

# CAI - LI Chapter News

Serving Long Island, New York

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## DEALING WITH LAKE COMPLAINTS FROM RESIDENTS: A GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY MANAGERS

By BRENDON DONNELLY - AQUATIC SPECIALIST & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANT AT SOLITUDE LAKE MANAGEMENT AND HOA TREASURER



Managing a community involves a lot of moving parts, and for most community managers, dealing with complaints from residents is one of their least favorite responsibilities. When left unmanaged or improperly managed,

lakes and stormwater ponds can be a common source of these complaints. Nuisance weeds and algae, bad odors, fish kills, muck, erosion, and other eyesores are just a handful of the issues that can affect aquatic ecosystems and aggravate the people who live around them. And while finding solutions can be simple, getting homeowners on the same page can be one of the most challenging parts of the job.

When lake and pond problems begin developing, complaints are usually first raised by the people living near the main inflow of the

waterbody where excess nutrients, pollutants, and debris first enter the system. This area may be more prone to water quality imbalances that fuel nuisance growth and degrade the ecosystem. It's important for communities to get ahead of these imbalances early before they create bigger problems, but homeowners who are not experiencing weeds and algae downstream, or who do not live on waterfront properties, may not support the use of funds towards lake and pond maintenance or may not agree with the solutions that have been chosen by community leaders.

Often, this stems from a lack of understanding. Most people are unfamiliar with the science behind freshwater management and are not aware of the far-reaching impacts lakes and stormwater ponds have in residential communities. Some people don't even realize that stormwater facilities exist in their communities in the

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form of dry basins. It's up to community managers to close this education gap. This involves teaching residents about the important functions of stormwater ponds, the value they provide to every homeowner, and why investing in their health is an investment in the community as a whole.

An excellent place to start is by educating board members who can disseminate knowledge and resources to the rest of the community. Decision makers not only need to understand how community waterbodies work to collect stormwater runoff, but they should also be aware of the potential legal and safety issues that can arise from poorly managed systems. Clogged stormwater equipment can result in flooding that endangers residents and can cause significant damage to landscaping, outdoor amenities, and community infrastructure. Crumbling shorelines create hazards that can lead to falls and accidents. Warm, stagnant water can become a breeding ground for annoying, disease-carrying mosquitoes. With the support of a lake management partner, community managers can better educate board members and residents.

Once most residents are on board, disagreements over management styles are still common, with some residents in favor of all-natural and "do-it-yourself" remedies like beneficial bacteria or hand-pulling weeds. These can be helpful solutions when used as part of a comprehensive management program, but they are not always effective in addressing more systemic issues like erosion and sediment build-up, and can end up costing communities valuable time and funds in the long run. Though it can be difficult to resist the pressure to provide instant gratification to complaining residents, it's important to prioritize effective long-term solutions like dredging.

Every waterbody fills with organic material over time, reducing its capacity to hold and filter stormwater runoff before releasing it downstream. Though this is a natural process, it can occur much faster in lakes and ponds that are not proactively managed. During dredging projects, hundreds to thousands or millions of





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pounds of nutrient-rich muck, sediment, and debris are removed from the waterbody to restore depth and create a clean slate for a healthier, more balanced ecosystem. Though dredging lacks the 'wow' factor of painting the clubhouse or replacing tennis courts, it can have a significant impact on the health and safety of community waterbodies.

Unfortunately, many communities are far past due for dredging. This is often due to a lack of awareness; however, in some cases, previous leadership may be to blame for ignoring growing sedimentation problems and leaving them for the next community manager to deal with. This can cause significant financial strain to residents, as dredging costs can be high and communities may have to raise dues to fund the urgently needed work. However, ignoring the problem may result in exorbitant damage that leads to the downfall of a community. In

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**Andrew Nigri | President**

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fact, it has become increasingly common for residents to take legal action against previous property managers for neglecting this important duty.

Community managers that find they have inherited a neglected waterbody should not be deterred – they have the unique opportunity to become champions of their community by educating stakeholders about the importance of proper pond management and the value it adds to every home. By addressing issues effectively and promoting the benefits of well-managed lakes and ponds, they can avoid being a scapegoat and instead become the champion that their community needs.

Closing the education gap also includes teaching residents about environmental stewardship and the personal impact each individual has on local waterbodies. Reducing the use of lawn and garden fertilizers, properly disposing of trash and pet waste, and bagging grass clippings and yard debris can help prevent pollutants from exacerbating water quality issues. As residents become more informed and involved in the maintenance of their community waterbodies, the more they will come to appreciate the dedication of community leadership.

