

An aerial photograph of a residential neighborhood, showing a grid of streets and numerous houses with varying roof colors and styles. The top portion of the image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue rectangle.

City of West Allis



Neighborhood
Associations

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



MAYOR

Dan Devine

“As we continue to move West Allis forward, active neighborhood associations will be a vital component in developing a safe and vibrant community.”

COMMON COUNCIL

Michael Czaplewski, Alderperson – First Aldermanic District
Vincent Vitale, Alderperson – First Aldermanic District

Cathleen Probst, Alderperson – Second Aldermanic District
Martin Weigel, Alderperson – Second Aldermanic District

Gary Barczak, Alderperson – Third Aldermanic District
Michael May, Alderperson – Third Aldermanic District

Daniel Roadt, Alderperson – Fourth Aldermanic District
Thomas Lajsic, Alderperson – Fourth Aldermanic District

Rosalie Reinke, Alderperson – Fifth Aldermanic District

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. What is a Neighborhood Association? 1
- II. Why Develop a Neighborhood Association? 1
- III. What Do Neighborhood Associations Do? 2
- IV. Benefits of Neighborhood Associations 2
- V. Start Up/Organizing..... 3
- VI. Development Stage..... 4
- VII. Neighborhood Association Formal Recognition 4
- VIII. Maintaining a Neighborhood Association 6



Active citizens are important to the health and spirit of a community. Dedicated citizens help shape the quality of life in a neighborhood. Neighbors can work together on topics like an upcoming road construction project, organizing a neighborhood picnic, planning a neighborhood clean-up day and much more! As a resident, homeowner or business partner, your enthusiasm for an area can significantly impact and enhance the quality of life and economic value of a neighborhood – in a positive way!

Neighborhood associations are a great venue to capture the positive momentum of individuals and have proven successful in a number of communities across the nation. This document outlines how dedicated time and energy can make a difference in West Allis through the establishment of neighborhood associations. The City believes that increasing citizen participation benefits the whole community by creating a positive environment of shared responsibility and collaboration.

I. WHAT IS A NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION?

A neighborhood association is a group of individuals who identify with a common area and share common goals and concerns, and are organized as a member-based group open to everybody within the neighborhood. Members collaborate on issues and identify creative solutions to address concerns. Through their collective energy and planning, members develop the stability, credibility, and political influence necessary to be an effective force in building a stronger place in which to live, work and play.

II. WHY DEVELOP A NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION?

Neighborhood Associations . . .

- Build new relationships between neighbors
- Create a forum for discussion of local issues
- Provide an opportunity for people to work together and make a difference
- Enhance neighborhood through effective planning
- Grow the neighborhood through organized social activities

- Attract and retain home owners and businesses, thus increasing the value of the neighborhood
- Encourage progress towards common neighborhood goals
- Increase awareness of policies and programs impacting the neighborhood
- Prevent neighborhood decline and apathy
- Provide a platform to build consensus

III. WHAT DO NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS DO?

Neighborhood Associations . . .

- Bring neighbors together
- Help identify challenges and concerns
- Support change and improvement efforts
- Resolve conflicts
- Provide volunteers for community initiatives
- Represent the neighborhood as a whole to elected officials
- Find resources to make the neighborhood a better place to live

IV. BENEFITS OF NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS:

Neighborhood Associations . . .

- Have real and lasting impacts on neighborhood programs (crime, traffic, parking, public space improvements)
- Grow demand for future home buyers
- Foster an effective communication link with City Departments
- Solicit funding for neighborhood improvement projects



Start Up/Organization

V. START UP / ORGANIZING

Neighborhood associations often expand from existing, informal connections that naturally occur around the kitchen table, sidewalk or other neighborhood gathering spots. Formal neighborhood associations attract additional neighbors to join the conversation.

There is no standard procedure for starting up a neighborhood association, but a suggested first step often involves communication and a simple handshake.

Examples of early communication methods include:

- word-of-mouth
- door-to-door conversations
- letters
- social media
- neighborhood gatherings

Early conversations can involve discussion about neighborhood issues, goals, activities and the potential benefits of forming a Neighborhood Association.

REMEMBER: Getting your neighbors together doesn't need to be difficult. Keep in mind some important tips as you begin to organize.

