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ASK MARIA

By Maria Bartolotti

THE RIGHT FIT

Choosing the right condo management company

Our condo board is talking about hiring a management company. What exactly would be their role?

I can tell you from experience that the role of the condo manager is not routine. No two days are the same in our world of property management. One day we're dealing with dogs barking, the next it's owners partying, no heat inside the unit, missing mats, keys down the elevator shaft, nightly board meetings, negotiating contracts — these are just a few of the challenges that a condo manager must respond to and be willing to find a solution for.

A professional condo management company is able to handle these critical tasks with their skilled staff, allowing the condo board of directors to concentrate their efforts on decisions that are in the best interest of the whole condo complex.

Choosing a good condominium management company can add significant value to your investment and can be one of the most important tasks a condo board undertakes.

The role of the condo manager is to provide advice to the board when requested, to carry out the day-to-day administrative functions specified in the management agreement, and to carry out the board's instructions. When interviewing a condo management company, look at a few key aspects to help you make an informed decision.

- Does the company provide services tailored to your condo and how? Avoid any management contract that transfers the decision-making authority from the board to the management company.
- How does your condo management company communicate with the board and the owners? Do they have well defined process and procedures that will help make communication easier?
- The one thing I hear too often from new clients are, "my manager rarely communicates with us," or "we can never get a hold of them when we need to." With today's technology there is no excuse for not being able to get a hold of your manager or their representatives. How reachable are they?
- Does the company have reliable contractors that can tend to call outs in a timely and proficient manner?
- Are management services clearly outlined in the management agreement? Is there room for flexibility? Is there a termination clause and what does it contain? No one wants to be put into a position that is difficult to get out of.

These are just a few of the functions that a good condominium management company performs.

Until next time... CL

Editor's note: Readers are encouraged to ask their most confounding condo questions to our resident condo specialist: Maria Bartolotti.

Maria Bartolotti is the owner-manager of New Concept Management Inc. She has developed a strong reputation for rendering timely and efficient services to the condominium industry. Maria believes that her company's success hinges on her hands-on approach to condominium management as well as maintaining open lines of communications with her clientele. Maria is actively involved in her industry. For more information, visit **www.newconceptmanagement.com**