

May 2018

# COMMUNITY MOMENTS

A REALMANAGE PUBLICATION



## Crystal Gant

*Director of Operations*

RealManage San Antonio



# MAY

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## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

**A**s the end of spring approaches, we are in the season of finalizing everything for the upcoming pool season for many communities that we service. Your RealManage team has been working hard to get prepared for another successful summer season.

Additionally, we are pleased to announce that one of our RealManage family will be recognized at the CAI National Awards Ceremony in Washington, D.C. on May 9th. Kara Cermak, CMCA®, AMS®, PCAM®, is the Senior Vice President of Learning and Development nationally for RealManage. She won the CAI 2018 Educator of the Year award which is awarded to an individual who has excelled in elevating the quality of CAI's education programs by developing, teaching, or leading a significant national course.

I am so proud our team and their continued investment in our company, industry and the communities we serve. We look forward to a fantastic rest of second quarter and serving you and your communities to the best of our ability.



**Chris Ayoub**

*President, RealManage*



## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

# Crystal Gant

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS - SAN ANTONIO

For the month of May, the Central Texas Division wants to recognize one of the most influential and impactful leaders in the market, **CRYSTAL GANT**. Joining RealManage San Antonio in 2016, Crystal brings nine years of HOA experience and 20 years of residential, multifamily, and commercial property management experience to the team.

In February, Crystal was promoted from a Director of Community Association Management to the Director of Operations for the San Antonio branch. Crystal displays an unmatched expertise in property management as well as an inspiring ability to lead people through adversity and diagnose complex financial problems. She holds a Bachelor in Business Administration from Seattle University and is currently pursuing her CPA.

At one point in her career, Crystal served as the Accounting Director at one of our major competitors, which has made her a huge asset for troubleshooting financial and tax-related issues. In addition to her service to RealManage, she also has served in Community Association Institute since 2010, chairing the education committee and attending local CAI functions.

Crystal has deep family roots in the San Antonio area and loves to garden, read, fish, and cook in her spare time. We are honored to have Crystal as a leader and look forward to her future successes in San Antonio.

Written by *Ben Kirby*  
Division Vice President, Operations



## MARY'S EDUCATIONAL CORNER

If you are reading this, you are more than likely involved in a community association on some level. Yet sometimes with the rapid pace of handling community association matters, we never stop to consider what exactly is a community association is. Do you know what is the definition of a community association? "A legal entity in which owners/members enjoy protection, enhancement, maintenance and preservation of their homes and property."

A community association has three defining characteristics:

- For most community association's, membership is mandatory and automatic for all owners.
- Governing documents bind the owner and the association to each other through mandated actions. These "mutually binding documents" create the automatic lien which provides for severe consequences if the owner fails to pay his or her assessments and other charges.
- Mandatory lien-based assessments (maintenance fees) are levied on each owner in order to operate and maintain the community association.

Stay tuned for more basic information on community associations and their proper management of them in future Community Moments editions.

Written by *Mary Arnold*, CMCA®, AMS®,  
National Director of Training and Community Association Management Support



## BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

# Rebecca Page

SAN RAFAEL MANOR COOPERATIVE

The San Rafael Manor is a 156-unit Cooperative located in the Terra Linda community of beautiful San Rafael, California. **REBECCA "BECKY" PAGE** has been a part of the San Rafael Manor community since 1999 and has served on the board for a total of eight years.

Becky's father was in the military, so the family traveled and ended up in San Rafael in 1974. Her parents settled in where they chose to own and operate the local Cooks Hardware store. Becky spent her teenage years learning the family business. She attended Ohio University and later transferred to Temple University where she obtained her BFA in Design Illustration. She looked to follow her passion, so she also attended the College of Marin and Contra Costa County Occupation Programs in search of furthering her education in the field of graphic and web design.

Her first experience with being on the board of directors was when she was appointed to fill a vacant seat on the cooperative. Later in 2012 - Becky was elected to the board and accepted the position of treasurer. During her tenure as treasurer is when she learned intricate parts of the operations and the finances for the cooperative. In 2015 Becky chose again to serve her community as she was nominated to become the board president and has continued her efforts to make San Rafael Manor an enjoyable and desirable community in which to live.

