

CAI - LI Chapter News

Serving Long Island, New York

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PROPERTY MANAGEMENT VS. PANDEMIC

By Stephanie Galvez, Property Manager - CAMCO Services of NY, Inc.



“Good teams become great ones when the members trust each other enough to surrender the ‘ME’ for the ‘WE’.” This was an opening statement, right before the meeting

was called to order, and read by one of my Board Presidents, Dr. Maureen Capone of Silver Ponds HOA. It was a perfect segue to what we are all about to venture as we navigate the proper protocols and procedures for re-opening clubhouses and amenities. The beauty of working with Boards of Directors is that we come from different backgrounds, specialties, and yes, even personalities, which bring substance and sometimes craziness to the table. And even though we are all different individuals, there is no denying we share the same goal... and it's all for the best interest of the community.

...surrender

There is no question that COVID-19 has jarred our reality and our normal routines. As Property Managers, Boards of Directors look to us for answers, but in reality, we all share this uncertain and unfamiliar territory, especially when the illness hits close to home. For all of us, the biggest question became “now what?” The pandemic put us all in a state of emergency which was echoed by our behavior and the way we interact very clear by: stay at home, wear a mask, stay 6 feet apart, work, and communicate remotely / go virtual. It became the law. It was a new world that all of us can agree, we were not prepared for. We comply, we **surrender**.

...me

So, what is the answer? As a leader, you are now being relied upon during the most crucial and historical event of all our lives. So, you do everything to acquire as much information as you can to understand all the restrictions and all the directives coming from

Continued on Page 3

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT VS. PANDEMIC	1
NEWSLETTER: ARTICLES & ADS	4
PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE	6
CALENDAR OF EVENTS	7
WHAT EXACTLY IS A COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION?	8
WHY PROACTIVE ANNUAL LAKE AND POND MANAGEMENT IS BETTER	9
WE’RE HAVING “WHAT” KIND OF MEETING?	13

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Continued from Page 1

the State. You observe, educate yourself, and keep yourself up to date on what is going on. You take a stroll and survey local businesses on their operation during the pandemic and how they are handling customers/patrons. Keep checking your local town for updates on rules and regulations and pay attention to what the State is directing the public to

follow. If you want to be extra cautious, it does not hurt to check with your attorney and/or insurance broker to understand all the risk and liabilities. It pays to have an expert provide you with the support you will need and gather factual information. As a Property Manager, it is our job to be that resource for our Boards and our members... it is up to *me*.

...we

To open or not to open? That is the question. Now that you have done all your research, it is time to present your board



with options. We are now pulled to work as a team, bring all our differences of opinion to the table and come as one.

To open. The New York State Department of Health just published an Interim Guidance for Gyms and Fitness Centers, dated March 25, 2021. This publication should be shared with your Board of Directors so that they are aware of the standards for the responsible operation of gyms and fitness centers in New York (go to www.coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home). Assess all the risks, costs, and make sure you conform to all that is required to protect the health of your members. Proper signs should be visible to the public, such as maintaining a 6-foot distance, how to prevent the spread of COVID-19, and to wear your mask at all times. Reservation is the best way to keep track of the number of patrons as well as controlling the limits and keeping a record for contact tracing. You will also need to have the proper filters in place for the HVAC system and have a hands-free sanitizing station both in the common area space and bathrooms. Once the clubhouse is ready, it is time to set rules and regulations and develop a waiver for members to sign (for added liability protection). Double-check everything... clubhouse ready... employees informed and/or trained... documents ready. It is time to publish and announce to the community that the amenities are back in operation, but with restrictions. It is very important to communicate to your members about the expectations and risks and be very clear about the new rules and regulations set in place in order to open. Good luck!

To close. Well, I guess the buck ends there. That is not true, WE have to now communicate this decision to the rest of the community. The best approach is providing a full explanation of the reasons at why the board does not want to take part in any risk that might be harmful to the health and life of your members. Let them know that there are liabilities and risks that the Board cannot afford. The added costs of the Merv-13 filters,

Continued on Page 4

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Continued from Page 3

the changes to make the clubhouse hands-free, possibly hiring attendants to take records, temperature taking, and monitoring behavior are all necessary for the health and safety of the members. Those are expenses that the community did not prepare for, let alone budgeted for, and because of that, in order to even adapt to the CDC guidelines, the Board may now be subjecting its members to a possible assessment. Giving some of these facts may persuade the majority that this was a good decision to make overall, and that it will all be sufficient enough that you won't have an uproar of residents with pitchforks. But stay firm, do not falter, this decision was not an easy one, and a motion was carried and agreed on, not by one, but by the majority and nothing is more important than to trust and support each other once a choice is made. Good luck!