Ultimately, the key to successfully fielding resident complaints is by becoming an educator. When residents understand the complex science behind lake and pond management, they are



more likely to support proactive maintenance strategies that prevent water quality issues, algae, weeds, and other problems – before they can become a source of complaints. Community managers that embrace this role can bring communities together, improve the desirability of their association, and cement their reputation as a trustworthy and capable leader. ■

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**PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE**

By ANDREW NIGRI - SANCUS INSURANCE AGENCY, LTD. AND CAI - LI CHAPTER PRESIDENT 2023

Greetings CAI Membership!

As I write the 3rd installment of the President’s article, I’m reminded that we won’t experience a sunset after 8 p.m. again until May 2024. This means that by the time you read this, Summer has flown by.

While we all enjoyed a summer break, your Board of Directors has been laser focused on planning the annual CAI Trade Show, which will be held on Saturday, October 14th, at the Huntington Hilton. In our initiative to expand the vendor turnout, we are asking all of our community association members to refer their favorite vendors. This could be your favorite plumber, electrician, painter, landscaper, or any other contractor you can think of. Please let them know that we are hosting a trade show and there is an opportunity for them to expand their business through engaging with many community members in attendance if they secure an exhibitor’s booth. We trust your recommendations and are always looking for new reputable

companies to become valued business partners to service the member communities in our organization.

The next educational seminar we have on the calendar will be ‘Budgets & Financials’ which will be held in late September. The Board decided this would be the perfect discussion to kick off the fall as many communities will be preparing for their year end. Please be on the look-out for the event flyer which will be sent out shortly.

Enjoy the remainder of the summer! ■

Andrew

You may reach Andrew at [Andrew@thesancusgroup.com](mailto:Andrew@thesancusgroup.com).



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The advertisement features a stylized illustration of a dryer vent with stars and the text "DRYER VENT WIZARD" in a bold, purple font. To the right, the name "John Ryley" is listed as "President" with the phone number "1-866-498-SAFE (7233)" and email "JRyley@dryerventwizard.com". At the bottom, it says "Dry Clothes - Safe Homes" and "www.dryerventwizard.com". A purple banner at the very bottom lists services: "Dryer Vent Cleaning · Repair · Alteration · Installation".

### 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](http://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](mailto: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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## DON'T LET YOUR NEXT ANNUAL MEETING FALL INTO MADNESS

By RUTH INGOLDSBY, CMCA®, EBP - DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS AT VOTE HOA NOW

In today's fast-paced world, poor planning is not just the downfall to a great annual meeting but could also spell social (media) disaster for you and your community. What better time than summer to organize your annual meeting process and make you the favorite in the eyes of your community? This way you are ready to implement your new procedures and avoid a meeting that falls into madness.

### HOA Board Election Process

One of the many requirements in each association's governing documents is to have an annual meeting of the owners. It is usually at this meeting that HOA/condo members elect the board of directors for the upcoming year. This duly elected board becomes the governing body for the entire HOA/condo so having a fair and impartial election where all owners' votes count is of utmost importance. Considering the number of community associations across the US is growing (there are over 14,000 owner associations in New York), it's important that the board election process be clear and concise.

### Tips for a Successful HOA Board Election

- Check the New York state statutes for specific requirements for HOA or Condominium board elections

(<http://public.leginfo.state.ny.us/lawsrch.cgi?NVLWO>). Some items to look for include when the meeting notice needs to be sent (how many days before the meeting), if the notices must be mailed or if they can be emailed, if the vote has a secret requirement, the minimum quorum requirements to hold a meeting, which types of proxies can be accepted, and parameters for an electronic vote (e.g., proxy is not needed, all votes count toward quorum).

- Check your association's governing documents. Check both your CC&Rs and Bylaws. Look for meeting date and timing requirements, the terms of the positions, ballot secrecy, quorum requirements, if votes can be changed after submitted, is there an owner date of record of those that are eligible to vote, and if past due owners can vote, etc.

- Make a list of all the election details. Once you know your requirements, make a list of all the details and keep it in an annual meeting folder so you can refer to it each year. You may even want to keep the pages of your governing docs with the specific sections highlighted that show the requirements in this folder. Your list should include the number of homes, quorum requirement, how many ballots are required for quorum, how

*Continued on Page 10*



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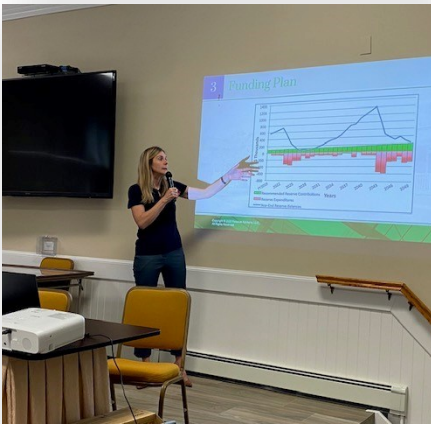
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# CAI Long Island Chapter Educational Seminar - May 25, 2023 - Fairfield at St. James Reserve Studies

Presented by Michelle Baldry, Regional Executive Director, PE, PRA, RS - Reserve Advisors  
Nicole Skaro, EBP, CMCA, Vice President - First Citizens Bank



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many directors are elected each year and the length of the terms, etc. Be sure to include the location of the meeting and your contact person at the location if off-site.

