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COMMUNITY MOMENTS

A REALMANAGE PUBLICATION



Lisa Paulk

Director of Community Association Management
RealManage Austin

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Valued Clients,

I hope each of you and your communities is having a wonderful 2018. It is so hard to believe we are already through the first quarter of this year. Our focus this year is providing the best level of service to our valued clients by working as a team made up of top-caliber individuals that are committed to being the best versions of themselves.

Our team members take great pride in managing our community associations. A great example of that is Lisa Paulk, Director of Community Association Management in our Austin office. Lisa is a consummate professional and a true adherent to servant leadership who is always there to support her team

Thank you again for the trust you have placed in the RealManage family. We look forward to serving you in 2018 and many more years to come.



Chris Ayoub

President, RealManage

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Lisa Paulk

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT

The RealManage team in Austin is exceedingly happy to celebrate the leadership of one of our own, Lisa Paulk. Lisa joined our team last year and serves in the North Austin office as a Director of Community Association Management.



Lisa is an Austinite who began her property management career here in 1989. She has experience in nearly every aspect of the real estate industry, having managed residential associations, commercial properties, multi-family apartments and condominium associations. In addition to her skills as a seasoned community manager and leader, Lisa is an expert in maintenance project management helping her deliver unparalleled value to our communities.

Lisa leads a team of managers, assistant managers and inspectors serving forty-two communities comprised of over 11,500 residences. Our team is extremely lucky to have her dynamic leadership and wealth of experience guiding portfolio operations. She exemplifies selflessness and leadership and is always there to support and guide her team.

Lisa is a professional in every way, one of the hardest working members on the RealManage team, and possesses an unflinching positive attitude. Her infectious optimism and sense of humor help us all keep things in perspective on even the toughest days. We are truly honored to serve on the same team as Lisa and are confident she will continue to delight our clients and lead her team with integrity and passion.

Written by, **Ben Kirby**, Vice President of Operations, Austin

BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Theresa Robinson

WATERFORD LANDING

The Raleigh Market would like to spotlight the Waterford Landing HOA board member Theresa Robinson. Theresa Robinson started her board tenure for Waterford Landing in June of 2011 as a director and has held the role as vice president for the last 4 years.

Theresa has held movie nights, set up yard sales, planted flowers at the many common areas of the community, and has volunteered at many community events. Theresa also was able to win a grant from the City of Raleigh in 2014 to upgrade some aspects of their pool house which saved the association over \$1,000.00.

She, along with other board members, volunteered their time this past summer and completely painted and renovated the inside and parts of the outside of the clubhouse and pool area and saved their association thousands of dollars in labor costs.

Waterford Landing is lucky to have such a dedicated board member and she is a true joy to work with! Thank you, Theresa, for all you do and for your dedication to Waterford Landing.

Written by, **Holly Bunch**, Director of Community Association Management, Raleigh, North Carolina



BOARD PORTAL TRAINING FOR BOARD MEMBERS

RealManage is proud to announce that online board portal training webinars are now being conducted for all our valued board members in all of our markets.

The webinars will be held quarterly in February, May, August, and November, and will provide an overview of all that Ciranet has to offer you. Announcements will be sent out approximately 30 days prior to each webinar. We hope that you will be able to take advantage of these convenient, online sessions with Mary Arnold, our National Director of Training, so that you can get the most out of the Ciranet platform.



Preparing Landscaping & Amenities for Spring

Spring is officially here and it is time to make sure that your HOA common areas are ready. Flowers are beginning to bud, leaves are starting to return, and more people will soon start enjoying our community's outdoor amenities. In this article, we will go over some of the things you will need to do to ensure that your community landscaping springs to life as well as mother nature does.

TRIM TREES AND CUT BACK BUSHES

During the winter, your trees and shrubs might have grown a little unsightly. However, it is not enough to trim the plants so that they look visually appealing. You will want to check for any dead limbs or saplings that may be using the warmer weather as an opportunity to sprout up. If any limbs are overhanging in a way that blocks easy passage underneath of them, trim them to a more convenient length.

CLEAN UP PLAYSCAPES

Playgrounds that have been neglected over the winter will also be in need of a spring cleaning. You will want to make sure that any dirt, stains, or grime that have accumulated on the equipment has been thoroughly cleaned. The landscape around the area should be cleared of any debris and potentially leveled out if the area contains any sand or gravel.

This is also the perfect time to ensure that all of the equipment is safe to operate. Since children will be playing there, safety should be considered paramount. Inspect all of the equipment to make sure that there is no visible rust. Make sure that all of the nuts and bolts are tight. Look for signs of dry rot on plastic parts.

Finally, make sure that any areas that need lubrication are well lubricated and ready for the vigorous use that your homeowner's children will put them through.

PREPARE THE POOL

As warmer weather approaches, no doubt your residents will want to dive into the pool to cool off. Before uncovering the pool and opening it to the public, there are a few steps that need to be taken.

First, you will want to clean or replace the filters and remove any debris that has gathered itself in the baskets. Remove any plugs you may have put in place before restarting the filtration system. If the water level needs to be topped off, now is the time to do that.

