



SPRING 2020

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-Compiled from
Davidson Law and Robson Carpenter



We think it goes without saying that the novel coronavirus and related risks surrounding Covid-19 have “turned the world upside down”. We have been put into uncharted territory and a learn as we go journey. Condominiums are very much involved because condominiums typically involve meetings and social gatherings and people living in close community.

The recommendations from multiple health organizations to enact social distancing, has resulted in most CCI chapters to making the difficult decision to postpone or cancel meetings, seminars and Conferences. We felt it was our responsibility to you - our community - to keep everyone healthy and safe.

Various pieces of legislation require condominiums to ensure that the property is safe for different groups of people, including the *Condominium Act, 1993*, *Occupier's Liability Act*, and the *Occupational Health & Safety Act*. There are unique legal issues depending upon the specific group. For instance, condominiums with employees may wish to seek out legal advice about their duties and rights with respect to employees.

The *Condominium Act, 1993*, also requires the condominium to manage the property and assets of the condominium. While the condominium should be taking steps to minimize the spread of communicable diseases on the common elements, the condominium does not have a duty to manage the inside of the units or the owners absent exceptional circumstances. Most feel, COVID-19 is unlikely to be one of those exceptional circumstances based upon the PHAC's determination that it is a low risk to Canadians currently and no quarantine orders have been made.

There have been questions about quarantines. This is a complex legal issue and there are differing opinions about the likelihood of widespread quarantines like we have seen in other countries. In Canada border officials and other public health officials do have the authority to quarantine individuals infected with, or suspected to be infected with, COVID-19. Condominiums need to be aware that Public Health Officials can make orders requiring the closure of buildings, increased cleaning or sanitizing, and posting of notices. If a condominium receives an order or is contacted by a Public Health Official, it is recommended that they seek legal advice as it is an offence to contravene an order and the fines are significant.

There have been questions about the cost of some of the precautions being recommended, such as additional cleaning or sanitizing of the common elements. Most of the costs are proper operating costs of the condominium and would not require notice or approval of the owners, even if the service was not provided previously. The *Condominium Act, 1993*, permits condominiums to make a change in services if, in the opinion of the board, it is necessary to ensure the safety or security of persons using the property. If the work is required due to an order from Public Health Officials, it would also be covered by the Act.

[Coronavirus in Condos](#) by Condo Advisor

[Considerations for Condo AGMs and the Impact of Coronavirus](#) by Lash Condo Law

There is so much that is not known about COVID-19 and so much misinformation available online. Seek out reputable sources. Be smart. Remain calm and do not panic. Keep in mind that while you may not be concerned about it, your neighbour could have a compromised immune system that puts them at greater risk. Be considerate. Take steps to reduce the risks. Be reasonable. This too will pass.

More reliable information is available here:

[Government of Canada](#)

[Government of Saskatchewan](#)



WHY IS UNIT OWNER CONDOMINIUM INSURANCE SO IMPORTANT?

-Marc Kelly Kanuka Thuringer

If you have never lived in a condominium (and sometimes even if you have), you may not be aware that, with some small exceptions, a condominium corporation gets insurance for the building and unit improvements up to the standard unit description. However, there are still gaps in that insurance, and my advice is generally to obtain a unit owners' condominium insurance policy to cover those gaps.

Why is it important? It can protect your stuff, but more importantly, it can protect you from screw ups that you may not have even caused.

The decision of *CH Condo Corp v. Payam*, 2019 SKPC 70 gives us a recent example of the importance of this insurance. The condominium corporation went to Provincial Court (small claims) and used Section 65(6) of the Condominium Property Act to claim that a unit owner owed them the deductible for an insurance claim that they needed to make to repair damages that started from the unit that the unit owner was responsible for.

The facts of the case, as far as I can distill them:

- Owner bought this unit brand new as a rental property.

- The condensate line was not hooked up to the furnace or A/C when the place was bought. It seemed to cause water to escape flood the units below. The owner and tenant were unaware of this problem.
- Condominium Corp used insurance for repair, paid deductible, and sought compensation from unit owner.
- Neither party had overwhelming evidence of the cause. Owner thought that problem was possibly due to weather. Condo corporation could not be sure that the water was from the lines, but the problem stopped after the line was hooked up. On balance of probabilities, the court decided it was from the line.
- Owner was decided as NOT being negligent by failing to hook it up.
- Despite that – owner was still deemed responsible. While it wasn't negligent, it was still an "act or omission" that allowed the corporation to pursue the costs of the deductible from the unit owner.
- Judgment was granted in the amount of the deductible, plus some court costs.