- Building an association is a process. It cannot be done overnight. Be patient. Identify your priorities and attain them step-by-step.
- Set realistic goals. Start small and build upward. As your organizational capacity grows, your organization can expand from year to year.
- How you treat people is crucial to your success. By treating people with respect and integrity, people will be more likely to get involved in the association.
- Communication is critical. Open, transparent and frequent communication is important.
- As you build your association, **BE SURE TO HAVE FUN!**

Interested groups are highly encouraged to contact the **City of West Allis Department of Development, Community Development Division** at (414) 302-8460 or neighborhoods@westalliswi.gov to set up an appointment to discuss further strategies and requirements for developing a formal Neighborhood Association.



Development/Formal Recognition

VI. DEVELOPMENT STAGE

After a core group of people is ready to move into the development stage of an organized association, the group should work to address the following **Minimum Standards for a Neighborhood Association**:

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. An agreed upon name2. A mission and statement of purpose3. Clearly defined geographical boundaries4. Contact person(s) |
|--|

Once the **Minimum Standards for a Neighborhood Association** have been met, the next stage involves contacting the City of West Allis Department of Development for assistance to apply for official recognition of your association.

VII. NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION FORMAL RECOGNITION

A successful neighborhood association is supported by endless hours of volunteer group efforts. The City would like to applaud this investment of time, and support the efforts of neighbors to improve and promote their neighborhood.

The **benefits** of formal City recognition include the following:

- direct correspondence on neighborhood and city-wide issues
- influence in local decision-making
- eligibility for project funding
- celebration of association achievements

The Department of Development, Community Development Division will facilitate the formal recognition via the following process, which includes:

1. Contacting the Alderpersons of the area to state your intent of formal recognition.
2. Completing the **West Allis Neighborhood Association Application Form**.
3. Scheduling a public meeting through the Department of Development to discuss the proposed neighborhood association. The notification for this meeting shall include the following:

- a. Date, Time and Place of proposed meeting
 - b. Proposed Neighborhood Association Name
 - c. Proposed Neighborhood Association boundaries
 - d. Neighborhood Association Contact Person and Contact Information
4. Convening the public meeting, with the aid of the Department of Development, to solicit feedback regarding proposed neighborhood association, including discussion of adopting organizational structure and policies, and electing association leadership.
 5. Compiling supporting documentation, to include the following:
 - a. Association Bylaws
 - b. Leadership structure and description (e.g. Board of Directors, Committees)
 - c. Membership Policy - State the requirements for membership in the organization, including any fees. Membership should be available to all residents, landowners, and business people who represent the social, economic and ethnic make-up of the neighborhood.
 - d. Membership listing (Name and Address)
 - e. Meetings Policy - State the location, time and number of neighborhood meetings held during each year. The suggested minimum standard is four (4) meetings per year. All meetings shall be advertised and open to all interested persons, which shall be reflected in the by-laws.
 6. Submit application and final supporting documentation to the Department of Development for the purpose of adopting the Neighborhood Association via Common Council resolution.

Once formally recognized, the Mayor will present the neighborhood with a Proclamation of Recognition. Press releases announcing recognition will include the following information:

1. Neighborhood boundaries;
2. Names and telephone numbers of the neighborhood's contact persons;
3. A statement encouraging all residents, landowners, and business people within the neighborhood to participate in meetings, and other activities providing direction to the City.



Maintaining a Neighborhood Association

VIII. MAINTAINING A NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Recognized neighborhoods must establish and maintain the capacity to represent the views of the neighborhood. Recognized neighborhoods shall:

- Fulfill the minimum standards for meetings
- Conduct ongoing outreach to all residents at least twice a year
 - This outreach can include newspaper announcements, public service announcements, mailings, and meeting notices posted in public or neighborhood places.
- Maintain regular communication with members of the organization
 - This communication may take place via e-mail, newsletters or social media.
- Submit an Annual Report to the City

Submission of Annual Report

The Department of Development, Community Development Division will request that all recognized neighborhoods submit the following information on an annual basis for continued formal recognition:

1. Any changes in neighborhood boundaries
2. Names, telephone numbers, and addresses of officers
3. Sign-in sheets and minutes of neighborhood meetings held during the previous calendar year
4. Any changes to the approved by-laws
5. Completed annual neighborhood survey (provided by the City)

The Department of Development will maintain this information for the benefit of City departments and the public.

If any neighborhood association's update is significantly different from the neighborhood's original information, the Common Council will receive the changes for their review, comment, and re-evaluation of recognition status.