To open or not to open? There is no question that no matter what side of the coin we are all going to be on we have to work harder as a Board, do our due diligence, and trust each other to come up with a plan that is best fit for our community, as a team... as a **we**.

Stay healthy, stay safe. ■

Stephanie Galvez is a Property Manager at CAMCO Services of NY, a property management firm. Feel free to reach her at #631.476.2100 x217 or via email at stephanieg@camcoservicesny.com.



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CAI - LONG ISLAND NEWSLETTER

The CAI - Long Island Newsletter is published quarterly by the Long Island Chapter of Community Associations Institute (CAI-LI) and is distributed to its members and is available on the Chapter website (www.cai-li.org). This publication provides members of CAI with letters from the Chapter President, informative articles written by industry professionals and service providers, updates on current legislation, and business advertising. The Chapter strives to provide our members with timely information and tools needed to keep them informed on community association issues.

The Newsletter Committee is always looking for new articles to publish. Articles should be educational, non-promotional in nature, and have a suggested word count between 500 and 1,500 words. CAI-LI retains the right to edit articles to conform to content and space requirements.

If you are interested in submitting an article for possible inclusion, please contact Christine M. Majid, Chapter Executive Director, at info@cai-li.org.

Quarterly Deadlines

Winter Issue - January 31

Summer Issue - July 31

Spring Issue - April 30

Autumn Issue - October 31

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PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

By NANCY FOX, DIRECTOR of OPERATIONS - CAMCO SERVICES OF NY, INC. AND CAI - LI CHAPTER PRESIDENT 2021



I love Spring! It is such a season of hope and renewal. Even the dead things all around us seem to spring to life! It’s been a year since the whole world pulled the plug and stopped life as we knew it due to Covid. What a long, hard and stressful year it has been, fraught with fears and sadness, and lots of quiet time to reflect on our lives. It made us grow and learn new technology too – ZOOM on!

Spring also brings lots of things that need a board’s attention like: cleaning your property and sprucing up the landscaping with mulch and flowers. Also, opening pools and clubhouses after the Covid shutdown may be a challenge for some. Watch for our surveys that we will continue to send out to gauge your level of comfort in attending upcoming events and please respond with as much information and feedback as you can. Thanks in advance for your cooperation.

As we share with each other, we all improve. In this newsletter,

there is an opening article titled “Property Management vs. Pandemic,” by Stephanie Galvez. Check it out for tips about safely opening pools, clubhouses, and other amenities in your community according to government guidelines.

As we head toward Summer, I am looking forward to more opportunities to do some of our favorite summer activities. I hope to get to a beach or maybe even travel. The Board of Directors, here at the CAI-Long Island Chapter, are working hard to prepare a get together, in person with all of you, for our “Sponsors’ Summertime Social” event in late August. We are so excited at the thought of actually seeing all your beautiful smiles again! Kudos to Linda Donato for her time and planning this event for us.

We hope you have been enjoying the monthly educational webinars that we are hosting. We would love your feedback as to the topics, the format, and any other insightful suggestions you might want to share with us. And congrats to all of our volunteer board members who have won an Amazon gift card while attending our webinars!

Although it looks like our annual Trade Show will be reimagined

Continued on Page 7

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Long Island Chapter Calendar of Events

In light of the continued health crisis, the Board is continuing to roll out a series of dates for webinar topics as presented below. As the schedule is formalized, we will send out updates via email so you may mark your calendar and register.

*Thursday, June 17th - 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Chapter Educational Webinar
"All Things COVID"*

*Presented by CAMCO Services of NY,
Sutton Agency, and Taylor, Eldridge & Endres, PC*

*Tuesday, July 13th - 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Chapter Educational Webinar
"Tree Risk & Plant Health Care"
Presented by Bartlett Tree Experts*

*Wednesday, August 25th - 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Sponsors' Summertime Social
Land's End Waterfront Catering
80 Brown's River Road, Sayville*

*Saturday, November 6th - 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Board Leadership Development Workshop
for Community Association Board Members
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*To REGISTER or to READ MORE,
visit our EVENT PAGE by clicking below —*

<https://cai-li.org/events/>

Continued from Page 6

this year (stay tuned, such exciting things are coming together for this show), and we have decided to return offering our Board Leadership Development workshop in person in November. Yes! A special thanks to Suzanne Borelli and all the folks at Belfor Restoration who will host it for us again this year.

We are always looking to spread the news about this great resource of support and education for volunteer board members. If you have friends living in other HOA communities, please tell them about CAI and invite them to join us. Or you can drag them along with you to our "Sponsors' Summertime Social," because once they meet us, they will be hooked! LOL! But seriously, feel free to point them to Christine Majid, our Executive Director, or myself to find out more about how to become CAI members.