So, unit owner bought something that he was entitled to expect that was installed correctly, but still responsible for the deductible for the damage that it caused.

The court specifically commented on the availability of consumer insurance that could be purchased in this case to have covered that loss. It also commented that they could explore a claim as against the developer or trade person that installed the furnace.

The national trend with condominium corporation insurance is that it is becoming more expensive. One method of controlling that cost is to increase the deductibles per claim. It reduces the risk associated with the main policy. Whereas deductibles of \$5,000-\$10,000 are common locally, I have seen examples that have significant exceeded that. Nationwide, I have heard from colleagues of situations where deductibles have been increased \$100,000+.

Accordingly, the risk to the individual owner is going to increase. The condominium corporation is going to try and pass deductible costs on to the unit owner, and the unit owner insurance policies would be the best form of defence from a surprise \$10,000 bill (or more).

However, one aspect of the decision that perplexed me is the description of the furnace room as “part of the unit”. In my experience, it is more common that those types of furnace rooms are set up as exclusive use common property, and not as a portion of the unit. I was curious enough to search the condominium plan, but it was not totally clear to me where exactly the furnace room was located relative to the plan.

It stood out to me because the court in its reasons reviewed the blueprints from the purchase agreement, and not the condominium plan, to determine unit boundaries, and that can often lead to confusion. Developers often include exclusive use common property in those drawings, without a distinction of the differing types of property ownership. However, it may be that the court was reviewing the plan but called it “blueprints”. Clarity on this point may or may not have affected the decision, but it is important to understanding rights and responsibilities of ownership.

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Are board members qualified to approve insurance policies?

BFL Canada Realty Team

Q: Are board members qualified to approve insurance policies?

A: From a qualification perspective, condominium board members are typically not licensed brokers, risk managers nor insurance professionals. They are people from varying backgrounds, bringing different views to the table. The situation is similar for property managers as they do not automatically have qualified insurance professionals on their team. Although some board members are getting experienced at purchasing insurance coverages, it is important to keep in mind that providing an opinion on a certificate or policy can put the board at risk of legal action from a unit owner incurring financial loss due to incorrect information received. Boards have a fiduciary responsibility to select service providers that are better suited to represent the best interest of their unit owners alongside the property manager. These decisions are not to be made lightly as they can have important consequences.

Therefore, the approval of insurance policies should be a combined effort between the board, the property manager, and the insurance broker. They all have specific roles in the transaction: the board is the purchaser, the property manager is hired to provide the board with advice and alternate insurance options, and the insurance broker is present to inform both parties.

One of the objectives of insurance professionals is to educate the board and property manager about the available products and services by attending board meetings and, periodically, annual general meetings. This presence and availability allow both the board and property managers to get strong educational tools, easy-to-digest information as well as unbiased and qualified resources. The insurance professionals also provide clients with highly detailed infographics, presentations tailored to the audience and customized content to make sure that the information presented is clear, simple, and adapted to their knowledge base. It helps bridge the gap and puts the board in a better position to make informed decisions.

Insurance brokers are quite active within the industry. The partnerships that we have developed from the condo specialist law firms to the appraisal houses and even to various levels of government gives a strong presence of credibility as an advisor and service provider in the face of our Property Manager partners and clients alike. This is an important asset for the Boards as they continue to educate themselves on insurance requirements.



The Insurance Brokers Association of Saskatchewan is a voluntary, membership-based organization, comprised of more than 95% of the independent

insurance brokers operating in 249 different communities across the province. IBAS represents the interests of its members to government, the insurance industry, as well as the public at-large. It promotes excellence in service and training to ensure consumers benefit from the highest levels of professional knowledge and ethical representation available in the marketplace.

Time for the Spring Walk Around Or Condo Maintenance Checklist

-originally in our 2018 Condo Voice

Although this is a different Spring, there are still things the Board must do annually around the complex. Whether Property managed or self managed this should be done as early as possible after the winter ends. It's good to have the checklist ready:

Buildings: Look for sagging gutters, loose window frames, deteriorating concrete or brickwork, missing roof shingles, or water damage under them. Look for evidence of water ponding around building foundations. Fill and regrade for positive drainage. Ponding on walkways can be cured by clearing ground drains or installing drain tile pipe to carry water away.

