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Justin Bieber and HOA Rules: Seriously, There's a Connection

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In this week's tip, we discuss why you should care about the goings on of teen heartthrob Justin Bieber. For at least a few minutes, at least.

You probably hate that you're reading a story about Justin Bieber on an HOA website. So we'll keep his back story brief. He reportedly lives in a Calabasas, Calif., HOA called The Oaks of Calabasas.

In May, news reports surfaced about a high-speed chase in the neighborhood as former NFL player Keyshawn Johnson--in his Toyota Prius hybrid--tooled after Bieber (allegedly)--in his white Ferrari--to try to catch the singer in the act of speeding in the HOA too close to Johnson's kids. Johnson insists Bieber drove up to his home, jumped out of the Ferrari, and scampered inside before Johnson could confront the teen. Later, Bieber claimed security footage proved it wasn't him behind the wheel.

The speeding was reportedly so frequent, and it was combined with loud, noisy parties and cars parking on the street overnight, that in June, fellow residents banded together and reportedly threatened to withhold their roughly \$1,000-per-month assessments unless the board began to enforce its own rules against the celeb and his guests.

The association appears to have taken action. In late June, the HOA sent a letter reminding residents they're subject to fines for violating HOA rules and instructing residents to call police on speeders.

What can you learn from (allegedly) bad celebrity behavior? Here's the first of five takeaways:

1. Owners can't withhold assessments in protest.

While the residents here certainly succeeded in getting the HOA to do something about the escalating situation, their remedy wasn't proper. "The owners should have told the board, 'Enforce the rules or we're going to get rid of you,'" explains Jed Frankel, a partner at Eisinger, Brown, Lewis, Frankel & Chalet PA in Hollywood, Fla., who advises community associations. "That's their remedy. It's not refusing to pay association fees. That's really a big danger for boards because if people stop paying fees, the board's going to

have to begin foreclosing on them, which nobody wants."

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Best regards,
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President