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Feeling Ignored? How to Be Heard at Your HOA Board Meeting

November 21, 2014

This article is part of an ongoing series in which we'll take your questions from the [HOAleader.com discussion forum](#) and get you the answers you need from experts who specialize in association management. If you have a question you need answered, [post it on the message board](#).

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In this week's tip, we listen to—and help—a reader who's been feeling ignored. Our reader piped up during an [executive session](#) of the board to offer an amendment to a motion—and was utterly ignored and even chided afterward for interrupting the meeting. What happened? And how can he be heard next time?

Generally, states don't govern the parliamentary procedures boards must follow during any type of [HOA meeting](#).

"In Illinois, both townhome and condo associations are completely free to set their own rules of procedure," says Barry Kreisler, founder of Kreisler PLLC, a Chicago law firm that represents 70-100 associations, most of which are condos. "They don't have to use any existing set of procedures. Some tend to use the black book of procedures—*Robert's Rules of Order*—but it's something like a 250-page volume."

Texas is similarly hands off when it comes to meeting procedures. "There's no statutory requirement in Texas that HOAs use or conform to any parliamentary procedure rules," says Gregory S. Cagle, a partner at Savrick Schumann Johnson McGarr Kaminski & Shirley in Austin, Texas, and author of *Texas Homeowners Association Law*, written for homeowners and association leaders. "Unless it's in their actual documents—and very few, if any, have requirements that they're going to follow *Robert's Rules*; I've seen it, but it's pretty rare—the person running the meeting tends to use an informal, made up, very lax version of parliamentary procedure. It can be an absolute free-for-all. I've seen it happen where people talk over and interrupt each other."

That's also what Alessandra Stivelman, an associate attorney who specializes in community association law at Eisinger Brown Lewis Frankel & Chaiet in Hollywood, Fla., has seen. "With these meetings, it can be kind of chaotic," she says. "Maybe this board member wasn't even heard. In associations with a large board, and sometimes with unit owners speaking out of turn, the president needs to move onto the next item and can't take all comments."

Head to our new article, [Recognizing Board Members During an HOA Board Meeting](#), for suggestions from our experts that may help our reader be heard in the future.

Best regards,

Matt Humphrey

President