Roof and gutters: Is anything obvious that needs repairing or cleaning? Note any areas that have moss buildup so that moss killer can be applied during the summer. It is recommended that you have a roofing contractor do the roof and flashing inspection. The gutters and downspouts probably need a post winter cleaning.

Siding and trim: Do any popped nails need to be secured? Check the caulking joints around the windows, doors and trim. More than likely some have opened and need to be caulked. It's very important to seal all points of water intrusion. Is any paint peeling? Check the south sides or those likely to receive more weather. Scrape bad areas, prime and spot paint, unless you're planning a project-wide painting this year.

Landscaping: Saskatchewan winters can cause a lot of damage to your property. Clean up fallen branches and leaves. Use a mulching mower to spread clippings evenly over the lawn and fertilize naturally. Loosen the soil around perennials, plant annuals or a vegetable garden. Prune shrubs and trees; repair sprinkler systems. Clean out ground and storm drains.

Turn on Outside Water: Hook up the hoses and inspect for cracks or leaks. Replace old washers.

Windows: Wash and repair caulking.

Check Exterior Vents: Make sure all exhaust fans are clean and remove lint buildup from the clothes dryer vents.

Repair Fences: Winter rains can change existing grade contours. Other than the posts, there should be no earth to wood contact which will promote dry rot and insect infestation. Check the posts to ensure they are solid and replace any that have dry rot. Use only metal, redwood, cedar or pressure treated posts. Look for signs of sprinkler overspray on fences and adjust spray heads accordingly. Repair broken fence boards and paint or seal them as needed.

Lighting: Check common area lighting for broken, cracked, or rusting fixtures. Consider upgrading older lighting to amore efficient type. The light levels will increase dramatically, and the power bills will plummet.

Sprinkler System: Walk the common area landscaping with your landscape contractor. Check the sprinkler system for broken pipes, missing or broken heads, and clogged valves. Splash blocks can be added where downspouts dump into landscaped areas. Look for wet, spongy areas in the lawn indicative of drainage problems. If severe enough, the landscaper can install drain tile pipe to dry the area out. Check for bare spots or pests in the lawn and ground cover.

Trees: Trees are one of your biggest assets and should be closely inspected at least every three years by an arborist. Your landscape contractor only contracts to do maintenance pruning. Have the arborist perform corrective care.

Furnace: Have it checked before you shut it down and you'll have a head start for Fall.

Air Conditioner: Have your air conditioner inspected to see if it's ready for summer. While you can do the basic cleaning on your own, hire a professional to check your coolant levels and perform some basic maintenance before firing up the A/C for a long, hot summer.

This should give you a good start but don't forget indoors as well.

Come on summer!



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CCI-SS Chapter Updates:

We regularly answer questions from members, but the information provided by the CCI-South Saskatchewan Board is for general information purposes only.

We are not able to answer questions which involve disputes or legal issues.

Please submit questions via email to cci-ssk@cci.ca.
Please note the following restrictions:

- We cannot comment on legal matters.
- We cannot comment on cases already in court.
- The information provided is compiled by and is the best knowledge of our volunteer Board based solely on the facts provided to us. Additional facts or future changes to applicable legislation may alter the information that we provided to you. For advice, you must seek professional assistance which we will be happy to direct you to.
- We have made updates this quarter to our website: ccisouthsaskatchewan.ca:
- Under the Resources tab we have embedded the National Resources from across Canada.
- Our site now opens at the News page, so issues of importance are easy to find.
- Don't forget to visit our Facebook page for articles and posts as well. We try to post every few days.

COVID-19 WEBINAR QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Marc Kelly & Jamie Herle

Money is tight – what can we do?

Budget

- Budget may need to be amended to reflect increase in costs or decrease in services.
- You can consider changing the payment term of the assessment to allow for the delay in payments.
- Must be offered equally.
- Do not make knee jerk reactions without all necessary information.

Can I use Reserve fund?

- Section 55(3) and 61 of the Act restrict what may use the Reserve Fund for
 - Pursuant to section 111 you can be fined up to \$2000 for misusing the reserve funds
 - However, if you access these funds, you may want to change reserve fund contributions, and/or provide note in estoppel regarding its use.