Department of Development
Community Development Division
7525 W. Greenfield Ave.
West Allis, WI 53214

Phone: (414) 302-8460
Website: <http://www.westalliswi.gov>
Email: neighborhoods@westalliswi.gov

Why Develop a Neighborhood Association?

Neighborhood Associations . . .

- Build new relationships between neighbors
- Create a forum for discussion of local issues
- Provide an opportunity for people to work together and make a difference
- Enhance neighborhoods through effective planning
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- Increase awareness of policies and programs impacting the neighborhood
- Prevent neighborhood decline and apathy
- Provide a platform to build consensus



City of West Allis
Department of Development
Community Development Division
7525 W. Greenfield Ave.
West Allis, WI 53214

Phone: (414) 302-8460
Fax: (414) 302-8401
<http://www.westalliswi.gov>
neighborhoods@westalliswi.gov

West Allis Neighborhood Associations



What Is A Neighborhood Association?

A neighborhood association is a group of people who identify with a common area, share common goals and concerns and are organized as a member-based group open to everybody within the neighborhood. Through their collective energy and planning, members develop the stability, credibility and political influence necessary to be an effective force in building a stronger neighborhood.



Mayor Dan Devine

“As we continue to move West Allis forward, active neighborhood associations will be a vital component in developing a safe and vibrant community.”

What Do Neighborhood Associations Do?

Neighborhood Associations . . .

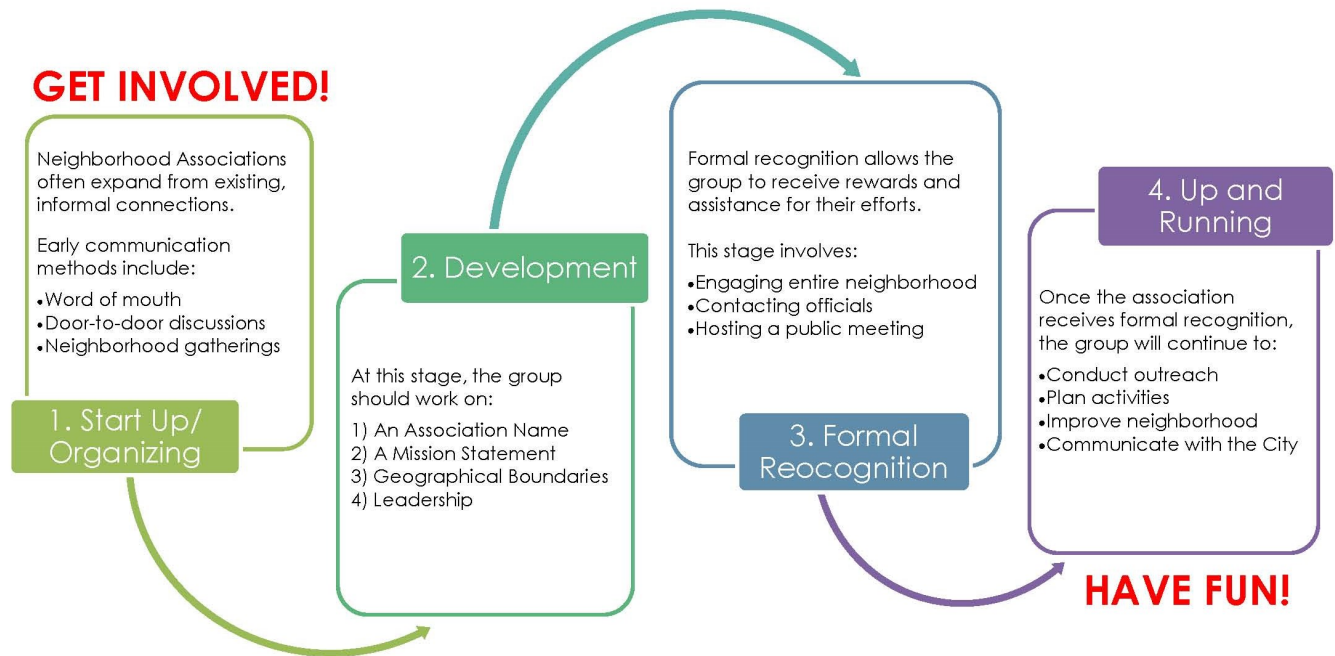
- Help identify challenges and concerns
- Support change and improvement efforts
- Help resolve conflicts
- Provide volunteers for community initiatives
- Represent the neighborhood as a whole to elected officials
- Find resources to make the neighborhood a better place to live

Benefits of Neighborhood Associations:

Neighborhood Associations . . .

