

# Cover your "Ass(ets)"! A practical guide to protecting you and your community

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### What "ass(ets)" are we talking about here?

#### Among other things:

- Property itself
- Operating and reserve accounts
- Manager/management company liability
- Association liability
- Individual Board member liability

- Insurance
  - Section 12 of the Illinois Condominium Property Act requires that an association maintain insurance on the common elements, including the limited common elements and portions of the units
    - Coverage B demolition costs
    - Coverage C increased costs of construction
  - Declaration sets forth insurance requirements for non-condos

- Insurance
  - Have you reviewed your policy with your insurance professional?
  - Does your policy comply with the ICPA or your Declaration?
  - Is your association insured for the full replacement value?
    - Lawsuit filed against insurance carrier as building was not insured for full replacement value
      - Maine Township condo association sues insurance company after fatal 2018 fire - Chicago Tribune

- Insurance
  - What about owner insurance?
    - Are the governing documents or rules clear as to what insurance owners must maintain?
      - All attached homes are **not** governed by the ICPA
    - Is the association collecting certificates of insurance (and fining for noncompliance)?
    - Is the Board reminding its owners to review their insurance policies with their agent to confirm they are fully protected?



- Maintenance, repair, and replacement
  - Perform it!
    - Not wanting to spend money is not a reason to ignore maintenance concerns
  - Be aware of the condition of your property
  - Utilize professionals to assess the condition of your property
    - Reserve studies or condition assessments
      - Appropriately plan and budget based off of this information

- Maintenance, repair, and replacement
  - Engage qualified vendors to perform work
    - Licensed, insured, reputable
  - Execute contracts which protect the association and require the contractor to warrant his/her/its work
    - Utilize your attorney!



- Adopt (and enforce)
  Rules and Regulations to protect the property
  - Insurance requirements
  - Architectural improvement requirements
  - Use restrictions
    - Grills, fire pits, etc.

#### Operating and reserve accounts

- Ensure that the association has the property fidelity coverage
- Require dual signatures for reserve expenditures
- Ensure that funds being held do not exceed FDIC limits
- Properly invest reserve funds
- Review your bank statements!

### Manager/Management Company Liability

- Be familiar with your contractual obligations to an association
  - Where can you get in trouble? Acting outside of the scope of your agreement!
    - How to stop that
- Understand your professional obligations
  - What should you and what should you not be doing?
    - How to communicate that to Board members

### Manager/Management Company Liability

- Respect yourself and your role as a licensed community association manager
  - Give your professional advice (knowing that the Board may not take it)
  - Don't get caught up in the drama or the internalpolitics
  - Take additional steps to protect yourself and your license
    - Pay attention to that red flag
    - Learn the art of the confirmation email

## **Association Liability**

- Insurance
  - Commercial General Liability Insurance
  - Directors' & Officers' Insurance
  - Workers' Compensation Insurance
    - Ensure you have it
    - Periodically review to make sure that this insurance fits the needs of the Association



#### **Association Liability**

- Understand the role of the association and the Board's responsibilities
  - Review and be familiar with governing documents and applicable law (ICPA, CICAA, NFP Corporation Act, etc.)
  - Know what you are there to do
- Fulfill the association's responsibilities
  - Don't get caught up with issues which are **not** the association's responsibility
- Communicate with your members

#### **Association Liability**

- Create a good team
  - Manager, attorney, accountant, engineer, insurance professional, other vendors
    - Understand their contractual responsibilities and be respectful of their ethical/professional obligations
    - Listen to their advice even if it is not what you want to hear (although there is nothing wrong with a qualified second opinion)
- Know when to call on those team members
  - Don't wait too long
- Adopt policies and procedures, including checks and balances on authority
- Always focus on the issue, not the person/personalities

#### **Board Member Liability**

- Understand your role you too are part of a team and cannot generally make unilateral decisions
- Understand what it means to serve as a Board member and your fiduciary role
  - Acting in the best interest of all of your members not yourself!
- Do not use your position to extract vengeance or favors
- Do not put anything in writing that you do not want to have read aloud at a deposition