Seek professional advice on your specific circumstances and bylaws to ensure you are acting reasonably and diligently.

Dealing with condo noise

—Bob Rimrott acoustical engineer

I've got a humming noise in my condominium and its driving me crazy. What can I do about it?

This is a more common complaint than what you might think. The following provides some of the steps and possible resolutions that we generally see. This is usually conducted by an acoustical engineer retained by the condominium corporation.

1. Is it really a problem?

In a multi-suite condominium building, there should be an expectation that each suite will experience noises consistent with having several adjacent neighbours. Each resident, however, has the right to his/her enjoyment of their home without excessive noise. Usually, the opinion of an acoustical expert is provided to determine if the noise intrusion is or isn't a problem. If you can honestly answer the question, "Would a reasonable person of average sensitivity find the noise objectionable?", you can get an idea if the noise is likely excessive.

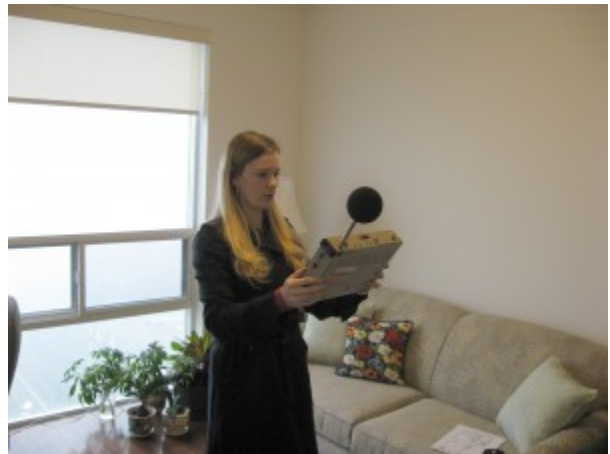
2. What could be the source of the noise?

From our experience, a humming type noise is usually from base building mechanical or electrical equipment. This could be pumps of the water or heating/air conditioning system or a transformer, or another piece of equipment that serves the building. It could also be a piece of equipment in a neighbouring suite. Frequently, the source of the noise isn't close to the residential suite where the humming problem is found. We've found water pumps in the basement causing a humming noise problem in a penthouse suite located 20 floors away. In this case, the pump pulsations were transported by the water in the pipe to the penthouse suite.

3. How is the source of the noise determined?

The best way to determine the source is the most obvious one; turning off equipment one at a time until the noise stops. It is preferred that the resident is involved in the

process to confirm that the noise disappears when the piece of equipment is turned off. For equipment that can't be turned off, the acoustic expert can measure the noise signature in the suite and conduct measurements of the mechanical/electrical equipment that generates this noise signature.



Acoustic consultants conducting measurements of condo mechanical/electrical equipment.

4. What can be done about it?

The good news is that, most of the time, this type of problem can be solved with an engineered solution in a practical, cost effective manner. Frequently the noise path is structure-borne. This is when the noise or vibration produced by a source is transmitted to some part of the building floors or walls at a point where the equipment or its components comes into direct contact with the building's concrete structure. This then re-radiates as noise in the residential suite causing the noise problem. In this case, the solution involves removing this direct contact condition, either by moving the equipment component to avoid the direct contact or introducing vibration isolation to remove the transmission of vibration.

How can I get somebody to look at it?

The usual process is to provide your complaint to your building manager. The building manager generally passes the information on to the condominium board of directors. There is an obligation of the condominium board to investigate the situation. Usually, an acoustical engineer is retained to provide an opinion if the noise is excessive, and if it is, determine the source and provide recommendations to solve the problem.

What can I do to help?

A good description of the noise is helpful. The What, When & Where's – What is the character of the noise? – is it a hum, a rumble, a ticking noise, etc.? When does the noise happen? Was it always there or did it only recently start? Is it continuous, intermittent, worse at night, etc.? Where do you hear the noise? – is the worst in the bedroom, kitchen, bathroom, etc.

WATER DAMAGE

ARE YOU PROTECTED?

Tips from IBC

What you can do: If you live in an area prone to flooding or sewer backups, it pays to take precautions.

Flooding and related sewer backup damage is costly for homeowners, businesses, municipalities and insurance companies. But there are steps you can take to help mitigate risk.