During her time as president, Rebecca has led her board to accomplish several large projects including a complete renovation and upgrade to the pool area, a complete asphalt replacement project for all roadways within the community, and LED lighting with retrofitting for energy efficiency. She believes in keeping her community members engaged and knowledgeable so she has published the



cooperative's newsletter keeping members up to date on what is occurring within the community. Becky takes a hands-on approach and is always one of the first to volunteer to meet with vendors, pick up supplies or donate her time to assist wherever the cooperative may need her. She navigates through challenges whether they are big or small with ease and a smile.

She expressed that one of her fondest accomplishments was that she was able to lead the board of directors when they successfully replaced all the old and outdated pool furniture with new, 100% recycled commercial-grade furniture - matching the new pool area! While at first mention pool furniture might seem like an easy feat, it took many person-hours and trips to various locations to find the right products for the cooperative. She has also led the board in successfully renovating two rental units that the cooperative owns as she spearheaded the necessary upgrades to bring the rental units up to code. Becky chose to coordinate all the vendors to get the units updated and ready to be rented.

On a more personal note, Becky is an avid San Francisco Giants fan (*Go Giants!*) and has a vast knowledge in the "nuts and bolts" area - thanks to her time spent in the family business - Cooks Hardware. An additional fun fact is that she has the ability/skill of identifying different dog breeds at first sight!

And finally, her favorite quote is one from Leo Rosten, "I think the purpose of life is to be useful, to be responsible, to be honorable, to be compassionate. It is, above all, to matter: to count, to stand for something, to have made some difference that you lived at all."

Thank you, Becky, for serving your board and community!

Written by  
*Joseph Price*, Division President Western Region &  
*Celena Moreno*, Community Manager



# Planning for Tornado Season: Keeping Your HOA Safe

Planning for tornado season is a great action to take in keeping your HOA safe. With over 1,400 tornadoes in the U.S. during 2017, and with the year being the fifth highest tornado count on record, tornadoes are indeed a serious matter. Be proactive rather than reactive by taking the following steps to ensure your HOA is ready for a tornado:

## HAVE AN EMERGENCY PLAN IN PLACE

Create an emergency plan for the HOA and distribute it to all members. Develop the plan with particular attention to procedures for evacuating children, the elderly, and anyone with disabilities or special needs. Obtain evacuation routes from local and state agencies. Highlight shelter information along the routes and any possible alternative routes or transportation. Be sure to designate a chain of command for emergency contacts. Let residents know who they should call first, second, or even third in the event of an evacuation.

Having an emergency plan in place is only good if all residents are aware of the plan. Conduct community meetings, promote via social media and association website, and even email. It is better to over communicate the plan than to have members unaware and unsure what to do. Update and redistribute frequently to ensure new members are aware of the plan. If your association is located in an area known for tornadoes, consider holding evacuation drills once a year.

## SECURE WINDOWS AND OUTDOOR ITEMS

With wind speeds of 200–300 mph, securing windows with plywood and removing outdoor items in preparation for a tornado is an important safety step for your community. Bring in any outdoor items that have the potential to become airborne during a tornado, such as patio furniture, grills, and trash cans. Turn off pool pumps and if time, have someone inspect the roof for loose tiles.

## REVIEW INSURANCE POLICIES

Review your insurance policies. Double check to ensure the association's policy includes coverage for extreme damage caused by tornadoes. Another great idea is to take time-stamped photos of common areas and the building before the need of a claim arises. This provides documentation of conditions prior to the severe weather and any damage it causes.

## PACK EMERGENCY KITS

Emergency kits packed in preparation for tornadoes are life-saving items for elderly or disabled residents. Have a community packing day or distribute lists with tips for what to include in a kit, items such as:

- Flashlights
- Bottled water
- Battery-operated radio
- Extra clothes
- Waterproof matches
- Medicines
- Extra batteries
- Non-perishable food

In addition to these basic survival items, remind residents to carry proof of residency, identification, and credit cards in their possession when evacuating.

