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New CAI course educates condo. board members

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Community Associations Institute (CAI) is offering a new, comprehensive education course that will help community association board members better understand association operations, management and governance.

Developed by experts in the community association business, the Board Leadership Development Workshop is available both as an online course and as a classroom workshop. The curriculum is equally appropriate for self-managed communities and those association boards that have the support of a professional manager.

"The information and insights conveyed in the workshop can save association leaders time, money and unnecessary headaches, perhaps even help them avoid costly, divisive lawsuits," said, CAI chief executive officer Thomas Skiba, CAE. "Even with a skilled community manager or attorney, board members can find themselves and their associations in hot water. This course can help them avoid the common pitfalls—and unanticipated traps—that association boards inevitably encounter."

Skiba points out that association board members are volunteers elected by their neighbors to serve their communities—a role that not only requires a commitment of time, but a commitment to understand the legal, leadership and operational obligations of the position.

With that in mind, the workshop provides association board members with invaluable information and perspective on many of the most critical elements of community association operations, including:

- * The role of the board;
- * The functions of president, secretary and treasurer;
- * Governing documents;
- * Finances and reserve funding;
- * Working with community managers;
- * Selecting and overseeing contractors;
- * Managing board and annual meetings;
- * Holding association elections;
- * Recruiting and retaining volunteers; and
- * Communicating with residents.

The workshop includes a toolbox of materials, including the Board Member Tool Kit, a best-selling book from CAI Press; the Board Member Tool Kit Workbook; a variety of informational publications and pamphlets; and a copy of Common Ground, CAI's award-winning magazine. Each student receives a certificate of completion, recognition on the CAI website and access to a series of online

webinars.

"We know from national surveys that association board members are dedicated volunteers doing their very best to serve their communities and neighbors," said Dave Jennings, CAE, CAI's vice president of education. "But that doesn't mean they know everything they need to know. Many boards get in trouble because they don't know what they don't know. That's why this course can be so helpful."

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