



STM Committee Training Note

Week commencing 21 November 2011

Advanced thinking and recommendations aids productivity

The Executive Committee's Guide to Better Owners Corporation Meetings

(Part 2 of 11 in this series)

Lawyers are taught never to ask a witness a question to which they don't know the answer. Preparing for a meeting is the same – you need to know the outcome before the motion is put in order to keep an owners corporation working well. Thinking and talking to key people ahead of a meeting helps achieve this.

Talking with the chairperson in setting the agenda is the start of this process. Agendas that push an outcome are helpful (see note 1 in this series).

Next you might suggest the chairperson canvass the other members with a phone call in advance of the meeting. Everyone likes to feel included. a quick call on a controversial issue ahead of the meeting will help get key people on board with the desired outcome.

These advance calls will also highlight otherwise hidden issues for investigation before the meeting. By flushing out concerns in advance the strata manager can investigate past history and other facts and circumstances that can ease the way for a motion to be passed rather than getting stuck in a meeting on unresolved detail.

A strata manager might use this advanced planning stage to let their feelings be known. Presenting this in writing may have more of an impact than presenting this view orally at the meeting, which can sometimes seem pushy.

For really big issues, like the awarding of a painting contract some sub committee sessions or less formal study sessions before a meeting can help the group get to a decision in the time allowed for an efficient meeting – generally thought to be no more than 2 hours.

Next week

Committee's can't do business in the kitchen – finding suitable times and places for meetings.

Adapted from Keatts, M. J. *'Conducting Meetings; A Guide to Running Productive Community Association Board Meetings'* (Community Associations Institute, United States, 1998) by Teys Lawyers Pty Ltd for STM.