- Have real and lasting impacts on neighborhood programs (crime, traffic, parking, public space improvements)
- Grow demand for future home buyers
- Foster effective communication link with City Departments
- Receive funding for neighborhood improvement projects

STEPS FOR CREATING A NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION



For more information about **Neighborhood Associations** in the City of West Allis, visit: <http://www.westalliswi.gov/neighborhoods>

Neighborhood Association Recognition Application

Complete the following form to be considered as an officially recognized neighborhood association by the City of West Allis.



Name of your neighborhood association:

Neighborhood Association Mission and Statement of Purpose:

List your association's contacts. To improve communication, please identify your primary and secondary contact persons:

Name	Title	Address (zip code)	Day Phone	Evening Phone

List the location and time of your proposed public meetings and how often you will meet:

Location	Time	How often association meets

Neighborhood Association Boundaries (include which side of the street):

- North:
- East:
- South:
- West:

Please submit the following items with the completed application:

1. Please call the Department of Development at (414)302-8460 for a map print out of neighborhood association area to highlight your neighborhood association boundaries.
2. Copy of Neighborhood Association proposed or approved by-laws.

SUBMIT ALL ITEMS TO:

City of West Allis
Department of Development • Community Development Division
7525 W. Greenfield Ave. • West Allis WI 53214 • 414-302-8460

Sample Neighborhood Association Bylaws

Bylaws of the _____ Neighborhood Association

Article I. NAME, BOUNDARIES AND PURPOSE.

Section 1.01: NAME. The NAME of this organization shall be the (Neighborhood Association), hereafter referred to as THE ASSOCIATION.

Section 1.02: BOUNDARIES. The boundary is as so depicted on the attached map, Attachment A. The Association is bound on the (describe, N, S, E, W, etc.).

Section 1.03: PURPOSE. The Bylaws shall govern the Association and its members.

The purpose of this organization is:

- a. To enhance the livability of the area by establishing and maintaining an open line of communication and liaison between the neighborhood, the City of West Allis, Wis., other participating agencies, and other neighborhoods;
- b. To provide an open process by which all members of the neighborhood may involve themselves in the affairs of the neighborhood;
- c. To perform all of the activities related to said purposes;
- d. To be organized exclusively for educational, social and charitable purposes; and,
- e. Nothing in these bylaws shall preclude an association from forming as a non-profit organization.

Article II. MEMBERSHIP.

Section 2.01: ELIGIBILITY FOR MEMBERSHIP. Any person who lives on or owns any real property, or any legal entity who operates a place of business or institution, within the recognized boundaries of the Association is eligible for Membership in the Association. In no event shall any person be eligible for more than one membership. Membership may be terminated by resignation and shall terminate at once for anyone who ceases to reside, own property or operate a place of business or institution within the boundaries of the Association.

Section 2.02: NON-DISCRIMINATION. The Association shall afford equal opportunities for participation in the Neighborhood Association to all persons who meet the membership qualifications regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, handicap, familial status, or national origin.

Section 2.03 MEMBER OF RECORD. A Member of Record is any person eligible for membership who has signed-in and provided contact information at any meeting within the previous two years. Members of Record are entitled to Notice of Meetings.

Section 2.04: HONORARY MEMBERSHIP. Any person may acquire Honorary Membership in the Association, by a majority vote of the Membership at a regularly scheduled meeting. Honorary Membership entitles the person to information regarding the Association, such as a newsletter, and free participation in neighborhood events. Honorary Membership does not, however, include voting rights.

Section 2.05: MEMBERSHIP DUES. Dues are not required for membership or voting in the Association. Voluntary contributions, or other sources as authorized by the Board of Directors, may be used as an income source for the Association. Any income realized by the association will be used to pursue the purposes of the Association. No board member will receive an income.

Section 2.06: VOTING RIGHTS. For purposes of voting, signing name and address on the “Meeting Sign-In Sheet” shall evidence membership. Each member, except Honorary Members, shall be entitled to one vote. There shall be no voting by proxy.

Section 2.07: AUTHORITY TO REPRESENT ASSOCIATION. No member, including any member of the Board of Directors whether acting individually or for the Board, may represent to any public agency, the media, or other person or entity whatsoever that they represent the Association or the views or desires of the Association or the majority of the members, unless such representation, and the essential content of the representations made by such member, has specifically been authorized by vote of the members and be so documented.

