

## Strata Living

Headline: The militant chairperson  
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**Dear Tony:** At our annual meeting in August a number of resolutions to cut down trees in our complex were presented by council. They were included with the notice, and they were set up as three quarters vote resolutions. All of those requirements were properly met, but when the resolutions came up on the agenda, the president, who was chairing the meeting, refused any discussion and insisted that the owners, without any debate, go straight to the vote. Several owners raised questions that were seen by the strata council as a challenge to their authority, so those owners were ordered by the chairperson to sit down. Our meeting ended up in a screaming match between owners and the chairperson with the meeting being adjourned for 1 week so the council could get some assistance. The result a week later was no better and the strata president ended the meeting without a vote. We have had a history of issues with this person as our president, but he always seemed to get elected, and we have no way of dealing with the confrontation.

*Marjorie S. Langley*

**Dear Marjorie:** The role of the chairperson at general meetings is to facilitate the proceedings to ensure compliance with the Strata Property Act, The Regulations and the Bylaws of your strata corporation, and to ensure fairness, access, and balance to the proceedings. As strata owners we often are

given the impression that the president of council or chairperson of the meeting has some extraordinary power or authority. That is not the case. While we elect these persons to fulfill particular tasks, we can also remove them from these tasks. The authority of the meeting rests within the voting quorum who attend the meeting. Section 50 of the Act stipulates that matters are decided by a majority vote at general meetings, unless a three quarters vote or unanimous vote is required. Apply that provision to the procedures of meetings and many issues will be much easier to manage. For example, the time when a vote is taken may be determined by motion of the owners and majority vote. If the owners by majority vote wish to continue discussion on a resolution, that is the privilege of the owners. If the chairperson ends debate without the consent of the owners, the owners may challenge the chair, and by majority vote overturn the decision of the chair continuing debate. The chair person does not have the final word. While the chair may have the obligation to decide whether a procedure at a meeting is within the Act or the bylaws of the strata, the chair is still subject to the voting authority of the owners to determine the outcomes.

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