



# Neighborhood Insider

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## Answers from Amanda



**Q: Do Board "working sessions" need to be noticed to all homeowners?**

**A:** To organize future Board meeting agendas, Boards of Directors may conduct working sessions in order to facilitate this process. These sessions can be very helpful for organizational purposes and add assurance that the applicable Board meetings run smoother and may even take less time. The most asked question in regard to these working sessions is do they require the same notification to

homeowners as the regular Board Meetings. We must look to the Open Meeting Statutes to find the answer.

Per A.R.S. §33-1804, Board of Directors meetings must be open to homeowners except when the portion of the meeting relates to any one or more of the following:

1. Legal advice from an attorney for the Board or the Association.
2. Pending or contemplated litigation.
3. Personal, health or financial information about an individual

member of the Association, an individual employee of the Association or an individual employee of a contractor for the Association.

4. Matters relating to the job performance of, compensation of, health records of or specific complaints against an individual employee of the Association or an individual employee of a contractor of the Association who works under the direction of the Association.

A meeting of the Board is considered to take place if a majority of the Board is present and Association business is being discussed. It does not matter that no voting occurs or no action by the Board is taken – it is still considered a meeting of the Board. Given this, working sessions for planning purposes would fall under this description and would thus require notification to the homeowners about the session.

Refer to your community's governing documents for meeting notification requirements, but note that unless otherwise mentioned in the governing documents, Arizona Statute requires that notice of the meetings be provided to homeowners at least 48 hours prior to the meeting by conspicuous posting such as on a postcard, website or signs within the community.

**Amanda Shaw, President of AAM, LLC**

## SERVICE SPOTLIGHT: Executive Team

Meet the AAM Executive Team! With more than 135 years of collective industry experience, the AAM Executive Team is dedicated to delivering total peace of mind to you and your community members.

**Laura Ziff, Founder and CEO** – With more than 20 years experience in property management, Laura Ziff has been involved in all aspects of the industry, from real estate sales and leasing to monitoring a \$50 million loan-servicing portfolio for a financial institution. Given her passion for educating her staff and clients about the finer points of community association management, it comes as no surprise that Laura spent nearly a decade as a teacher before founding Associated Asset Management in 1990.

**Amanda Shaw, President** - As AAM's President, Amanda Shaw is at the helm of the company, guiding its daily operations and charting the course for reaching even greater heights in the areas of customer service and industry expertise. Formerly General Manager, Amanda was appointed President in January 2004. A Certified Public Accountant, she brings more than 15 years of financial and development experience to her leadership position with AAM and has been involved with residential development for nearly a decade.

**Kevin DeBolske, Executive Vice President/Chief Financial Officer** - Kevin DeBolske joined AAM in 1996 as controller, and for many years, was the company's sole Certified Public Accountant. Over the years, he has taken on increased responsibility and has been promoted to the position of Executive Vice President/Chief Financial Officer. Today, he is joined by two other CPAs on the AAM team.

**Nancy Larson, Executive Vice President of Operations/Human Resources** - Since joining AAM in 1996 as Executive Assistant to the President, Nancy Larson has been promoted to the positions of Office Manager and most recently, Executive Vice President of Operations/Human Resources. As her title suggests, she is directly responsible for the firm's daily operations, as well as developing and implementing a wide range of employee policies and procedures.

**Ercell Sherman, Executive Vice President/Chief Operating Officer** – Ercell Sherman brings more than 20 years of experience to his position on the AAM Executive Team. Since joining the company in 2000, he has served in a number of high-profile positions, including Community Manager, Vice President of Special Projects and most recently, Executive Vice President.

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## Service Spotlight continued

**Susan Platner, Vice President of Community Management** - Since joining the company in 1999, Susan Platner has served as a Portfolio Manager, Trainer and an Area Manager. She was appointed to the management team as Vice President of Customer Service in 2006 and assumed the role of Vice President of Community Management in 2007.

**Scott Swanson, Vice President of Information Technology** - Scott Swanson joined the company in May 2003 from Meritage Corporation, one of the nation's largest homebuilders. His responsibilities at AAM include maintaining the company's extensive computer network and ensuring the system is serving AAM and its clients to the greatest degree.

**Joel Kramer, Partner** - Longtime Arizona residents may recognize Joel Kramer's name as a member of the Phoenix Suns NBA team during the late 1970s and early '80s. Since then, he has been a practicing Certified Public Accountant, most recently as Business Unit President of CBIZ Accounting, Tax & Advisory Services LLC. In 2005, he joined AAM as a Partner, and plays an active role in strategic long-term planning and business development.

**James LeDuc, Vice President of On-Site Community Management** - James LeDuc brings more than 30 years of community management experience to the AAM Executive Team. His career started in the '70s managing residential resort developments and includes oversight of projects considered developments of regional impact, as well as large-scale master-planned and age-restricted communities.

**Vicki Sears, Vice President of Customer Service** - Vicki Sears is an 18-year real estate industry veteran. She joined AAM in 1998 and has served as the company's Training Manager, an Area Manager and most recently, as Director of Community Services. As Vice President of Customer Service, she is responsible for ensuring that homeowner issues are handled effectively and efficiently.

**Steen Stencil, Vice President of Development Services** - Steena Stencil has been involved in property development, real estate and management for more than 20 years. Since she joined AAM in 1997 as a Community Manager, she has served as an On-Site Manager of a Del Webb active adult community, On-Site Manager of large master planned communities, an Area Manager and most recently as Director of Special Projects.

## NEWS YOU CAN USE: Resolving Conflict

Let's face it. Nobody ever enjoys conflict, but into every HOA an occasional bit of conflict must fall. Here are a few helpful reminders to keep in mind when an issue with a disgruntled homeowner arises:

- 1. HEAR THE ANGRY HOMEOWNER OUT.** Always allow a homeowner to let off steam and air his or her complaints.
- 2. EMPATHIZE.** Put yourself in the homeowner's shoes. Demonstrate that you understand where he or she is coming from.
- 3. APOLOGIZE.** Apologize for the problem and the homeowner's dissatisfaction – even if you don't agree with him or her.
- 4. TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACTION.** Work with the homeowner to find a solution to his or her problem. Address the CC&R's and Rules and Regulations for the Community as it relates the problem. Take action to ensure that the solution is realized and the homeowner understands the solution so they can be satisfied with the outcome.
- 5. ACCEPT THAT YOU CAN'T ELIMINATE CONFLICT – YOU CAN ONLY MANAGE IT.** Conflict is inherent in our industry and is truly unavoidable. How we deal with it is up to us. Realize that the issue is not personal and do your best to find the best resolution for all involved.



### DID YOU KNOW: Holiday Lights

Did you know that HOA rules governing individual holiday light displays can be as varied as the displays themselves?

Before you purchase or display any outdoor holiday decorations this year, be sure to check your community's governing documents for guidelines specifying display type, location and duration. If you still have questions, consult your Community Manager. Happy holidays!

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