

A portrait of Rebecca Jones, CMCA®, a woman with short blonde hair, smiling. She is wearing a black turtleneck with a white fur collar and a necklace with a circular pendant. The background is a blurred indoor setting.

COMMUNITY MOMENTS

A RealManage Publication

Exemplary Service & Values Rebecca Jones, CMCA[®]

Director of Community Association Management

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Words From Our President

It is amazing to consider that the summer is already winding down to a close! For our clients all over the country, it has been another season of family vacations and frequent trips to the neighborhood pools for some much needed rest and relaxation. As we transition out of the summer and into a new school year, I am excited about what the fall has to offer; Our children starting new grades, the temperature cooling, the changing colors, and most importantly, football season! Most of the residents will have returned from vacations, so for your Community Association, this is the perfect opportunity to reengage with neighbors and encourage volunteerism within the community. Examples could be serving on the architectural committee, planning a social event, or even running for an office on the Board of Directors.

One of our main focuses for the fall and winter months is leading our communities through, what we call, budget season. This is the time where the Board of Directors has to make informed decisions regarding the Association's funds. This is easily one of the most vital roles of the Board of Directors and we at RealManage do not take this responsibility lightly. As a company that is always striving for improvement, we are leaning heavily into the preparation of the budgets and are anticipating a smooth and thorough budget planning process.

We are so grateful to be partnered with each one of our communities and look forward to finishing 2016 strong!

Chris Ayoub
President



Employee Spotlight | Rebecca Jones, CMCA®

Written by: Ben Kirby, Vice President of Operations - Austin



Rebecca Jones began her career with RealManage in 2013, and she is known for her integrity and passionate stewardship to the communities she serves.

Rebecca Jones joined the RealManage team in early 2013 bringing with her a dozen years' experience in real estate, land development and community association management. She began working specifically in association management in 2001, and was an integral part in the development and management of the exclusive Barton Creek North Property Owners Association and several other high-end communities in the Austin area, which she continues to manage.

Currently, Rebecca is the RealManage Austin – South Office Director managing over 40 communities with a staff of four Community Association Managers and one Assistant Community Association Manager. She leads a strong and enthusiastic team, who benefit from her wise, energetic and caring leadership. Rebecca is an expert in all areas of community association management, including

budget development, deed restriction enforcement, architectural control and vendor management; just to name a few. It is not her expertise though, rather her poise, integrity, and passionate stewardship that make her an invaluable asset to the communities she serves.

Rebecca is a terrific example of RealManage values and character. She diligently fosters strong personal relationships among her staff and boards. Her honesty and work ethic enable her to lean into difficult situations and develop effective solutions in collaboration with her community partners. Rebecca Jones' leadership, dedication to her communities, and positive attitude are a major contributor to RealManage's success. We are proud to have her on our team!



The lazy days of summer are winding down, the barbecues and fun in the sun are but happy memories as we go into the fall season. As the summer ends, school season begins for many students across the country. What does that mean? Time to get prepared to make the transition easier.

Here are 5 top tips to get you started:

1. Start Adjusting Schedules

Do not wait till the weekend before school starts to get the kiddos back into the swing of things. Ease them gradually into school routine two weeks before school starting. What does this mean? Well, those night owls need to get back to having a set bed time, and for those that sleep late, start waking them up earlier and earlier till they get closer to when they will need to wake-up for school.

With changing sleep schedules, remember meal times! Get youngster used to having set mealtimes, from breakfast, snacks through lunch. This way it will be easier for them to adjust when school starts, and

it will help with the rumbling tummies.

2. Clean the Closet

With every new school year, there are supplies to buy and of course in most instances new clothes to be purchased. Take a look in your kid's closet to see what they have outgrown and what they will need for the next year. Donate gently used clothing to a local charity to reduce waste. When the purging is complete, get to organizing. While it might only last a little while, having everything in its proper place will help albeit "where is my...." a little while.

3. Shopping

With purging and organizing now complete, let the shopping begin. August is one of the biggest sales months for retailers; so be on the lookout for hot deals. Shopping on a tax-free weekend, if you can tolerate the lines, is a sure-fire way to save a buck. Plan ahead on what you need to buy and the stores you want to visit. Set expectations with children on the items to purchase, this will help protect the family budget.

4. Make Schedules

Every school year there numerous activities going on from sports, open house, to music lessons. To help keep organized, create a monthly calendar to lay out expectations of what is happening over the course of the year. That way if something additional comes up such as being asked to volunteer, you will quickly know if you are available. You can consider placing the calendar on the refrigerator door or a bulletin board. Add to your calendar as needed. Include school lunch menus, assignments for classes, practices schedules, etc.

5. Test Run

Before the big day, do a practice run to ensure children will be able to get to school on time.

