

Strata Living

Headline: Why do we elect scrutineers?

Topic: Annual General Meeting / Special General Meeting

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Dear Tony: at our annual meeting last Saturday, a resolution came up that required a secret ballot. Before the resolution vote was called, an owner demanded a secret ballot. At first the president refused; however, one owner brought our bylaws which require a secret ballot if any eligible voter requests a secret ballot. Fortunately our secretary came well prepared, as a result of attending one of the CHOA workshops, and we had ballots, a voting box and voting booth. When voting was complete the president, who chaired the meeting, picked up the box and was about to leave the room to count ballots, but he was challenged by the owners and stopped from leaving the room. We requested scrutineers being appointed and the president chose his wife and they counted the ballots at the front of the room, and then reported the outcome with the resolution passing. To avoid these confrontations, how could this have been handed better?

Tracey Dawes

scrutineers, by majority vote. Scrutiny implies a close and continuous watching or guarding. Appointing scrutineers indicates that the strata corporation has a formal process for the counting and reporting of ballots and the outcome. If there are differing factions in a community, having scrutineers from both interests will greatly reduce conflict and suspicion over the voting procedures. In addition, by doing so the corporation will have voted for the scrutineers appointment and granted them the authority to count the votes and report the results. Great care should be taken to ensure voting procedures are transparent. Only voters should place their own ballots in a ballot box, and the ballots should be counted in the room in front of the eligible voters. Then the chairperson announces the result of the vote reported by the scrutineers. Don't forget, these procedures and decisions also need to be reported in your minutes.

Dear Tracey: the underlying fundamental at annual or special general meetings is that matters are decided by majority vote, unless a different voting threshold is required, like a 3-4 or unanimous vote. Either at the beginning of a meeting or before a resolution vote is called, eligible voters or the president may put forward individuals who are elected to act as

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