



Keough & Moody wishes all of you a very happy holiday season! We thank you all for allowing us to be a part of your team and for your continued support in 2026!

Chuck Keough, Dawn Moody, and Gabby Comstock

Mr. Board President



You're a Mean One, Mr. Board President
You're a mean one
You really are unscrupulous
You act without approval
You assess fines that are ridiculous
Mr. Board President, you're a lousy leader
Mr. Board President, you should be the subject of a removal!

You're a bully
You do not listen to others
You speak so obscurely
You leave mothers
Shaking their heads
Mr. President!

You live in an association
Not in isolation
Mr. President, let's not rule with an iron fist
So we can all better coexist!

Mr. President, you're a bad banana
You're gonna spoil everything with your bad attitude
(Spoil everything)
Mr. President!

(*DISCLAIMER*: Not all Board Presidents are "Grinch" like! In fact, most are not.)



**THE IMPORTANCE OF ELECTING BOARD MEMBERS AND
OFFICERS WHO ARE NOT MR. GRINCH, EBENEZER SCROOGE,
OR BUDDY THE ELF, BUT INSTEAD ONE WHO CAN DELIVER ALL
THAT HAS BEEN PROMISED IN ONE YEAR LIKE (YOU GUESSED
IT) SANTA CLAUS**

As another year comes to an end, your association's books and records for 2025 are almost ready to be closed. Your association's budget for next year is in place, and coupon books are ready to be mailed out. In addition, your annual meeting recently occurred, and the board of directors for 2025-26 is in place. All that is left to be done is a quick vote of the officers. So, let's do that quickly and call it a wrap!

WAIT, NOT SO FAST!!

Selecting your officers has more of an impact on your community than most realize. Whether you are part of a condominium or a common interest community association, every community association must have officers. Officers are elected by the members of the board of directors. Typically, the board of directors for a community association consists of a president, secretary, and treasurer. Some bylaws require a vice president to be elected as well. When electing the officers for your community, consider the following before casting your vote.

President

Merriam-Webster defines president as an official chosen to preside over a meeting or assembly, and the chief officer of an organization, usually entrusted with the direction and administration of its policies. Like any organization, a community association needs a leader. While every board member has an equal vote and no greater power than another, a board president has a unique role and can truly set the tone for the community.

We are fortunate to work with many board presidents who have made such a difference for their community. As I write this article, I am thinking of a current board president who

has worked very hard to turn his/her association around. This person has served on the board of directors for his/her community for a very long time. He/She has never been afraid to express his/her opinions, and he/she has not always seen eye to eye with the majority (and he/she was not afraid to tell the majority why he/she thought they were wrong!) Recently, he/she was elected as board president. Upon being elected, this person's leadership traits exploded! This person was not focused on what his/her friends on the board or in the community wanted, but instead on what was best for the association. He/She tackles each issue with a focus on fairness and compliance with the documents. He/She makes decisions based on what is needed and, again, not because that is what his/her friends on the board want. His/her style has helped to bring what was once referred to as a divided board together to make decisions and move ahead.

The president of the association is the officer who must lead the community. Harvard Business School^[1] identifies the following characteristics for an effective leader:

1. Ability to influence others;
2. Transparency-to an extent;
3. Encourage risk-taking and innovation;
4. Integrity and accountability;
5. Act decisively; and
6. Demonstrate resilience.

As you elect the president of your board of directors, consider these characteristics. This position should be given to the person who can lead the association, and not just be the person who received the most votes!

Vice President

As stated, not all bylaws require an association to have a vice-president. The vice-president's primary role is to act in the place of the president when he/she is not able. For this reason, it is important to consider the characteristics identified above for an effective president when selecting the vice president.

The president I described above, who has helped to turn a board of directors around, closely works with an equally effective and strong vice-president. Before being elected as president and vice-president, these two persons rarely saw eye to eye and were not in the same "camp". Yet, as president and vice-president, they work together and focus on what is best for the community. Are they perfect? No—who is?! But they are leading their community onto a path of success. They are setting the tone for the association's board of directors that is positive for the entire community.

When electing the vice-president for your community association, be certain he/she has the same characteristics of an effective leader, and not the second-highest number of votes!

Treasurer

By definition, the treasurer is the officer entrusted with the receipt, care, and disbursement of funds. While most of these functions are delegated to the management company, for those associations that are professionally managed, it is important for the treasurer to still play an active role. That is, even for the professionally managed association, the treasurer should be ready to do more than sign or approve checks. It is important for this person to review the financial records and to understand what the records say. For a professionally managed association, the treasurer does not have to perform the day-to-day functions related to the receipt and disbursement of funds, but he/she must be ready to act as another set of eyes on the association's finances. This person does not have to be an accountant. He/She just must be ready to dive into the financial records, understand them, and ask questions—including the hard ones!

Secretary

The secretary is the officer who is responsible for the keeping of the corporate records. Typically, this person is responsible for the taking of minutes at the meetings of the board

of directors and providing required notices to the owners. Like the treasurer, for a professionally managed association, most of the duties of a secretary are delegated to the management company (or to a recording secretary). Yet, also like the treasurer, the secretary should be involved and work with management to ensure that notices are timely sent out and accurate minutes are taken and kept. Like the other officers described above, the secretary should be someone who is organized, has a general understanding of what is considered to be a timely notice, and is not afraid to ask questions and remind management when something has to be mailed.

While these officers are elected by their fellow board members, members of the association still play a key role in ensuring only effective persons are placed in these officer positions. After all, for both condominium and community associations, the officers must be members of the board of directors. Hence, when casting your vote for the members of the board of directors, vote for the candidate that is most qualified to serve in one of these roles, not just the person you like the most (or the person who has made unrealistic promises).

*[1] Lauren Landry, 6 Characteristics of an Effective Leader, October 4, 2018,
<https://online.hbs.edu/blog/post/characteristics-of-an-effective-leader>*

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Naperville
630-369-2700

Chicago
312-899-9989

www.kmlegal.com
info@kmlegal.com

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Keough & Moody, P.C.,
114 East Van Buren, Naperville, IL 60540



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