Bus: Know where the bus stop is and time how long it will take to walk there.

Driving: Take a drive to the school to estimate how long it will take to get to there along with how long the wait makes be to drop the kiddos off. You will also want to account for early-morning traffic!

Walking: If your children walk to school, help them learn the route that is best to take to get there safely and on time.

CiraConnect | What's New?

We are excited to announce that several changes have been made to the notices to enhance the presentation to the owner outside of adding your optional community logo or violation photo (some charges may occur to include the photo in the letters).

Most importantly these modifications moveseveralkeyfieldsearlierinthenotice (regarding, location and compliance text) and fields like the excerpt from the documents (contract reference and contract text) following the compliance text.



Account Number	R0000000L0000000
Community ID	PREVIEW
Property Address	123 Abc St City, State Zip
Violation Notice ID	1234567
Notice Type	Courtesy Reminder

Current Resident
123 ABC ST
CITY, STATE ZIP
United States

August 04, 2016

Light trailer stored on drive

Current Resident:

Plantation Oaks HOA is a planned community governed by covenants, conditions and restrictions. Compliance with these rules benefits the entire community and all property owners are responsible for protecting the aesthetics and harmony of the neighborhood.

Now you have probably already corrected the following issue at 123 Abc St. If not, then this is a courtesy reminder from Plantation Oaks.

It has been reported or observed during a routine site inspection on 12/2/2015 that the property was out of compliance with the community rules and restrictions. This violation specifically regards the following item(s): Light trailer stored on drive. It was noted that this violation occurred at the following location: Driveway.

To bring this property into compliance, please move the trailer to a location where it cannot be seen from other properties or the street.

Governing Documents, specifically Article IX, Section 9.6(a) of the Declaration of Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions (Deed Restrictions) for Plantation Oaks HOA states, in part:

"No campers, boats, marine craft, hovercraft, boat trailers, travel trailers, motor homes, camper bodies, golf carts, and other types of recreational vehicles and, non-passenger vehicles, equipment, implements or accessories may be kept on any Lot unless the same are fully enclosed within the garage located on such Lot and/or said vehicles and/or accessories are screened from view by a screening structure or fencing approved by the ACC, and said vehicles and accessories are in an operable condition..."



Written by John Garvin, Senior Vice President, Colorado

Residents serving as board members of a Homeowners Association often fall into the trap of taking every issue facing the community as the top priority, and often can lead to out of control budgets, conflicting interests, and unhappy homeowners. Therefore to help keep things on track, HOA Board Members should create a vision for their homeowners association and strive to stick to that plan. Creating a vision will ensure that the community obtains its maximum potential for achieving its set goals.

The first step of building the association's vision requires that the board and the HOA management company have an in-depth understanding of the community as a whole, including budgets, geographic constraints, etc. It is great to want to grow your homeowner's association into a community with the best parks and pools, but if your budget only allows for a few water fountains, you should consider focusing your time and energy on something more realistic. Having a complete understanding of the dynamics of your community will be a large factor in building out your vision.

Once your board has an understanding of what direction they want to take, the next step will be to create a Mission Statement; which you can share with your HOA Community Manager. It is important to keep your mission statement as a simple directive, such as “Our community will strive to form a cohesive community through organized social events”. You should avoid complicating your vision with many goals such as “Our community wants the best pools, parks, encompassing insurance policies, social events, and trash removal”.

In summary, once you have created your Mission Statement, your Community Association Manager can work with the board to help plan, establish timelines, monitor, and control new projects as they come along. There will always be projects that pop up, but when it comes to projects that develop your community, your vision and mission statement will always be there to guide your decisions.

We hope these tips help you in creating a vision for your homeowners association!

Board Member Spotlight | Harriet Anderson

By Brandi Head, Director of Community Association Management

Mrs. Harriett Anderson is the Board President of Buffalo Creek Homeowners Association in Heath, Texas.



Mrs. Harriet Anderson has been a member of the Buffalo Creek Homeowners Association since 2007. She has served as Board President for many of those years.

Buffalo Creek is a custom home community of 709 homes located in the rolling, tree-lined hills of Rockwall County just 25 minutes east of downtown Dallas on Interstate 30 in Heath, TX. Interwoven with an 18 hole masterpiece golf course, the community contains some of the most beautiful custom homes available in the Dallas area. Buffalo Creek also features two pools, one located in Buffalo Creek and the other located in The Enclave as well as a custom designed playground. Buffalo Creek also has private tennis courts with two tennis pro's offering lessons.

Upon transitioning to Homeowner Board control a review of the finances unveiled a significant lack of funding for the Association's operational requirements. Mrs. Anderson, along with the rest of the Board, launched a course of action to remedy the deficit funding. In less than

three years, due to exemplary fiscal management, the Association now maintains outstanding financial health and easily meets all of the financial requirements for the operation of the Association in addition to numerous improvements throughout the community.

