

STEER CLEAR WITH A PROFESSIONAL MANAGER AT THE HELM



A homeowners association is a business and a business needs to be managed. Oftentimes, when accepting the role of board member, you are put into a boat on a fast-moving river without oars and told to navigate as best you can.

HOA board members may come to the board without prior experience and serve for shorter terms than many other types of corporate boards. For this reason, an HOA board of directors is smart to take on a professional manager as an ally and expert in management of their business.

A professional manager is not only the keeper of corporate history, but also the person who can navigate that fast-moving river since he or she has the expertise in exactly this realm. Your manager is the one who provides professional guidance and advice as the board sets policy,

helping to avoid dangerous rapids and overseeing administration of the corporate operations.

Here are just a few of the many things a professional, certified manager can offer you:

Continuity: It may be typical for your association board to welcome new members year after year. Your manager can help provide continuity through these frequent changes by ensuring the board continues to follow through with corporate policy that has been set in prior years.

Operations Oversight: When you hire a CACM Certified Community Association Manager (CCAM) or Master of Community Association Management (MCAM), you are getting more than someone with great business traits. You are hiring a person with the formal training needed

to manage the day-to-day operations of the association (a.k.a., the corporation). The manager is the operational heart of the corporation, ensuring all parts of the business work smoothly and in line with policy.

Expert Guidance: A California certified manager has the knowledge and depth of experience to advise the board wisely and provide action plans that are the result of ideas tested throughout the state and found to be effective. A professionally trained manager is someone who is knowledgeable about HOA finance, industry standards, new case law and effects of legislation, as well as someone who understands administration as it applies to community management.

Expert Connections: Sometimes a board must rely on subject matter experts to make informed decisions. In addition to sharing his or her expertise on various aspects of association management, a CACM certified professional manager also has access to an entire network of managers and industry professionals. Your manager can help you access and consult with expert service providers on a variety of HOA issues when the need arises, helping you and the board make decisions in the best interest of the community.

Law Compliance: Even if you read the laws pertaining to HOAs, it is not always clear how to translate that law into your day-to-day operations. Not to mention, there are more than 1,200 laws governing California HOAs, which is a lot to keep track of and comply with. CACM certified managers are trained to understand and ensure compliance with all of California's HOA laws, and they are accustomed to working closely with industry experts who can help offer the board advice on best practices in all areas of the law.

Governance: Are you ready to put policies in place? Your manager can help you and your fellow board members build a set of policies

to guide the direction of the corporation in carrying out the fiduciary responsibilities of the board. Policies enable boards to be proactive and forward thinking in their duties. A certified manager can help craft policies that will allow the board to be freed from minor operational decisions, while ensuring the board's desires are handled wisely.

Point of Contact: A homeowner's association is much bigger than the boardroom; it also involves contact with and issues surrounding owners, tenants, sub-contractors and public entities. Professional community managers are accustomed to acting as a liaison between the association and these outside parties. He or she is comfortable and confident in being the voice of the board of directors and the association among these different audiences. In addition, your community manager can help administer necessary association communications, including election materials, violation and meeting notices, and the association newsletter.

Strategic Vision: A professional community manager is trained to monitor countless areas of the association, from the common ground maintenance to the annual budget. It's important to have a strategic plan in place to avoid financial pitfalls and maintenance mishaps. Your manager can help the board develop and implement a strategic plan to stay on top of maintenance issues, budget development, insurance needs and more.

With your manager handling the tiller of your boat and navigating through rough waters, you and your fellow board members will find your journey along the river nothing but smooth sailing.

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CACM's "In the Boardroom" feature is intended to provide key trends, tips and practical advice for association board members.

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