

Creating and Using Agendas

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Although the statutes have little to say about the “agenda” for association meetings, they are generally expected both by the law and by those attending. Agendas are also a very useful tool to keep the meeting orderly, focused, and moving.

Agendas are usually created by the Board’s Secretary but any other officer or designee of the President may do so instead if requested, customary, or required by the association’s bylaws. They are intended to provide the most general possible outline for the various items of business to be taken up during the meeting and the proposed order of doing so. They also serve the additional purpose of providing advance notice to the unit owners under Connecticut law, which requires that agendas be:

- mailed, e-mailed, or delivered to each unit owner at least 10 days before all annual and special meetings of unit owners;
- mailed, e-mailed, or delivered to each unit owner at least 10 days before any board meeting at which a rule change will be considered;
- as of October 1, 2013 under Public Act 13-289, made “available” to each board member and the unit owners at least 48 hours before any meeting included in an advance schedule distributed to the unit owners; and
- mailed, e-mailed, or delivered to each unit owner at least 5 days before any regular or special board meeting which is not included in an advance schedule distributed to the unit owners and at which rule changes will not be considered.

The bylaws of many associations contain a specific “order of business” for unit owner meetings which are used to formulate their agendas. They would typically include:

- Roll call or check-in.
- Proof of notice of meeting.
- Reading of Minutes of preceding meeting.
- Reports.
- Establish number and term of memberships of the Executive Board, if needed.
- Election of inspectors of election, if needed.

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- Election of members of the Executive Board, if needed.
- Ratification of Budget, if needed.
- Unfinished business.
- New business.

State law also requires the agenda for a unit owner’s meeting to additionally include: “(A) a statement of the general nature of any proposed amendment to the declaration or bylaws, (B) any budget changes, and (C) any proposal to remove an officer or member of the executive board.” Agendas for board meetings are often simpler than those for annual unit owner meetings, with specific day-to-day topics to be addressed as they have arisen since the last meeting. “Unfinished business” refers to matters which were specifically raised but not resolved at the prior meeting, while “new business” refers to any matters being raised for the first time. Although individual unit owners generally cannot force the Board to include a specific item on an agenda for any kind of meeting, many associations will designate a “public comment” period during which unit owners have a legal right to raise any issue they wish which relates to the association or its affairs.

According to Robert’s Rules of Order, dispensing with certain technicalities related to agendas is typically accomplished by consensus or even automatically absent objection. Common examples include literally reading the minutes verbatim, proving notice of the meeting, and formal voting to take items in a different order as that listed in the agenda. On the other hand, a discussion which is dragging off topic or a major departure from the agenda can be quickly remedied by someone making a “call for the orders of the day,” which obligates the President to stick to the agenda unless two-thirds of the participants vote not to. Whether or not on the agenda, the meeting concludes either when a motion to adjourn is made, seconded, and passed by majority vote, or instead when the President declares the meeting adjourned after asking for any further business and hearing none.

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