Throughout the course Mrs. Anderson's leadership she has also established an outstanding relationship with the City of Heath. This established relationship allows for quick action from the City to resolve issues outside the authority of the HOA. Together the Association and City of Heath have partnered together to resolve numerous issues which aids in maintaining the harmonious environment intended for Buffalo Creek.

Mrs. Anderson and the Board of Directors are truly a pleasure to work with. It is our honor to serve as the management team for Buffalo Creek as a valued client.



Why You Need Directors and Officers Insurance

Written by Katie Vaughan, Vice President CiraConnect Insurance Services

Directors and officers of a community regularly make decisions that impact the lives of fellow residents and the association itself. They put forth their best efforts to make the right decisions to make the community a wonderful place to live. Unfortunately, sometimes a resident or two disagrees with a decision and makes a claim against the board.

Did you know that, by volunteering for a board position a person places all of their personal assets at risk? Fortunately, their assets are often protected via the association's legal documents including the Declarations of Conditions, Covenants and Restrictions or by-laws which frequently have a clause requiring they be indemnified. In the absence of Directors and Officers insurance, if a claim or lawsuit arrives, that clause should ultimately result in association paying for the defense against the claim and any settlement amount.

Disputes can and do arise over Deed Restriction Violations, assessments and liens and certainly have been known to result in a claim. The most common causes of Directors and Officers or D&O losses for community associations are:

- A board's failure to adhere to the legal documents
- Failure to notice elections and properly count votes/proxies
- Architectural decisions including approval of variances and easements
- Failure to maintain common areas
- Challenges to assessments
- Failure to properly disperse funds such as insurance proceeds
- Challenges regarding the power of the board granted in the by-laws

Even attempts to beautify your community can result in a claim. Here's a case in point. An association was attempting to improve the safety and property value of the community as a whole and approved a general assessment to repair and/or replace the sidewalks. The association hired an engineer to identify the specific sidewalks areas. One homeowner objected to work being done in front of their home arguing they had recently repaved the area. However, the engineer disagreed and the board followed his recommendations. Subsequently, the homeowner refused to pay their share of the assessments and a lien was placed on their home. The homeowners counter-sued to get the lien removed. Ultimately, the court sided with the Association but they had already accrued \$25,000 in defense costs.

Fortunately, Directors & Officers insurance responds to protect board members and the community from claims resulting from decisions that are made in the course of managing the community.

Directors & Officers policies for community associations should include these important features:

- Defense coverage in addition to the limit of liability.
- Current, past and future board members, officers and volunteers as well as the property management company included as Insureds.
- Coverage for non-monetary claims. (These are claims asking the board to take action such as approve an architectural change or dismiss a deed restriction violation.)

It is important to review not only the coverages provided in your policy but also the exclusions. Common D&O exclusions include intentional criminal and fraudulent acts, damage to or destruction of property, bodily injury and construction defects. Some policies also exclude failure to maintain insurance, failure to maintain common property and a failure to have adequate reserves to maintain community owned property.

Be cautious about D&O coverage that is provided by an endorsement to a package policy. Oftentimes these endorsements are missing some key provisions and coverages.

AD&O policy provides coverage on a claims-made basis. Claims-made policies have two important triggers to determine policy response – the date the claim is first made and the date the event happened that caused the claim. Generally, the policy that is in force when the claim first arrives will respond. There is an important caveat to this which is something called the Retroactive Date. (Most, but not all D&O policies have a Retroactive Date.) A wrongful act that took place before that date will not be covered by the policy, even if the claim is first made during the policy period. Look for the Retroactive Date on the D&O Declarations page.

Here are a couple of examples of how the claims-made and Retroactive Date work using a policy effective date of 1/1/2016 to 1/1/2017 and a Retroactive Date of 1/1/2015.

1. A DRV is issued on 12/1/2015. The homeowner disagrees with it and asks the board to remove it. After several months of back-and-forth discussions, the homeowner files a claim against the board on 3/1/2016. This policy should respond because the event happened after the Retroactive Date and the claim was made during the policy period.
2. Now change the year the DRV was issued to 2014. In this situation, since the event giving rise to the claim happened before the Retroactive Date, there is no coverage under this policy – even though the claim was made during the policy period.

The Retroactive Date is especially important if you change insurance companies. If you move your insurance to another company, ask your agent to be sure the Retroactive Date isn't changed.

Please be sure to read your policy. If you have any questions, your insurance agent or the CiraConnect insurance team is available to assist you.

CiraConnect Insurance Services works with several underwriters who specialize in D&O insurance for community associations. We'd be happy to work on a quote for you!

ccis@ciramail.com | (972) 380-3502



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