It is the intent of this section that the Association shall represent the consensus of the members, and if consensus cannot be reached, then no representation shall be made in the name of the Association on behalf of its members. It is anticipated that this section shall be implemented by the members, by majority vote, giving general guidance and direction to the Board on specific issues, and the Board shall then give specific direction to the elected officers for the implementation of the members directions and public representations of the Association. A summary of dissenting views shall be transmitted along with any recommendation made by the Association to the City.

ARTICLE III. MEETINGS OF MEMBERS.

Section 3.01: PLACE OF MEETINGS. All meetings, whether regular, annual or special shall be held at a suitable location within the Association, or as close thereto as is reasonably practicable, considering the distance, suitability of facilities, and cost, if any. When practical, public meeting places such as libraries and schools are preferred.

Section 3.02: REGULAR MEETINGS. There shall be at least two general membership meetings yearly. The meetings shall be convened at a time and place designated by the President.

Section 3.03: ANNUAL MEETING. An annual meeting of the Members shall be held in the month of _____ of each year, if possible. At such meeting, the Members shall elect the Officers of the Association, receive reports on the affairs of the Association, and transact any other business which is within the power of the Members. If an annual meeting has not been called and held within six months after the time designated for it, any Member may call the annual meeting.

Section 3.04: SPECIAL MEETINGS. Special meetings of the Board of Directors or Members may be called by the President, by a majority of the Board of Directors of the Association, or by twenty-five percent (25%) or more of the current Members of Record.

Section 3.05: NOTICE OF MEETINGS. A written, electronic or printed notice of each meeting, stating the place, day, and hour of the meeting, shall be given by the Secretary of the Association, or by the person authorized to call the meeting, to each active Member of Record of the Association. Public notice, in a manner deemed reasonable by the Association, shall also be provided. This notice shall be given at least seven (7) days before the date named for the meeting.

Section 3.06: QUORUM. The Members present at any properly announced meeting shall constitute a quorum at such meeting.

Section 3.07: VOTING. All issues shall be decided by a majority vote of members present at the meetings.

Section 3.08: PROCEDURES. The Association shall follow Robert's Rules of Order (Revised) in all areas not covered by the bylaws.

ARTICLE IV. BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

Section 4.01: BOARD OF DIRECTORS. The Board of Directors shall consist of not less than three (3) individuals and not more than eight (8) individuals, inclusive of elected Officers, each of whom at all times shall be a Member of Record of the Association.

The affairs of the Association shall be managed by a Board of Directors in the interim between general meetings of members. The board shall be accountable to the membership; shall seek the views of those affected by any proposed policies or reactions in a public meeting format before adopting any recommendation on behalf of the association; and shall strictly comply with these Bylaws.

Section 4.02: OFFICERS. The Association shall have the following officers:

- 1) President;
- 2) Vice-President;
- 3) Treasurer; and,
- 4) Secretary.

Section 4.03: ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS. The Officers and Board Members shall be nominated and elected by majority vote at the annual meeting of the full membership. Secret written ballots may be used for voting for Officers and Board Members.

Section 4.04: TERMS. The Officers and Board Members shall serve a one-year term, with no limitations on future terms.

Section 4.05: DUTIES. The duties of the Officers are as follows:

- 1) The **PRESIDENT** shall be the principal executive officer of the Association and shall preside over all meetings, maintain tie-breaking votes, represent the Association on public occasions, and make such committee appointments from the membership, as shall be deemed advisable for the effective conduct of the work of the Association.
- 2) The **VICE-PRESIDENT** shall assist the President as the President requests, and represent the Association on appropriate occasions. The Vice-President shall also, in the absence or disability of the President, perform the duties and exercise the powers of the President of the Association.
- 3) The **TREASURER** shall collect, safeguard, disburse and make periodic reports of all funds collected in the name of the Association. Annual Financial Reports shall be prepared by the Treasurer and presented to the Members at the Annual Meeting.
- 4) The **SECRETARY** shall keep attendance records and record the proceedings of all meetings, maintain adequate records of the Association activities, and conduct such official correspondence as shall be required.
- 5) The duties of the Officers shall not be limited, as enumerated above.

6) Unless so authorized, no Officer or Board Member shall have any power or authority to bind the Association by any contract or engagement, to pledge its credit, or to render it liable pecuniarily for any purpose or in any amount.

