

SELECT REFLECTS

KEEP THE CHANGE

BY KEN BADE, PRESIDENT/CEO,
CMCA®, AMS®, PCAM®

In 1981, David Lee Roth of the rock band, Van Halen sang about it in their song “Unchained”. America elected a President based on a desire for it in 2008, and yet mention it in the same breath with the words “your manager” and you almost instantly feel the earth stop turning.



As the recognized “face” of the management company, the association manager often becomes the board’s only perceived connection to the company with which the directors contracted to professionally manage their community. It’s easy to fall into this mind-set if companies fail to showcase their entire management team and if managers encourage the misconception.

If a professional management company manages your community, the concept of the manager being solely responsible for the association couldn’t be further from the truth. Professional managers are fully supported by the firms they represent. In most cases, there are a myriad of support staff behind them who are fully engaged in the day-to-day operation of your association. There are customer service representatives, administrative staff, assistant managers, bookkeepers and maintenance folks. Let’s not forget the senior staff responsible for the operation and training of the entire company. Quite an impressive list isn’t it? So while the manager may be the most visible member of the team, he or she is not alone. Why, then, is the loss of a manager one of the most difficult times in the life of a board and management company?

Let’s face it, we really don’t like change, do we? The last thing a board of directors wants to hear is that their manager is being reassigned or leaving the company. From a management perspective, it’s even more distressing. If the manager is leaving the company, thousands of dollars of education and training are leaving with him or her. Questions abound from the board: Why is it that you always change our manager? Are there problems in your organization? Shouldn’t a professional management company know that changing managers is a bad thing for our community? What could your company have done differently? Did you make a bad hiring decision?

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The Associa Advantage Network is a free and voluntary **VALUE-ADDED SERVICE** available to members of the Associa Family. By leveraging the purchasing power of Associa's 8,000 communities and 2 million households, we are able to negotiate exceptional savings on household goods and services commonly used by our clients, maintenance groups and employees.

Through the Associa Exclusive Offers area members will find trade partners that are icons in their industry such as Lowes, Sherwin-Williams, DoodyCalls, 1800-GOT-JUNK?, Budget Blinds and *Bulbs.com* to name a few.

Choose the best and take advantage, www.associaadvantage.com.

“I recently placed an order with *Bulbs.com* through the Associa Advantage program and was extremely pleased with their pricing and service. I received a quote from our normal supplier and *Bulbs.com* beat their price by 50%! The ordering process was easy and we received our shipment fast. This is a phenomenal program and I look forward to sharing the savings information with my Board of Directors and using their services for future orders.”

-BLAKE ROSE, CMCA®
COMMUNITY MANAGER

“I was getting ready to order more bags for our pet stations and thought this was my chance to experience Associa Advantage for myself. There was definitely a huge savings! For \$115, I received 4000 bags from DoodyCalls! The closest competitor would have cost the Association \$250. In times like these the Association definitely appreciates the savings.”

-MAYEA HENDERSON, CMCA® AMS®
BEECHTREE COMMUNITY MANAGER



(KEEP THE CHANGE)

All valid questions. Realistically, a manager and a board of directors will always develop a professional bond if the management company leadership has done their homework

and chosen the proper person to work with the board. This makes for tough going when a change needs to happen. However, we can't lose sight of the fact that as a board you have hired a management company, not just a manager, and that sometimes change is necessary.

There are many valid reasons for change. The one that surfaces most often is a manager's desire for advancement, be that a new job with a larger salary or an internal promotion and the accompanying pay raise. While we would like to believe that people will stay with us forever, it is really not realistic. The work ethic has changed; virtually gone are the days of taking a job and working for a company for the rest of your working life. People need to be challenged in their work and they want advancement. Since employees are

a significant investment, keeping things fresh and engaging for them with an opportunity for pay increases are the only ways to retain staff. Management needs to offer talented employees larger and more challenging accounts or they will look elsewhere to grow.

Of course, we cannot overlook complacency. In reality, board members often serve for extended periods of time, usually due to a lack of other willing volunteers. Couple that with a long-term manager and suddenly things aren't getting done as quickly as they used to be. Worse yet, this scenario can lead to opportunities for fraud and misappropriation of funds. A fresh set of eyes by a new manager can help revitalize the situation. In this scenario, change is a very good thing.

