



Maintaining Member Interest In Your Neighborhood Association

Keeping the interest and involvement of neighbors in their association is a continual challenge faced by every neighborhood group. Here are some pointers and ideas that may stimulate other ideas.

1. Be realistic in your expectation of the members. Neighbors have to work and have other priorities that may limit their participation.
2. **Stay focused on a few well-defined goals or projects. Too many projects may frustrate or dilute your volunteer resources.**
3. Be sure to set attainable and realistic goals, which include a time line and identify individual and/or committee responsibilities.
4. Celebrate your successes, even if it means doing it one step at a time.
5. Be sure to publicly recognize members for their efforts and accomplishments. Recognize efforts in your newsletter.
6. Try to incorporate "fun" into your meetings or projects. Humor helps too!
7. Ask specific neighbors for help or their involvement. Sometimes all it takes is asking a neighbor to do something. They may be willing if asked, but may not volunteer or speak up when an "all call" for help is issued.
8. Find out what is important to your member(s) and try to get them involved in committees or projects involving their interest.
9. Delegate important tasks and assignments.
10. Ask neighbors what their concerns are and respond quickly to those issues when and if possible.
11. Anytime a hot issue comes up, call as many neighbors as possible to ask their opinions.
12. Create a buddy system or "neighbor mentor" to make newcomers feel more welcome and important to the association.
13. Have the president or another board member personally visit all new members to encourage their involvement.
14. Publicize your association meetings well in advance; including what will be on the agenda.
15. Start and finish meetings on time. Respect the time and commitment of members attending the meeting.

16. Keep meetings on track and to the point. Summarize the results of decisions and actions at the end of the meeting so that members leave with a sense of accomplishment.

17. Be creative with your meetings, maybe ask neighbors to share what they do for a living. So often neighbors have no idea what each does for a living. Promote using the businesses and services of neighbors with no perks attached or expected discounts for services, etc.

18. Publish a newsletter to keep the neighborhood informed and focused. Include a classified section for neighbors to promote their businesses or sell items.

19. Meetings are not the only way to bring neighbors together. Organize a social function by delegating the event to a special committee.

20. Sponsor clean-up days, possible taking one street at a time so that the clean-up seems manageable and can be accomplished in the morning.

21. Respond to concerns and questions as quickly as possible.

22. Involve the youth in the neighborhood in activities and events. Many times, kids are able to get their parents involved easier than the association.

23. Provide useful and meaningful information at your meeting. Contact your Office of Community Coordination for information on City services useful to your neighborhood.

24. Always thank members for their participation and leadership, including showing appreciation to committee chairs and members.

25. Listen to what members are saying. Often, all a member may want is for someone to listen.

26. The president and/or board should delegate authority and be supportive. Let the committees do their jobs. Respect their decisions.

27. Create a telephone chain or communication system that makes it possible for the association to keep its members informed.

28. Volunteers always appreciate Incentives and rewards. Some examples are: recognizing and thanking a specific person or persons at a general meeting; acknowledging someone's efforts in your newsletter; or neighbors' cooking dinner or cake/cookies for someone. Incentives and rewards don't have to cost a lot. Use your imagination and creativity.



Together, you and your neighbors make life better on the street where you live.