

Condominium Home Owners' Association

Serving BC's Strata Property Owners since 1976

Bulletin: 300-164

Condo Smarts

Headline: How do I survive council?

Topic: Strata Council

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Dear Condo Smarts: For the first time I have just agreed to be elected to our strata council and to my surprise was elected as president. After a month of constant harassment and abuse from two owners, I now know why.

They are demanding to know at all times what is going on in the strata and immediately want copies of all the strata business.

Now no one wants to stay on council and everyone is ready to resign. Are there some secrets to surviving council?

-- *David J., Kelowna*

Dear David: Think of your strata council as an elected body in much the same manner as you elect a city council, except strata council are generally volunteers in a simplified political system.

Managing how you conduct business and communicate with your owners is often more time-consuming than the day-to-day affairs of your strata, but that's the key.

This is the business of the strata, so conduct it as a business. Property managers also experience the same time-consuming frustration with aggressive, demanding individuals.

The Act and bylaws give you some direction, though.

If an owner wants access to information, he or she must make a written request.

The strata must provide copies of those requested specifically listed the Act within 14 days of the request and the strata may charge up to 25 cents per page per copy.

If they want a hearing with council, as prescribed by your bylaws, they should formally request a hearing process with council.

Perhaps the history of your strata has created these problems so it might be time to amend your bylaws to include very specific procedures that address contacting council, hearings and distribution of council minutes.

As owners they have the right to access the information, but they do not have the right to abuse your generosity in volunteering for their benefit.

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