From ensuring that important documents are not stored in your basement to installing a sump pump, there are many ways to be proactive such as:

1. Keep a current and detailed [home inventory](#).
2. If your neighbourhood is prone to flooding, [take precautions throughout your house and property](#).
3. Assemble a disaster safety kit.
4. Create a [72-hour emergency preparedness plan](#) for your family.

Have an emergency preparedness kit for each person in your household to help you get through the first 72 hours of a disaster.

How to put together your own emergency kit:

Disaster Safety Kit

When a natural disaster occurs, it can take first responders as long as 72 hours to reach people in non-critical situations.

10 Things to Include in an Emergency Kit

[Public Safety Canada](#) recommends that you keep a basic home emergency kit containing the following items to help you survive a disaster:

1. Water
 - 2 litres of water per person, per day (small bottles are easier to carry in case of an evacuation order).
2. Food
 - Canned food, energy bars and other non-perishables
3. Manual can opener.
4. Flashlight and batteries.
5. Battery-powered or wind-up radio and extra batteries.
6. First aid kit.
7. Special needs items:
 - Prescription medications, infant formula and equipment for people with disabilities.
8. Extra keys for your car and house.
9. Cash
 - Include smaller bills and change for pay phones (travellers' cheques are handy also)
10. Emergency plan
 - Include a hard copy of your emergency plan and ensure it lists in-town and out-of-town contacts

Remember to check the expiry date of applicable items such as medications and infant formula on an annual basis and replace items as necessary.

Additional Sources of Information:

[Visit Public Safety Canada for more emergency preparedness information](#)

Board Member

Education is Important

New Condo board members bring a lot of energy, good ideas and the right mindset needed to work with others and create a positive environment for the community. New members mean new perspectives and a fresh outlook. However, even the best intentions might not mesh with plans and personalities already in place. Often new Board members do not understand the limitations of their position when they join a board.

A board of directors needs to understand its role, and the individual responsibilities of those who serve on a board, in order to provide the best leadership and services. In order to form an effective and strong board of directors, leaders must have a clear understanding of a condo corporation responsibilities. The corporation has responsibility for common property as well as the management and operation of its business operations, all needing to fall in line with standards established by the governing documents, the Act, Regulations and Bylaws. Each officer of a corporation, as well as its board of directors, has a fiduciary responsibility with the members of a condo corporation. This relationship puts in motion obligations of trust and transparency in favor of the corporation and its members. It requires the members of the board to act justly, in good faith, and in the best interests of the members of a condo corporation. This means that not only do board members and officers must exercise due care and diligence, it means they can be held legally liable for claims made by members.

If a board of directors' member are found to be acting in their own self-interest, they could be held legally liable. Therefore [D&O insurance](#) is mandatory, keeping high legal costs down and taking care of potential reputation damage. Each board member must know where they stand on the fiduciary relationship and the responsibilities that the condo corporation's board has to the corporation. The duties of a board must be

performed with the care and responsibility that someone with an important role has.

New members might have an idea of what it means to be on a Condo board, but really do not understand the complete outline and specific tasks they have. There are multiple responsibilities Condominium Corporations have, offering different opportunities to its members to make an impact. Board members must learn the foundational knowledge necessary to lead a board and serve the community. From financial management to local governance, there are many different moving parts when it comes to serving.

Since learning a new role is vital to being on a board and making a positive impact, members need access to the right education and leadership. Canadian Condominium Institute (CCI) New Director courses, education seminars, website and newsletters can help provide resources and tools for all members to stay current.

One proactive way new members can get acquainted with their new role is to attend Condominium meetings and familiarizing themselves with the way in which meetings are conducted. Just getting to know the way in which topics are brought up, discussed, and solved or delegated is a solid first step.



Consider taking a CCI Introduction to Condominiums Directors' Course.

You will learn lots of pertinent information To assist your Board.



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How Drones Are Changing Engineering and Building Inspections

■ **Criterion Jansen Engineers**

From mechanical arms assisting doctors in surgery to drones delivering online shopping packages, technology is quickly transforming how we work in every field. Every industry is maximizing their potential with new and exciting programs and machinery, and the engineering and building inspection sector is no exception.

We are always reading up on the latest and greatest engineering innovations. In today's blog, we talk about the use of drones in building inspections, and how they've greatly improved the speed, accuracy, and safety of the entire process.