- Create a timeline of when each item needs to be completed. Advance planning of the timing will keep you on track to have a successful annual meeting and board election. Be sure to list all the dates: when to send the call for candidates, when the candidate intents must be received by, when the notice must go out, when the proxies must go out, when the proxies must be returned by, etc.

The goal in creating the Annual Meeting Folder and Timeline for each association is to ensure all requirements are met and the process is followed correctly each year. Failing to follow the process could result in an election being deemed invalid and needing to be redone, costing the association both time and money.

**How to Add Electronic Voting to the Mix**

It is very easy to incorporate this into your election process and offer owners another option for having their vote count. The process follows the same timeline as paper proxies/ballots. Start by having the board adopt a resolution (see an example here <https://www.votehoanow.com/how-it-works/resources.php>) to add electronic voting as a method to accept votes. Next, work with a company that offers the type of voting service you need. It is recommended that community associations work with an electronic (or online) voting company that is specific to the HOA/condo industry as they understand the complexities of how HOAs operate. Also, it is important to look for a company that offers full-service management, not just a portal. A full-service voting company has the expertise to focus on your election to make sure you reach a quorum, while relieving some of the workload from the manager or election committee and providing third-party separation.

With a little preparation, your next annual meeting can be a joyful experience! ☺ ■

Contact Ruth via email at [Ruth@votehoanow.com](mailto:Ruth@votehoanow.com).

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## ELEVATE SECURITY & EFFICIENCY: THE BENEFITS OF REMOTE GUARDING FOR HOA'S & GATED COMMUNITIES

By JOANNA PAWLOWSKA, M.S. - CMO/PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AT MAXIMUM SECURITY AND CAI - LI BOARD MEMBER

Homeowner Associations (HOAs) and condominiums strive to provide residents with efficient security. As technology continues to advance, traditional physical security measures are evolving, leading to the emergence of remote guarding solutions. Among these innovative approaches, the Remote GateGuard solution, is revolutionizing the way HOAs and condominiums safeguard their community entrances.

### Unparalleled Monitoring & Response

A critical advantage of remote guarding is the ability to monitor the community's entry & exit points in real-time with use of cameras. Traditional security guards have limitations, such as fatigue and the inability to focus on multiple areas simultaneously. In contrast, Remote GateGuard relies on advanced technologies like video analytics, and cameras to offer total coverage. With real-time monitoring, potential security breaches can be detected and addressed live, reducing the risk of unauthorized entry.

### Enhanced Response Time

A local command center plays a pivotal role in remote guarding, ensuring rapid and efficient response to suspicious events. When a security breach or suspicious activity is identified, the command center operators can instantly assess the situation and respond appropriately. Whether it's alerting on-site guards, contacting law enforcement, or activating deterrents like alarms or lights, the swift response significantly minimizes the impact of security threats, providing peace of mind to residents.

### Cost-Effective Security

Implementing traditional on-site security personnel can be costly for HOAs and condominiums. Remote guarding offers a cost-effective alternative without compromising

on security. By leveraging technology and centralized monitoring, the number of on-site guards required can be

*Continued on Page 13*



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*Continued from Page 11*

reduced or eliminated, resulting in substantial cost savings in the long run. This cost-effectiveness enables communities to allocate resources to other essential services, ultimately benefiting all residents.

### Visitor Management

Controlling entry access is paramount in maintaining the security of gated communities. With traditional security measures, managing gate access can be cumbersome and may lead to lapses in security. Remote GateGuard offers sophisticated technical visitor management. Residents, staff, and authorized visitors can be granted access via command center security guards that can also remotely verify visitor credentials, allowing or denying access as necessary; thereby minimizing unauthorized entry. The Remote GateGuard follows all the security protocols set by the community.



### Deterrent Effect on Criminals

Criminals often canvas and target communities with lax security measures, seeking opportunities to exploit vulnerabilities. Remote guarding acts as a powerful deterrent against such activities. Visible cameras and warning signs indicating 24/7 monitoring can discourage potential intruders from attempting to breach the community's perimeter. The knowledge that their actions are being closely watched and recorded acts as a significant deterrent, contributing to a safer living environment.