## TAKE WARNINGS SERIOUSLY

The word tornado comes from the Spanish "tornar," meaning to turn and "tronada," which means thunderstorm. Tornadoes are known for their funnel shape and violently rotating winds. If a tornado warning surfaces on local media channels, it is best to take the warning seriously, even if your area has never experienced one before. You never want to underestimate a tornado's power.

## REACH OUT TO RELIABLE SOURCES

Evacuating for a tornado can be scary. Invite local community responders to speak to your association at an annual meeting. Encourage them to communicate how to remain calm during an evacuation and what to expect. Visit the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for tips and information. The site includes templates for creating emergency plans and other useful items.

## BE READY

The scope of planning for tornado season will depend upon the size of the association. Condominiums, for example, will have different planning processes than neighborhoods with individual homes. The key strategy is to have a plan in place, communicate that plan, and to remember that property is replaceable and people are not. Take care of your members first, secure your buildings the best you can, and double check your insurance.

Mother Nature is unpredictable and it is worth noting that every state in the U.S. has experienced a tornado at some point in time. Whether it's a tornado, hurricane, or some other natural disaster, be prepared with plans and strategies that will keep your HOA safe.



## Helpful Tips for Creating Board Resolutions

Board volunteers should choose the best and most efficient ways to govern. Creating resolutions is one common method for amending documents that establish policy or set rules. By addressing the who, why, what, and how, a resolution is a formal record of a board decision. Board resolutions should adhere to federal and state law, provide details, and, once adopted should be consistently enforced. For volunteer boards, it is essential to understand the definition and process of board resolutions.

## WHAT IS AN HOA BOARD RESOLUTION?

In simple terms, HOA board resolutions are formal statements regarding the association's policies. An HOA board resolution includes the following:

- The source of the board's authority to create the resolution.
- Details for readers to understand the purpose and meaning of the resolution.

There are generally three types of resolutions:

- Administrative
- Policy
- Special

Of the three, a policy resolution affects a member's rights and obligations. Administrative resolutions typically apply to internal matters, and special resolutions usually reference an individual situation. Resolutions may change with new boards or need to be updated due to new ordinances or laws. It is important to note that HOA resolutions do not require a membership vote; however, seeking member feedback and input about proposed resolutions is highly recommended.

## CREATING HOA BOARD RESOLUTIONS

### 1. REVIEW CURRENT LAWS

The first important step as you get started is to review current federal and state laws. Carefully check to ensure that no laws will be violated with the new resolution. This step is crucial to the overall success of the resolution.

### 2. ENSURE AUTHORITY

Review the association's community documents to ensure the board has the authority to make new resolutions. Reference the law that allows the authority at the beginning of the resolution.

### 3. CONDUCT RESEARCH

Discuss details of the resolution with board members. Ask specific questions, such as why the resolution is being proposed and how it will be enforced. Conduct enough research so that board members remain dedicated to developing the resolution.

### 4. DEVELOP A DRAFT

Follow a general format of a previous board resolution to develop a draft. Begin by listing the law or bylaw that provides the board with authority to create the resolution. Next, go into specifics about the resolution, including plans for enforcement.

### 5. SOLICIT FEEDBACK

Distribute the draft among community members. Providing members with an opportunity for suggestions and questions helps to make them feel included in the process.

### 6. VOTE TO ADOPT

After the feedback period, ends and all community input has been considered; it is time to vote. If the resolution passes, it must be signed by board members and dated.

### 7. CONSISTENTLY ENFORCE

The resolution was drafted and adopted for a purpose, and now that purpose must be enforced. This must be done consistently for the resolution to be taken seriously by association members.

Board resolutions are helpful when a board feels a new rule or if clarification is needed. The step-by-step outline above is also helpful for board members in learning whether the resolution is important enough to continue the process. While resolutions are easier to adopt than amending bylaws, their creation, adoption, and enforcement will eventually affect all association members in some way. Resolutions should be created correctly with careful consideration given to the details and enforcement.





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