Inspections Take Much Less Time with A Drone

An unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) or drone can complete a building inspection in a fraction of the time required for an engineer to complete the same inspection. A high-resolution thermographic camera allows customers to locate where their facilities may be leaking energy through gaps in the roof or elsewhere where there may be wet insulation.

Drones can be used during property condition assessment evaluations to evaluate roofs and other hard to reach exteriors of the building envelope. We use them

regularly and are experts at building envelope solutions and inspections.

Drones Increase Safety of Engineers

It goes without saying that the use of drones for large scale building inspections greatly reduces the risk of injury to engineers. A drone allows the highly trained technician to keep his or her feet on the ground, while taking pictures of any possible "hot spots" that need to be later removed or marked for further analysis.

Given this added health and safety benefit, engineers can focus on other aspects of their job such as analyzing the footage and identifying structural deficiencies.

Drone Technology Has Really Taken Flight

It's entirely common for photographers to use drones to capture cinematic shots, and real estate agents to use them to take aerial footage of a home, so why not apply them to building inspections as well?

The technological advances that come with drones allow for faster and more precise media sharing, streaming, and back up. UAV's not only transfer useful information to engineers faster, but they also make it much easier to review any issues with the client.

Drones Are Cost-Effective

The cost of using drones is a lot less than you would find with other solutions. Other solutions, such as those that come with planes or other aerial options, require a huge monetary investment. A drone costs less than manual labour.

UAV's are an exciting new development in the building engineering sector. Drones will help improve facility maintenance planning and budgeting, are the safest way to conduct nighttime infrared scanning, and are a huge benefit to field technicians who need to locate and repair rooftop damage.

They help us Engineer the Future.

Conducting Virtual Meetings During the COVID-19 Crisis

-Nancy Houle DHA Team

For most condominiums, a virtual meeting will involve unfamiliar technologies and new procedures.

Ten practical tips to consider for virtual meetings and e-voting.

1. Make sure your condominium corporations are legally permitted to have a virtual meeting and/or conduct electronic voting. First consider if this is allowed in your jurisdiction, how and for how long. Some jurisdictions have emergency orders in place to temporarily permit electronic and virtual meetings; others don't. Some jurisdictions allow for virtual or electronic meetings generally, without emergency orders in place, either in the legislation itself, or by allowing condo corporations to pass bylaws to permit such meeting and voting practices. Make sure you understand what is or isn't permitted in your jurisdiction.

2. Remember that virtual meetings and electronic voting are not the same thing. Make sure you are legally permitted to do both—allowing for participation and attendance virtually and allowing for voting electronically.

3. Should the meeting be held virtually; consider what business you absolutely need to transact at the meeting and what must be accomplished. For example, in some jurisdictions, the annual budget must be approved at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and can only be done once. Arguably this must be done, and a virtual meeting is necessary. In other jurisdictions, certain meetings, such as AGMs are permitted to be both postponed. Ask what makes the most sense for your condominium community.

4. Should a meeting be postponed, subject to changes and circumstances with the pandemic until such time as a large gathering can be held. New controversial issues really can wait. Maybe it makes sense to wait for now until a fulsome discussion in person can be held.

5. Procedure is crucial. Be sure to follow all the generally mandated process to make sure your virtual meeting is validly called. Follow the requirements of your jurisdiction, for notices, pre-notices, proxies, etc.

6. Participation is necessary. Ensure alternate methods of participation for those owners who do not have access to a computer. For example, the ability to still mail in a proxy combined with attending the virtual meeting by telephone.

7. Communication is key. Make sure all notices to owners let people know exactly how they can participate in various forms

8. The validity of your meeting cannot be lost. For whatever form you choose for your virtual meeting, your goal must be to make every effort to mimic an in-person meeting. You need to be confident that you can validate your registration and attendance, validate there is no duplication of proxies or attendance, validate the voting process, allow for motions and votes from the floor, and allow for questions and answers.

9. Book everything and everyone early. If you are using a third-party service provider, they are booking up fast and have a limit of how many meetings can be done in one evening. There is going to be a lot of catch-up going on so make sure you are prepared.

10. Do a dress rehearsal involving the host, board members and who else will be playing a key role in your meeting so everyone is comfortable with the technology used during the meeting. Then sit back and enjoy the meeting and continue learning about these tools at your disposal.