Please help me welcome our newest business and community association volunteer leader members from:

Aqualis Stormwater Management

Highlands at Aquebogue Homeowners Association

The Greens at Hampton Vistas HOA, Inc.

Timber Ridge Park at Mount Sinai

In closing, please remember that every person you encounter may have had a very hard year, and all of us are under enormous stress, of which we may be unaware. So be kind and patient, to yourself, and others. Let's try to remember to take a moment to thank those heroes that live among us: Doctors, Nurses, EMT's, First Responders, Firemen, Police Officers, and many others who make life a little better for all of us. There's light at the end of this tunnel friends, hang in!

Everyone has something to give so may I encourage you to get involved? Please feel free to contact me directly with ANY questions, concerns, and/or suggestions you may have at #631.484.3066 or nancyf@camcoservicesny.com.

Thank you, Nancy ■



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WHAT EXACTLY IS A COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION?

By CAI NATIONAL

Some residents think homeowners and condominium associations (generally called community associations) exist just to tell them what to do — or not do. Actually, the association is more like a housing management or service-delivery organization that provides **three types of services to all residents** — owners and renters alike.

Community Services — these can include securing trash collection, publishing newsletters, orienting new owners, holding community-wide information meetings, and scheduling recreational and social functions.

Governance Services — these can include ensuring that residents are complying with the association's governing documents, that the association is adhering to local, state, and federal statutes (like fair housing laws), enforcing community rules and policies, administering design review policies, and recruiting new volunteer leaders.

Business Services — these can include operating the common property efficiently, bidding maintenance work competitively, investing reserve funds wisely, developing long-range plans, and equitably and efficiently collecting assessments.

Providing these services requires good management (whether carried out by a professional manager or a self-managing board of home owners), strong planning and organization, and carefully monitoring the association's affairs. It isn't easy, but by fairly and effectively delivering these services, community associations protect and enhance the value of individual homes and lenders' interests in those homes. ■

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WHY PROACTIVE ANNUAL LAKE AND POND MANAGEMENT IS BETTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND YOUR WALLET

By Marc Bellaud, Aquatic Biologist - SOLitude Lake Management



We have all heard the adages about being proactive: “The early bird gets the worm” and “Never do tomorrow what you can do today.” These principles apply to nearly every facet of life, whether it’s our job performance, healthcare, financial planning, or in this case, lake and pond management. It’s no secret that taking care of our environment is important, but it goes beyond

that. Science suggests that the preservation of our water resources is a key factor in our health and happiness; memorable experiences and time spent around the water lead to a greater sense of peace and connection to the world around us.

Much like the human body, when a lake or pond is ‘young,’ it typically requires less effort and funds to keep it healthy and functional. But a lifetime of neglect can lead to premature aging

and serious imbalances. Without ongoing management, waterbodies become inundated with organic matter, sediment, debris, and other pollutants that cause aesthetic, ecological, and



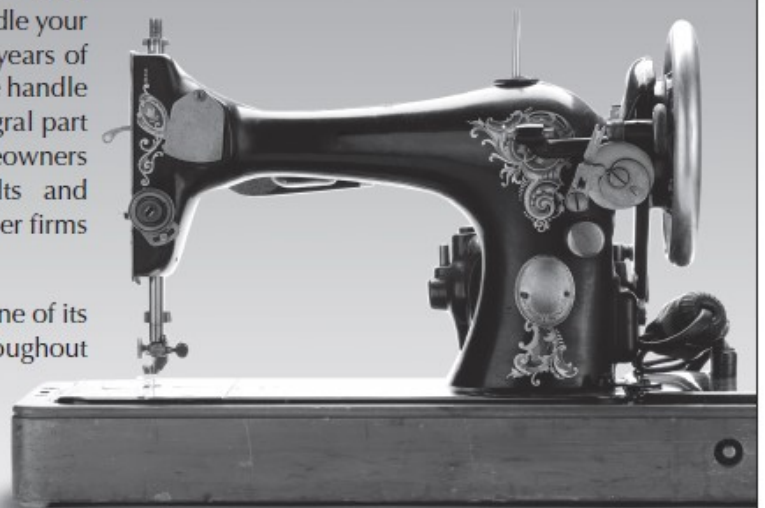
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Continued from Page 9

functional problems. These can arise in a multitude of ways, including recurring water quality issues, nuisance weeds and algae, and foul odors — and even scarier issues may lurk unnoticed beneath the water for many years before they manifest. When they do finally appear, it is generally a sign that the waterbody requires significant intervention.