With the water level back to operating depth, check the chemical levels and add products as needed to bring them within recommended levels. After doing this, clean the filter and check the levels every day until the water is clear. Once the water is clear, you can open the pool to the public and keep up with the usual maintenance routine.

SERVICE HVAC SYSTEMS

The pool is not the only place that your residents will be looking to cool off. If you have an amenity center or clubhouse, be sure that you have turned on the air conditioning and ensure that is functioning correctly.

You will also need to check any air filters in the building and make sure that they are clean. HVAC filters need to be replaced regularly. Follow the instructions for your filter type to determine if it needs to be replaced.

ADJUST SPRINKLER SYSTEM TIMERS

The return of spring marks the return of lawn growth. To look its best, your lawn will need a steady supply of water. Now is the time to set the timers for your sprinklers. It is recommended to water your lawn two times per week for 10 minutes in early spring. Slowly increase that to 18 minutes in the summer, unless prohibited by water restrictions that are in place.

PLANT FLOWERS

As the final icing on the cake, it is time to bring back the flower beds that surround your property. Nothing says that dreariness of winter is gone and the excitement of spring has arrived more than a collection of beautiful flowers. These should indeed be a part of your HOA landscaping.

Top 13 Tips to Achieving the One Hour Board Meeting

We understand what it is like. You work all day, you are tired, hungry, look forward to going home and being with your loved ones, but wait, you have that association board meeting tonight! The thought of a meeting that drones on for hours with little productivity is not appealing, now is it? Well, you can trust me when I say, it need not be that way!

Yes, the one-hour board meeting is a reality and it can be yours! By following a few simple and practical tips, your meetings can be the most efficient and effective meetings possible!

1) First and foremost, keep in mind that a board meeting is the time for making decisions, not for lengthy discussions. How do you make decisions without lengthy discussions? Just read on...

2) You can make decisions without lengthy discussions by reviewing the meeting packet well in advance of the meeting. The Community Association Manager can send a board meeting packet to the board at least 3-7 days before the board meeting. The board should read the information contained in the packet so they can come to the meeting prepared to conduct business and make decisions based on its content. If any of the information is unclear, the board has ample opportunity to ask the questions they need answered ahead of time. The Community Association Manager can do the necessary research, bring the answers to the meeting, thereby allowing the board to make a decision right then and there.

3) If your state has open meeting notice requirements, make sure meeting notices are sent out timely to avoid having to cancel and reschedule meetings that were not properly noticed.

4) The board president and the Community Association Manager should keep in mind that they are responsible for assuring board meetings are well organized, stay on topic, and begin and end on time. Occasionally they may find the need to curtail a conversation that is going nowhere and bring everyone's attention back to the task at hand.

5) Decide ahead of time who is taking the minutes. Typically this is done by the board secretary. (Remember to only include decisions made, not discussions.) There is nothing worse than getting half way through your meeting and realize that no one was taking minutes!

6) Stick to the agenda. Start on time. Include time allotments for each agenda item with a set start and end point. Don't allow people to wander off topic. Remind attendees of time constraints. Table items when it becomes evident a decision cannot be reached. Remember, the meeting is for decision making; if you cannot make a decision without more information, it's time to move on.

7) Follow Roberts Rules of Order. While you do not need to be overly formal, following basic parliamentary procedures (when and how to make a motion, when to call for questions, etc.) will help keep the meeting on track.

8) Having trouble scheduling your board meetings due to everyone's varying schedules? The most efficient method to scheduling board meetings is to schedule them all at the beginning of the year. Once that is done, expectations are set, and everyone can schedule their other obligations around the pre-scheduled board meetings. Doesn't that sound much easier than going round and round with emails trying to coordinate 3, 5, 7 or more people's schedules at random times? If you absolutely cannot set a schedule for the year, then at a very minimum, schedule your next board meeting at the conclusion of the current meeting while everyone is still gathered together.

9) Boards should hold board meetings as often as necessary to conduct business and/or conform to legal requirements. If you find business decisions piling up, and you do not have pre-scheduled meetings, it might be time to pull out the calendar and get one scheduled.

10) Financial reports are typically provided in advance of the meeting. These reports should be reviewed by the treasurer ahead of time so that he or she may provide a treasurer's report at the meeting.

11) Research has proven that after two hours, especially at the end of an already long day, human attention tends to wane at an evening board meeting. It is therefore best not to let board meetings run past two hours maximum.

12) The ideal place to conduct a board meeting is a conference room. Restaurants can be too noisy, and leaves potential for confidential conversations to be overheard. Board member homes often do not provide adequate space to spread out documents and establish a business setting. Outdoor amenity features are unreliable, as weather issues and/or pests can cause a meeting to halt abruptly or cause it to be cancelled or rescheduled.

13) Once your business is concluded, summarize any action items to ensure everyone is on the same page, and there are no misunderstandings about what follow up action is to be done, and by whom.

Written by **Mary Arnold, CMCA®, AMS®**

National Director of Training and Community Association Management Support

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