

Vice-president

The role of the vice-president is relatively simple but very important. The vice-president acts in the place of the president in the event of absence, inability, or refusal to act. The vice-president also serves in an advisory capacity to the president and the board may assign additional duties as needed.

Some of the traditional responsibilities of the vice-president are:

- Effectively manage and facilitate meetings in the absence of the president.
- Step into the president's position in the event that the president is unable to complete his or her term.
- Follow-up on tasks assigned to members of the association.

Secretary

The secretary is responsible for making sure that meeting minutes are recorded, reviewed and kept in a safe place. The secretary also makes sure that copies of the minutes, agendas, and other association records are available for the board and the public.

Some of the responsibilities of the secretary include:

- Maintain current and comprehensive membership records.
- Record all of the official correspondence of the association.
- Pass along important information to be included in association newsletters.



Treasurer

The treasurer is responsible for the funds of the neighborhood association. The treasurer ensures that all monies are deposited in the appropriate accounts, that bills are paid, that financial statements are prepared, that an annual audit is performed, and that an annual budget is created and distributed to members.

Most boards do not require anything but an occasional status report from the treasurer. Someone should be selected that will take the duties of the position very seriously since the fiscal condition of the association is crucial to the future well being of the group.

Typical duties of treasurers are to:

- Pay all of the association's expenses in a timely, accurate, and appropriate manner.
- Collect and deposit all funds received by the association.
- Maintain a financial accounting system that is adequate and thorough for the association.
- Collect dues from association members.



Neighborhood Communications is a series of brochures produced and distributed by the city of Carrollton's Community Services Division to inform citizens about the fundamentals of starting, maintaining and growing a neighborhood organization. If you have any comments about this brochure or if you have an idea or suggestion for another brochure or series of brochures, please contact the Community Services Division.



COMMUNITY SERVICES

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION

LEADERSHIP



Community Services Division
Department of Environmental Services
City of Carrollton
1945 E. Jackson Road
Carrollton, Texas 75006
Phone: 972-466-4299
Fax: 972-466-3175
www.cityofcarrollton.com



A neighborhood association is, in many ways, a business. As the governing body, a board of directors is responsible for making sure that the association is properly organized, that its bills are paid, and that its funds are managed wisely.

Officers typically are chosen by their fellow board members at the first meeting of a newly elected board. Board members often get the job because they want it, not because they are the most qualified. Still, you should not look on your officer positions as a popularity contest. They, along with the entire board, wield very potent authority on your neighborhood's behalf.

This does not mean that your board runs the association by itself. It can and should delegate its authority to qualified members or committees to help conduct the day-to-day business of the neighborhood. But the contact points for these people and groups are almost always the president and the other board officers, whose decisions and actions ideally are guided by their sense of fiduciary duty to the neighborhood.

Elections for the Board of Directors should be held annually. The Board will handle the business of the neighborhood association throughout the upcoming year. Your association's bylaws should specify the individual positions and the general framework of your electoral process. Descriptions should outline the general responsibilities of the board and any other individual officer positions. There are a number of duties and responsibilities involved in an organization. It is important to have enough people on the board to delegate the many tasks that need to be completed. The following positions are generally the minimum number needed for the governing board of your association:

President

The powers and duties of this position are far-ranging. It is the president who most often calls meetings, finalizes meeting agendas, and, when necessary, serves as the spokesperson for your neighborhood.

Unfortunately, many neighborhoods appoint a newly elected board member as president. This can be disruptive, even counterproductive, to the smooth operation of an association. It can often take a board member six months to a year just to understand the many issues facing the neighborhood and its board. No matter how involved people are before joining the board, it is unlikely that they have a complete picture of association business, simply because certain discussions are privileged information. If at all possible, choose a president who has served at least one year on the board.

One of a president's primary duties is presiding over board and general meetings. This is never as easy as it sounds. When chairing a meeting, the best thing a president can do is keep the board focused on its agenda. A good president will allow for comments from other officers or members but will maintain control of the meeting. If the board can not come to a decision on an issue, the president should not hesitate to determine why—or table the issue until further information is obtained.

The president is responsible for the overall leadership of the association and sets the agenda and facilitates all meetings. It is important for this person to be objective and judicial. A president should never dominate discussions. The president keeps the meeting running smoothly and makes sure people keep to the agenda, both in content and timing.



Some duties that are usually the responsibility of the president are:

- Make sure all members are notified about meeting dates, times, and locations.
- Represent the association in a public capacity.
- Have an organized agenda and keep the meeting focused and within the allotted time frames as outlined in the agenda.
- Mediate arguments between members as they arise.
- Clarify decisions made by the group.
- Bring the issues to a vote as needed and in an orderly manner.
- Review tasks and make assignments.
- Ensure that all members follow bylaws and procedures.
- Give credit and recognition for accomplishments.
- Follow up on decisions made at meetings.
- Meet with successor and transfer records, files, etc.

Tips to Make Your Job as President More Manageable

- Introduce yourself at the beginning of a meeting. Do not assume everyone knows who you are. If the group is a reasonable size, have everyone introduce themselves as well.
- Review the agenda and establish ground rules.
- Direct the discussion. Keep people on topic. If irrelevant issues are being brought up, remind the group that there will be a time for new business at the end of the meeting. If people are repetitive, restate the information that they have shared and move on to the next speaker. If a decision needs to be made, call for a motion and take a vote. Keep your own opinions to a minimum.
- Facilitate voting and decision making. Never assume there is an agreement until it is put to a vote.
- Do not abuse the power of your office. Do not ignore people who want to speak and do not monopolize the floor. A president should be neutral. If you want to voice your opinion: temporarily step out of your role as the president; express your views; and when finished, return to your role as the president.
- Mediate arguments when they arise.