

## Questions for Board Candidates

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### Question #1

Which of the following statements represents your view on the current state of the POA and why?

1. We have a good POA. We don't need to change anything.
2. We have a good POA. We should strive to make it better.
3. We have serious issues to fix in our POA

We were all aware the Board was given a handful from Patten and the first year was going to be a challenge. The Board hit some bumps, made some missteps, learned lessons, made progress, and gained experience.

I was not part of the Board, so I am not privy to all the work that has been done. Based on what I do know, the Board has worked hard and accomplished some of the initiatives they set out to, but the end goal is still quite a distance away.

Whether I feel the current state of the POA is good or not, our goal should always be to make it better.

### Question #2

The following is one definition of POA transparency with the community. What is your definition of transparency and do you believe POA transparency with the community is important?

*Transparency, as it applies to a POA, is operating openly, visibly, and with integrity; being reliably honest and forthcoming about services, maintenance, decisions, and funding, and as such, it promotes a partnership with all property owners. All of a POA's actions should be scrupulous enough to bear public scrutiny. A transparent POA invites property owners to open meetings, welcomes their input and feedback, keeps community websites updated, and promotes public two-way communications.*

I agree that transparency, as it applies to a POA, is operating openly, visibly, and with integrity; it is free from pretense or deceit. A transparent POA promotes a two-way conversation between the Board and the owners so there can be open and honest discussions pertaining to the community. You build trust as leaders when others don't have to guess why a decision was made, when they can be open and honest with constructive feedback, and when they know you won't go back on your word or will let them know if you need to change directions.

Creating the Communications and IT Subcommittee and launching the TGR POA website were good initial steps towards transparency, but there is still a lot of work to be done in this area.

The onus is not solely on the Board to be transparent; it is also on the members of the association. The Board should provide information and updates and the community must provide information back to the Board. This can be in the form of constructive feedback, suggestions for projects, or responses to requested information (i.e., surveys). There can only be a two-way conversation if both parties are engaged.

The benefits of transparency include increased trust, dedication, and involvement, but extreme transparency can cause issues. Not all information should be made public, such as pending or threatened litigation, contract negotiations, enforcement actions, etc.

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### Question #3

How should a POA handle situations where a majority of board members are opposed to an action but the majority of property owners are in favor of that action? For example: The board is opposed to building a tennis court but a survey with 1200 respondents indicates 75% are in favor of a building a tennis court.

The POA is, by definition, the association of the property owners. It is not a select few pushing their own agenda. As a board member elected by the property owners, my responsibility would be to represent them. If 75% of the property owners have expressed interest in an action as determined by a quantitative source such as a survey, the Board should do their due diligence and research the impact of said action. This would include considering all aspects of the ask including cost – both short-term and long-term, logistics, need, maintenance, safety, and liability. These findings, including where the money would come from (cash reserves or increased dues), should be publicly presented in detail to the owners with an opportunity to ask questions ensuring they understand the research results. Armed with the information to make an informed decision, the owners should be asked again via survey if they are in favor of the action. If the results of the 2nd survey still indicate a high-level of interest, the Board should act accordingly. The by-laws, as currently written, give the Board considerable flexibility in spending POA funds, although there are limitations regarding what they can vote on outside an open board meeting which prior notice was given to the owners.

### Question #4

Should a survey of property owners indicate a solid majority wants open public two-way communications between the board and the community, please describe the specific methods you would use to accomplish this task. What safeguards, if any, would you propose to ensure all communications are done in a respectful manner?

*“Two-way communication” can be public or private with a one-on-one interaction with the board. Both public and private communication have advantages and disadvantages. Currently everyone has one-on-one private communication with the board such that any sensitive or personal information is not broadcast to everyone as in a public communication. Public one-on-one communication by definition will allow everyone to see your business and ask questions. Be aware that this public communication comes with a caveat.*

I do not have a plan to implement two-way communication currently, but I am interested in working with the Communications and IT Subcommittee to find an appropriate solution. My understanding is the subcommittee was looking into various options to accomplish this goal. Before we formulate a plan, the new Board should understand the work already done and review all the information collected.

I do think there should be a two-way communication channel between the Board and the community. Giving the community an avenue to publicly ask questions, provide feedback, or express opinions would contribute to the transparency the owners want. I believe hearing varying perspectives and differing opinions, provided they are presented in a constructive and productive manner, is essential to ensuring the Board acts in the best interest of the community. If the Board is to represent the entire community of property owners, those owners should have a way to make their voice heard. I don't know that there is a perfect solution, so we would need to weigh the pros and cons of each option.

Some of the safeguards to prevent or limit disrespectful communications may depend on what is available within the technology chosen. Outside of what is available within the technology, the Communications Subcommittee should draft unambiguous rules and boundaries that all users must accept and abide by. There should be a clear definition of the consequences of not adhering to the rules, such as deletion of the comment, suspension of commenting ability for a set amount of time, or permanent removal of privileges, as examples. We do need to remember that what is considered respectful/disrespectful by some readers would not be considered respectful/disrespectful by others. Respect isn't something that can be regulated. We should strive for civility and common courtesy.

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### Question #5

Please describe your approach in determining the appropriate level of community involvement in making board decisions. Give examples of when a “closed session board only” approach is appropriate and when a collaborative effort involving the community start to finish is appropriate.

Community involvement in every decision is impractical which is why the Board is elected as representatives. The Board is granted the authority to independently manage many areas of the POA, but where practical, they should try to include the community in decisions.

Examples where a closed session – Board only are appropriate would include contract negotiations, matters involving pending/threatened litigation or discussions with the Attorney, or enforcement actions.

Anything not legally required to be in a closed session should be open to the community to attend.

Our neighbors have a wide range of knowledge, experience, and skills that we could benefit from. For example, we have master gardeners in the neighborhood who could organize a group to beautify the Dipping Vat entrance. The more of the community we have involved, the more we can accomplish.

To be in a real community, not only do you need to care about the community, but you also need to care about and respect each other.

### Question #6

What guidelines would you recommend for determining the appropriate level of POA involvement? Please give examples of all three levels of involvement.

*There are various levels of POA involvement on issues of concern to the community. Direct involvement where the POA is responsible for an outcome; indirect involvement where it is clear the POA is not responsible for an outcome, but the board supports/coordinates efforts when in the best interest of the community. No involvement where the POA/board takes no action.*

The Board is required by TGR's By-Laws and Texas Law to manage specific affairs of the POA. These are areas the POA must be directly involved in and take ownership.

Indirect involvement is less black & white. Where there are items that impact either the entire community, or a significant subset, and the POA's influence could help drive results, it is in the best interest of TGR for the Board to be involved.

The POA should not be involved in items that do not impact the entire community or a significant subset.