



FINDING YOUR RHYTHM

*It's important to maintain a
harmonious environment in
times of transition*

A successful board of directors is like a symphony: while each person brings a unique voice to the group, the collective sound is characterized by harmony and an eloquent rhythm. Each person plays off the other to create a powerful, unified sound.

When there's conflict in the boardroom, it interrupts the established rhythm. Because boards change with every election, you may find that conflict arises more often around the time new directors are joining the group. It may seem that just when you've built a rhythm and understand the ways in which your fellow board members operate, the music stops and you find yourself seated around a very different board table.

How do you work with the shift in dynamic that comes with new board members?

First, take stock of the new group. You may find that even returning, experienced board members shift their approach based on the new dynamic.

Next, celebrate the new instruments at your disposal. Before joining, all new board members have gained enough support in the community, and they can become an important addition to the vision that existing board members have set. Find out what motivated each new member to volunteer and what they hope to accomplish in the community through their participation.

It's also important to listen (and I mean really, really listen). Remember, you are not just a standout solo artist belting out your own ideas. You are part of a team and the value of any team is listening and bouncing ideas off one another. It's important to get to know each person's unique talents and perspectives on the association. There is value in the voice of experience at the table, as well as the new points of view that can only come from someone who was on the outside and is now coming in.

Your community association manager can act as a type of conductor when necessary. He or she can help smooth the transition from one

board to the next, offering guidelines about group behavior and board policies. Your manager can also facilitate discussions and offer insights into how boards get things done. He or she wants to ensure that the group listens to and learns from each voice at the table.

You can take comfort in the fact that your community association manager has likely worked through many board transitions and knows how to ease the strangeness and momentary lack of fluidity.

Having a professional manager on your side – someone who knows the steps to achieving harmonious board relationships – can help facilitate communication as you get to know one another. Once a new rhythm has been established, the new board can pick up the pace, move forward with ongoing operations and adjust their goals to the new music.

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