While timing for such change may be less than perfect, the test of a good management company is in how they handle this change of representation. All involved should embrace the positive aspects this opportunity presents. The board, manager and management company staff should recognize that while some issues may require refocus, changing managers should be nearly seamless because the management company has staff and standardized procedures in place to ensure that the community continues to operate efficiently through the transition and into the future.

HELP! For Homeowners New to Association Living.

By Dee Dee Blizard, Vice President of Management Services, CMCA®, AMS®, PCAM®

It took longer than you expected to sell your home and find the perfect location to downsize, but here you are. Your new home meets all of your goals relating to location, amenities and conveniences. It's so exciting and you waste no time adding a few warming touches. First, you paint the front door wedge wood blue, which seems to be appropriate in this gardenlike setting. Next you add a new wreath to the door and finally your favorite lamp bearing statues to the front garden. It is impressive how much more welcoming the home now appears. So, imagine your surprise, when a most unwelcoming letter arrives just three days later stating that your home is - in violation! The letter states that the color of your door is *non-compliant*, you must remove the newly mounted wreath and that the statues in your garden, is actually in something called *Common Area* and must be removed!

Upon calling the number on the letter you are reminded that you have purchased into an Association. A bell goes off as you remember the large notebook you received titled, "**Restrictive Terrace - Condominium Association**". You locate it among the closing documents and begin reading it and quickly realize that it may have been a mistake not to use the week prior to settlement to review this information.

Sound familiar? It happens more often than you know. Purchasing into a Community Association has many benefits and restrictions that govern the community that you will need to know. It is a life style choice that should be taken seriously when considering this option. Just a little preparation can ensure that you make a well informed decision.

Here are a few things you'll need to consider:

- **Governing Documents** (Articles of Incorporation, Declaration, Bylaws, etc.) These are documents that dictate how the Association is setup and operates. They include such helpful information as definitions, governance, budget, meetings, maintenance, and use restrictions.
- **Rules & Regulations & Architectural Guidelines.** These can often be more specific than the documents listed above and include additional items that are silent in other governing documents.
- **Assessments.** These are fee that must be paid to the Association to cover common interest expenses. It is possible to have more than one Association for the same location resulting in multiple assessments.
- **Board of Directors.** The Association will have a governing body referred to as the Board of Directors who are usually volunteers appointed or elected to govern the affairs of the community.
- **Management Company.** Most Community Association's are managed by a professional management company whose job it is to manage the day to day operations of the Association. They can be quite helpful in helping you to understand association living.
- **Get Involved.** There are many opportunities for you to volunteer and participate in operation of the Association. Make it a point to attend board meetings and volunteer when possible.

Community Association living offers a wonderful lifestyle. Being an informed Association member can make it an amazing experience for you.



Erin Midgette Receives Her CMCA® Designation from Community Associations Institute (CAI)



Select Community Services is pleased to announce that Erin Midgette, Community Manager, has earned her Certified Manager of Community Associations (CMCA®) designation from Community Associations Institute (CAI).

“Congratulations to Erin for reaching this pinnacle of success,” said Dee Dee Blizard, Vice President of Management Services of Select Community Services. This designation demonstrates her commitment to her profession and will help her to better serve our clients and homeowners.”

WELCOME NEW CLIENTS!



Addison Way HOA



Long Acres HOA



Eden Village HOA



Poplar Parc HOA



Emerson Park HOA



Hunting Creek HOA



Fosters Run Estates HOA

ASSOCIA  CARESSM



Because We Care: The majority of all Select Community Services employees voluntarily contribute monthly to Associa Cares.

Associa Cares (www.associacares.com) is a national nonprofit 501(c)3 organization created to assist families and communities in crisis as a result of natural and man-made disasters. Donations provided by these events allow Associa Cares to provide necessary goods

and services to the families affected by these types of tragedies. If you know of a family who has been the victim of a natural or man-made disaster, go directly to info@associacares.com to submit a request.