

10 STEPS TO ELECTING A RESIDENT ASSOCIATION BOARD

1. **Confirm status of the association**

State law defines a resident association as “an organization that has the written permission of the owners of at least 51 percent of the manufactured homes in the park to represent them, and which is organized for the purpose of resolving matters related to living conditions in the manufactured home park.” Before holding elections confirm that 51% of the homeowners have signed.

2. **Define the Mission of the Resident Association**

The association should have a brief mission statement defining its purpose and values, so that it is clear to potential candidates what the association is about.

3. **Decide the Structure of the Board**

Size: The board should have an odd number of people. Generally 5 or 7 people is a good size. If the board is too small, your officers may get burned out from all the work. If the board is too big, meetings may become unmanageable and harder to coordinate.

Officers: Boards typically have a president, vice-president, secretary and a treasurer (if the association wants to do fundraising). The other members are “at large” but have the same voting privileges as officers.

4. **Identify potential conflict of interests**

It is critical that in a resident association, the issues affecting residents be the main concern of its officers. There are numerous ways in which a conflict of interest may arise, and the membership will have to decide whether or not someone can be on the board. For example:

- park managers, owners, landlords, maintenance or people otherwise employed by the park
- immediate relatives of the park owner or management
- people who own a home or homes in the park, but do not live in the park
- anyone else who doesn't live in the park
- anyone who benefits financially from the operations of the park or from closing the park due to a unique relationship with the park or developers

5. **Determine who can be on the board**

As a general rule, conflicts of interest are best avoided, but the membership should clarify before nominations who can and cannot be on the association board. Only members of the association can be members of the board.

6. Nominations

Only resident association members can nominate for the board. Members can also nominate themselves. Once a candidate has been nominated they should either decline or accept the nomination based on their interest.

7. Candidate speeches

Candidates should give a brief speech (2 minutes) on why they want to be on the association board, what they hope to accomplish, and why they are the best person for the position.

8. Voting

Elections should begin for the highest office (president) and proceed down so that people can run for multiple positions if not elected. They should be done through secret ballot and only one person per household is allowed to vote. To win the election a candidate must receive 51% of the vote, if no one receives 51% the first round of voting, the top two candidates will hold a run-off election.

9. Vote counting

Votes should be counted by an objective party. Candidates for a particular position should not be involved in counting ballots for that position. Votes should be tallied and the results posted for all to see.

10. Acceptance Speech/ Pledge

Each newly elected board member should give a 1 minute acceptance speech and promise to uphold the mission of the resident association.