Important Amendment to the Condo Regulations

Effective at signing May 13, 2020. Publications Saskatchewan.ca

This is the link:

Condominium corporations: <https://publications.saskatchewan.ca/#/products/105440>

Title: The Condominium Property Amendment Regulations, 2020

Minister: Minister of Justice and Attorney General

Summary: On filing date, these regulations will amend RRS C-26.1 Reg 2 to expressly authorize non-profit corporations, condominium corporations, co-operatives, and new general co-operatives to hold annual general meetings by telephone, video conference or other electronic means.

See: The Condominium Property Act, 1993, section 112

Date Signed: May 13, 2020

GREAT NEWS!



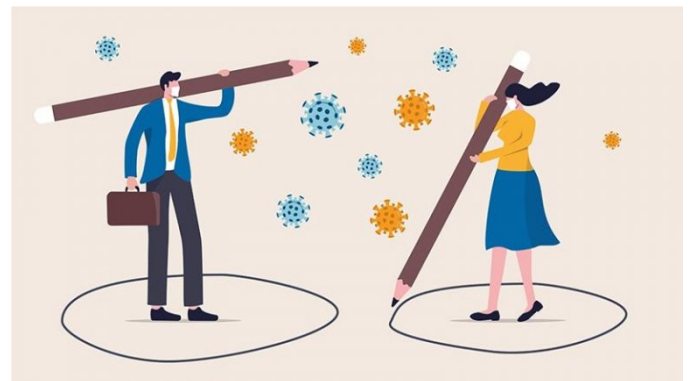
President's Message

The past few months have certainly been a new adventure for all of us. We've gone through the cancellation of gatherings, lockdowns, travelled the long and winding- road trying to find a new normal that allows us to survive. None of us currently know what the future will bring or the changes which will occur as we start to emerge from this darkness. There are so many challenges right now. But as emotionally and financially draining as it is for us all, there is still kindness, compassion, and inspiration and based on the acts of kindness and good deeds shared throughout the country, we will succeed.

We had to cancel our planning and events as did many others and of course, we feel this postponement was the best decision to be made at the time as we wanted to have a safe environment for everyone.

This slow re-opening of establishments will give us all an opportunity to reassess and discard past processes that were holding us back and embrace new ones to move us forward on a brighter path for the future. Everything

won't be quite the same as it was and maybe that will be a good thing. As we all adjust to our shared COVID-19 world, we are working hard on planning events and



hope to have updates soon.

Until then, stay well, keep positive and we will see each other soon.

Dawna Matthews

A Discussion of Value

Dianne Werbicki, BA Editor CM Magazine

Value in a business environment is a concept that has many different interpretations. In our personal lives we all know what we value most – our families, our homes, our friends, our happiness. In business, the focus is different. Or is it? At its most basic, business value is defined in terms of dollars and cents or economic value, for example, monetary savings. Our condominium boards strive to get the best value for money spent and for work performed. It's not always about the lowest price. It's about what meets the board's and residents' needs and makes everyone feel satisfied. How else do we measure value in a condominium community? Perhaps, these are the more intangible definitions of value. A person's value – what skills and qualities does an individual manager, concierge, administrator or superintendent bring that makes that person valuable. Skills like decision-making, attitude, planning, critical thinking.

We asked Bill Thompson, RCM, president of Malvern Condominium Property Management, and recipient of ACMO's Leader of the Year award, to discuss Value in a condominium situation.

Q: How does a condominium corporation board of directors define value?

Bill Thompson: Historically, many boards have defined the value of management based solely on price. After all, if they hired professional management, that manager would get competitive quotes on every contract, and would generally recommend the lowest bid unless there were known differences in those quotes. The only quotes that the board would seek themselves is for the provision of management services. Given that there was no mandated standard, it was next to impossible for boards to differentiate the service levels, so they would tend to judge the quotes by the easiest comparative – price.

Q: How should a condominium corporation define value?

Bill Thompson: Boards have the duty to set the standards within their condominiums. There are no two communities that are created identically, and the needs of the individuals within that community also differ greatly. A board, therefore, needs to define their value equation based on their individual community. They should carefully sit down and capture those aspects of their community that are important to them and what their exact expectations are for those defining aspects. When they interview prospective managers, they should concentrate their interview on those defining aspects and see how the management company can add value to those areas. Value should be defined by the relationship match between the needs of the community and the services of the manager.