Section 4.06. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST. A conflict of interest exists for a member of the Board of Directors when they hold a personal financial interest, which will be impacted by the action or inaction by the Association on a proposal before the Membership or Board. A personal financial interest shall include a financial interest held by the Board Member and/or their immediate family. A personal financial interest includes an ownership interest above 5% of a business, which will be impacted by the decision of the Association. Examples of personal financial interest would include but not be limited to:

1. Ownership of property the use or control of which is being considered by the Association; or
2. Plans to purchase property the use or control of which is under discussion by the Association.

Section 4.07: DECLARING A CONFLICT OF INTEREST. Whenever an Officer or Board Member determines that they have a conflict of interest relating to an item under discussion, they must inform the body hearing the proposal that the conflict of interest exists.

Section 4.08: ABSTENTION FROM VOTING. Officers or Board Members shall not vote on matters in which they have a conflict of interest.

Section 4.09: VACANCIES AND REMOVAL. Any Officer or Board Member may be removed by a two-thirds majority vote of the members of the Association (excluding the person to be removed). Upon the death, removal, resignation, or incapacity of an Officer or Board Member of the Association, a majority of the Association shall elect a successor.

Section 4.10: MANAGEMENT. The Association shall be managed by the Board of Directors so elected, with powers consistent with these Bylaws of the Association.

Section 4.11: EMERGENCY POWERS. In such cases where the Board of Directors is required to provide neighborhood response before a question can be presented to the membership, the Board of Directors must indicate to the questioner that this is the case. They shall then present the action taken at a special or general meeting within fourteen (14) days or a lesser time for ratification by the membership, where circumstances dictate.

ARTICLE V. COMMITTEES.

Section 5.01: AUTHORIZATION TO ESTABLISH COMMITTEES. The Association may establish committees as deemed necessary to pursue its stated objectives. Members of Committees shall be appointed with term specifications by the President. Committees shall make recommendations to the Board of Directors for actions.

Section 5.02: GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE. The Grievance Committee, whose purpose is to receive complaints and promptly recommend specific actions to the Board of Directors, shall consist of at least three (3) members, who are not members of the Board of Directors, appointed by the President.

ARTICLE VI. FINANCES.

Section 6.01: EXPENDITURES. Expenditures of funds amounting to over One Hundred Dollars (\$100) in any month must be approved by majority vote of the Membership present at any properly-announced meeting of the Membership.

ARTICLE VII. GRIEVANCES.

Section 7.01: COMPLAINT OF GRIEVANCE. A member of the Association adversely affected by an action of the Board of Directors may submit in writing a complaint to any member of the Grievance Committee. Such complaint shall be provided in writing within ten (10) calendar days of the meeting where such action took place.

Section 7.02: RESOLUTION. Within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of the complaint, the committee shall arrange with the complainant a mutually acceptable place, day and hour for a review of the complaint, and will in writing, within ten (10) calendar days of such meeting, mail a recommended resolution, and/or action, of the grievance to the complainant and each member of the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall hold a Special Meeting of the Board of Directors within ten (10) calendar days of the postmarked letter from the Grievance Committee to determine whether or not the committee's recommendation is acceptable to the Board of Directors or complainant.

Section 7.03: FINAL. If the Board is unable to resolve the grievance, then final resolution of the complaint shall be by vote of the membership at a Special Meeting of the membership. The Board shall be obliged to call this meeting.

ARTICLE XIII. NON-COMPLIANCE WITH BYLAWS.

Section 8.01: NON-COMPLIANCE PENALTIES. Noncompliance with the Bylaws of the Association may result in termination of membership for the offender, upon a two-thirds majority vote by the membership of the Association. Under no circumstance will noncompliance with any section of these Bylaws constitute the forfeiture of the rights of the Association to exist or the rights of the Association to enforce the Bylaws of the Association.

ARTICLE IX. ACCEPTANCE OF BYLAWS AND AMENDMENTS

Section 9.01: ADOPTION. Adoption of these Bylaws and any Amendments shall be by a two-thirds majority vote of those present at any meeting of the Members of the Association, provided written copies of the Bylaws and proposed Amendments, and notice of the meeting is given at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting.

Section 9.02: ACCEPTANCE. The undersigned, being a majority of the persons eligible for membership present at the formation meeting of the Association held (date) _____, do hereby certify that the within and foregoing Bylaws constitute the Bylaws of such Association:

1. _____
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etc. ...

ATTACHMENT A. DEPICTION OF BOUNDARY