Questions for Board Candidates

Name and Date: Ed Toufar   09.October.2023

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 have a good POA. However, we should strive to make it better.

The board should always strive to improve processes and work to make the community better. Any organization that accepts the status quo will fail.

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.

Transparency is important with any organization. Transparency builds trusts and ensure the POA puts integrity above self-interests. Being a board member requires transparency so the residents understand the POA board is representing the residents and community to ensure TGR maintains why people moved to TGR.

Integrity and transparency of POA board members is crucial to ensure the community can trust the POA is doing what is right for the community. To gain resident trust, a POA board must have processes in place that allow open communications between residents and the POA board. Without two-way communications, the POA will be ineffective and will lead to dissent within the community.

Questions for Board Candidates

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.

In the example given, it is important to define what type of community TGR wants to be. Does TGR want to become a "Master Planned Community" or does TGR want to maintain itself as an acreage community with limited amenities.

Another question that must be answered is out of the 1200 respondents, how many are current residents in the community. Why is this important? There are many lots in the community that people bought for an investment opportunity and could see making TGR a mastered planned community would increase their return on equity. However, for the people that moved to TGR as an acreage community, this creates dissension because TGR was never designed as a mater planned community.

What is important with this question is that the POA does not put their interests above the community's. See that 75% of the community wants tennis courts, a super majority of owners, then the POA has a responsibility to move forward with a cost analysis of what it will take to put in tennis courts. After the cost analysis is complete, the results must be presented to the community and a referendum can be held to decide if the project should move forward.

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.

First, the board should explain the ramifications of "open public communications," and not all matters can be discussed in an open public communication format per Section 5 of the current bylaws. Additionally, in a public communications format, something could be said unintentionally that offends someone, which could lead to a negative impact of the TGR neighborhood, and/or lawsuits.

However, if Open Public Communication plan is to be implemented, than strong rules surrounding what communications are allowed must be set. This includes the right of censorship and being barred from the POA open public communications format. While I do not believe in censorship, there must be professional communications when it comes to business matters, even when people do not agree with each other.

If open public communications is adopted, I have no preference as to a specific method. This would a situation where the community could recommend different methods, then the board meets and adopts one.

Questions for Board Candidates

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.

Day-to-day business, and issues that are sensitive or involve a member of the community are best performed in closed session board only discussions. When performing day-to-day business, the residents elected the board to perform these duties with community minimal involvement. Additionally, most people would agree discussing issues involving individual property owners should not be aired in front of other property owners. There is no need to shame our neighbors. Then there are special circumstances such as litigation that requires confidential communications.

Community collaboration is important when implementing changes that would impact POA fees and newly proposed projects where the board members have limited experience.
Using the tennis court example above, it will be important for community involvement to ensure the tennis courts meet the expectation of the community. Examples of involvement required:
Best place to locate the tennis courts.
Involve people that play tennis and have expertise that helps the board make an informed decision about the pros and cons of different style tennis courts.
Upkeep requirements.

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.

POA direct involvement is mandatory to ensure deed restrictions are followed so TGR remains a community where people want to move to and live in. The POA must periodically review the deed restrictions and ensure they are being applied equitably across all land owners or determine if deed restriction changes should be made to be more representative of the community we live in.

Indirect POA involvement would support /coordinate efforts to have a quarterly bulk trash pickup in the neighborhood. This could be held at one of the parks and gives the community the ability dispose of bulk items or trash from moving without having to make make a trip to the dump.

No POA involvement would apply to any activity that would not be a liability to the TGR community. Such activities include the TGR's OMG group, bunco groups, book club, and other social events held by groups in the community.