The newest stress on boards is the all-inclusive service offering of some management companies. These firms offer to provide services such as security, cleaning, HVAC, utility supply services and any other service imagined by a condominium. I personally have a very difficult time understanding how a management company can have expertise in all things in order to offer those services. I fear that the practice will put managers in a difficult place in their day-to-day provision of management services and believe that this is just another way for boards to revert back to value being aligned strictly with price.

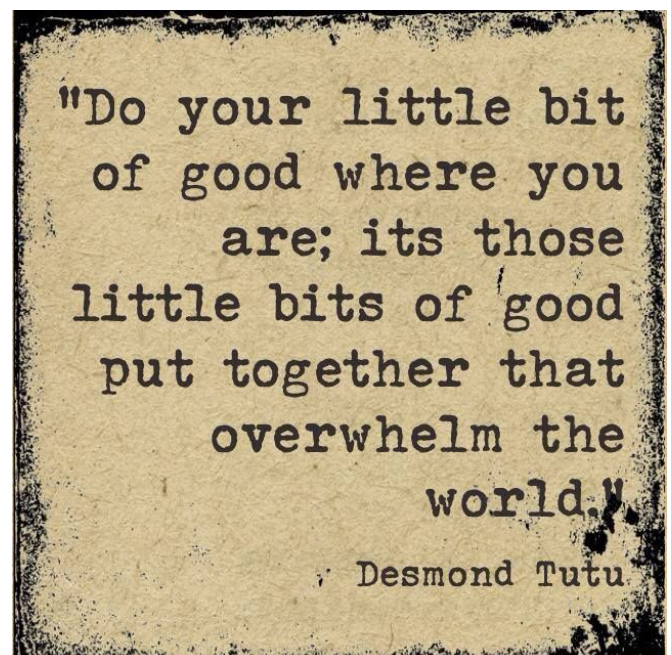
Q: How do you, as an executive and leader, strive to bring value to your condominium communities, clients, employees, and other stakeholders?

Bill Thompson: Managers spend their lives developing relationships with their boards, their owners, their trades, and their coworkers. A good manager is good at developing and maintaining these relationships. If you can accept the idea that management is a relationship-dependent service, then it is an easy jump to understand that a good management company will strive to manage the environment to aid in those relationships. A good management company will develop systems and practices to balance the interactions and, therefore, the relationships between all of those parties.

Things like 'transparent purchasing' balance the relationship between managers and trades. Community websites and communication systems policies balance

the relationship between the manager and the owners. Good transparent reporting and inspection systems will help to balance the relationship between the manager and the board. Any management company that ignores these aspects of the job, and leaves the manager without the needed tools and parameters to keep those relationships in balance, is going to be exposed to poor performance by its managers, which will inevitably lead to high levels of manager turnover. Staff changes lead to decreased value of the service, which leads to change of management service provider, which also adds to decreased value in the community.

Given the current growth in the condominium market, and the licensing of managers and management service providers which has reduced the number of qualified managers servicing that growth, it is inevitable that there will be massive change in the industry. Many condominiums cannot even find a management company in the current environment, and managers are being hired away for more money by those communities that are willing to pay for a good management company. This environment is breaking down all of the relationships that can be and have been built over time – when managers become long-term contributors to the success of a condominium community. We have restructured our service and compensation plans to ensure that our managers find work/home life balance and have a say in their compensation package. Happy, well-supported managers create successful communities. N



COVID Q & A

CCI received this question from a member re opening amenities

Q: We are wondering what other complexes are doing concerning the operation of their swimming pools this summer. Do you have any recommendations or advice?

Some of our owners are pushing for us to open the pool; the Board wants to hold off until Stage 4 of the Re-open Saskatchewan plan.

We also are concerned about whether a condo pool is considered public or private?

A: Sask Health Authority advised that there are two 2 points to allow for opening in this phase:

- Full time staff to monitor social distancing, amount of people in the room and sanitizing
- Equipment needs to have proper social distancing to open.
 - If this cannot happen gym is not allowed to open
- No pools to open under this phase as they are considered public. Pools will have to follow the guidelines imposed with Phase 4.

-thanks to Logan Fraser and

Marilyn Pollock for sharing this response

