

ALLOWING OWNERS INPUT

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Many owners think that members of the Board never seek their input and/or could care less what the owners think about decisions being made or considered to be made.

Owners may have valuable information pertinent to current issues that this board may be considering for action. For example, several years ago the pool pump may have been replaced and as the complete makeup of the board has changed with no continuity, prior members of the board may know that there was a 10 year warranty on the pump being considered for replacement. Having the open forum at the beginning of the meeting allows for those comments to come forward saving the association a lot of money.

Nevada law now requires that the board have an open forum at the beginning and the end of each board meeting. The first forum must be limited to items that are on the agenda while the forum at the end has to be open for any comments.

During the legislative session, where this was considered, the original bill required that an owner comment period be held on each item on the agenda before the decision was made by the Board. Industry experts testified that requiring this process would not only cause for seriously longer meetings, but meetings that could be continuous in length to allow members in a large association to comment on each item. This would run the meeting for a full month. One size does not fit all in this area as a controversial issue could bring out over ½ of the members in some cases, which could be 4,000 to 5,000 owners.

The compromise was to allow a comment period at the beginning on items on the agenda and one at the end on any item.

Some boards have determined that they will have an open forum for members that will last for 30 minutes prior to moving on to the agenda. If owners in attendance have completed their comments on all agenda items, some boards have made the decision to ask the owners if they had comments that were not on the agenda if the remaining time worked to take additional comments. Does the law say they can do this? Not specifically, but who is hurt in this process as long as all owners in attendance knew that there would be a 30 minute period allowed for comments.

Communicating and allowing owners to communicate back while making decisions benefits all of the owners ultimately and getting their buy-in to the action.