- Disregarded plant matter and debris can clog and damage stormwater equipment and increase the risk of dangerous flooding.
- Harmful Algal Blooms can create toxins that may harm aquatic animals, pets, and humans.
- Invasive plants like Phragmites can take years of dedicated treatments to successfully eradicate.
- Invasive animal species like armored catfish, bufo toads, and quagga mussels can out-compete beneficial native species and pose significant challenges and costs to remove.
- Shoreline instability can cause expedite lake and pond “aging” and endanger others.
- The accumulation of muck and sediment over time can reduce depth and volume - with costly and invasive dredging oftentimes being the only solution.



Beneficial Vegetative Buffer

The number of tools necessary to restore an imbalanced lake or pond depends on many factors, and the benefits can be fleeting if not done consistently. That’s why year-round maintenance is key. To begin developing an annual

Continued on Page 11

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Continued from Page 10

management program, aquatic specialists conduct preliminary assessments that examine the biological, physical, and chemical properties of the water. Detailed visual inspections and baseline water quality tests provide valuable insights into the overall health of the waterbody and establish an important foundation of data to inform future management decisions.

Once preliminary assessments are completed, a customized management program can be designed. The most effective programs lean on cutting-edge technologies, comprehensive data collection, routine laboratory analysis, and premium services like nutrient remediation, algae ID, biological augmentation, oxygenation, and erosion control solutions that help stakeholders achieve the trifecta of health, functionality, and beauty. And these solutions are underscored by the guidance and expertise of scientists who specialize in freshwater management.

Lakes and ponds exhibiting more mild issues or those with budgetary limitations can still be supported by the basics like periodic visual monitoring, nuisance vegetation control, buffer management, and decorative pond dye. These ongoing efforts help lay the groundwork until more advanced solutions come into the picture. Consulting with your lake and pond management professional can help you make the most

Continued on Page 12



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appropriate decision for your property and your wallet.

Lakes and ponds are an investment, but the upfront costs to kickstart your management program will help to reduce expenses that are often much larger and more concerning down the road. While every aquatic ecosystem has different needs, they all benefit

most from comprehensive maintenance strategies supported by the most effective and sustainable technologies available to us. Like most other facets of life, when it comes to lake and pond management “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” ■



Marc Bellaud is an Aquatic Biologist at SOLitude Lake Management, a freshwater management firm that provides sustainable solutions for lakes, stormwater ponds, wetlands and fisheries. Learn more about this topic at www.solitudelakemanagement.com/knowledge.

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WE'RE HAVING "WHAT" KIND OF MEETING?

By CAI NATIONAL

What's the difference between a board meeting and a special meeting, or an annual meeting and a town meeting? Confused? Here's some clarification.

Annual Meetings

Annual meetings — or annual membership meetings — are required by the governing documents, which specify when they're to be conducted and how and when members are to be notified about the meeting. This is the main meeting of the year when members receive the new budget, elect a board, hear committee reports and discuss items of common interest.

Special Meetings

Special meetings are limited to a particular topic. The board can call a special meeting at any time, and they must notify all members in advance. The notice will specify the topic so interested members can attend. Special meetings give the board an opportunity to explore sensitive or controversial matters — perhaps an assessment increase. Members do not participate in the meeting, unless asked directly by a board member, but they have a right to listen to the board discussion.

Town Meetings

Town meetings are informal gatherings intended to promote two-way communication; full member participation is essential to success. The board may want to present a controversial issue or explore an important question like amending the bylaws. The board may want to get a sense of members' priorities, garner support for a large project or clarify a misunderstood decision.

Board Meetings

Most of the business of the association is conducted at regular board meetings. Board members set policy, oversee the

manager's work, review operations, resolve disputes, talk to residents and plan for the future. Often the health and harmony of an entire community is directly linked to how constructive these meetings are.

Continued on Page 14



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Member
FDIC

Continued from Page 13

Executive Session

The governing documents require the association to notify you in advance of all meetings, and you're welcome — in fact, encouraged — to attend and listen. The only time you can't listen is when the board goes into executive session. Topics that the board can discuss in executive session are limited by law to a narrow range of sensitive topics. Executive sessions keep only the discussion private; no votes can be taken. The board must adjourn the executive session and resume the open session before voting on the issue. In this way, members may hear the outcome, but not the private details.

Parties

Occasionally the association notifies all residents of a meeting at which absolutely no business is to be conducted. Generally these meetings include food and music, and they tend to be the best attended meetings the association has. Oh, wait! That's a party, not a meeting. Well, it depends on your definition of meeting. ■



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