The Remote GateGuard solution for HOAs and condominiums empowered by a local command center elevates security levels, increases efficiency, and offers a cost-effective approach to safeguarding these exclusive residential areas. From enhanced surveillance and monitoring to rapid incident response, visitor management, and deterrent effects on criminals, remote guarding provides comprehensive protection and peace of mind for residents. As technology continues to advance, HOAs and condominiums are embracing these cutting-edge security solutions to adapt and thrive in an ever-changing world. ■

To schedule a demo for your community, reach out to us directly at: [info@maxsecurityusa.com](mailto:info@maxsecurityusa.com).

## Long Island Chapter Calendar of Events

*Wednesday, September 20th - 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.*

*Chapter Membership Meeting  
with Educational Presentation*

*"Budgets & Financials"*

*Half Hollow Hills Library*

*55 Vanderbilt Parkway, Dix Hills*

*Saturday, October 14th - 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.*

*Annual Trade Show*

*Hilton Long Island*

*598 Broad Hollow Road, Melville*

*Saturday, November 4th - 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.*

*Board Leadership Development Workshop  
for Community Association Board Members*

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*Thursday, November 16th - 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.*

*Chapter Membership Meeting  
with Educational Presentation*

*"Preventative Maintenance"*

*Venue to be Determined*

*December*

*Chapter Holiday Party*

*Venue to be Determined*



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# HOW TO ESTABLISH & MAINTAIN A HEALTHY WORK-LIFE BALANCE

By LESLIE ALVEREZ, MCMCA, AMS, LSW, PCAM - MANAGER OF ST. ANDREWS COUNTRY CLUB POA, BOCA RATON, FL



These past several years have been indescribably stressful for everyone. Economic concerns after a year's long pandemic, lack of socialization, mask-wearing, and general fear and anxiety have only increased the slow erosion of kindness and empathy we have seen devolve over the past few years.

In our business, verbal and written abuse have reached new, unacceptable levels, and basic respect and common courtesy are no longer so common. We are told not to take the job personally, but it is personal. It's our livelihood. It's our reputation. It's our name. It is very hard to not take insults and rudeness personally. Our health takes a toll.

One time, I lost 20 pounds in less than six months due to the stress of a position, and I have seen and experienced other managers suffering other stress-induced health issues. I believe it's time for some important behavioral changes in the industry.

We need a significant focus and shift to ensure community managers are treated with respect and courtesy. It all starts with **setting reasonable boundaries** for your mental and physical health. If more of us do that, we can start a movement and create real industry change for the next generation of community managers.

Here are a few boundaries to establish to maintain a healthy work-life balance:

**1 Establish an appointment-only policy.** Many times, residents will stop in the office and demand to see the manager. They wouldn't do this to their cardiologist or attorney. Yet, with us, they have no hesitation. Establish the fact that you are a professional and require appointments. If your board opposes this concept, you can offer a schedule of "open-door" hours where walk-in traffic can access you freely.

**2 Establish a weekly update meeting.** Oftentimes, we spend hours meeting with every director. They pop into the office for just a couple questions, and our morning is blown. This repeats itself with each director. The bigger the board, the more our week can get blown **away** bit by

*Continued on Page 15*

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~ Benjamin Franklin

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bit. However, we can take control by scheduling a recurring weekly meeting with board members to give updates on pending projects and priorities for the week. This is not considered an official meeting. Ideal participants are the president and the treasurer.

**3 Schedule as many board meetings and committee meetings as possible during business hours.** This may be a challenge for board members who have full-time jobs. However, when you serve on the board for a professional nonprofit organization like the United Way or Red Cross, your meetings are not at 7 p.m., and certainly are not on the weekends.

**4 When you leave the office, leave the office.** Establish the understanding with your boards that while you are available for an emergency, you are not available for everything that strikes their fancy to talk to you about after hours. If you respond to a non-emergency email after hours, you are effectively training your board to believe you will respond, and they will have an expectation as such.

**5 Manage your email.** An organized email inbox is imperative to your success. In today's technological age, some things can be a quick phone call, text, or Microsoft Teams message. This helps to avoid bogging down everyone's emails

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for a quick conversation and avoids frustration and unnecessary delays when waiting for a response on something relatively easy.

**6 Manage your time effectively.** Time block for big projects. Blocking time out to accomplish projects allows you to be focused on the actual task and project without feeling the need to multitask.

**7 Prioritize your personal events.** Make sure your personal schedule is a priority and is on your professional calendar. This way you won't double-book yourself and miss

important personal events.

**Let's not just talk about change, let's go make it happen. ■**

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