



# Successful Approaches to Engaging Volunteers

*A discussion on strategies for recruiting new board members, sustaining leadership pipelines, and addressing turnover and vacancies within associations.*

**May 2, 2026**

# DESIGNING A WELL-OILED MACHINE

## TOPICS

- Adopting a Business Mindset
- Identifying Volunteer Needs & Opportunities
- Attracting & Reaching Potential Volunteers
- Engagement, Retention, and Recognition of Volunteers



## Benjamin Andres, Esq.

### *Whiteford, Taylor & Preston*

Mr. Andres has more than a decade of legal experience, including over four years with Whiteford's Community Associations Industry Group. As Counsel, he represents condominium unit owner associations, homeowner associations, and housing cooperative entities. Mr. Andres provides fiduciary counseling and training to Boards of Directors on issues and disputes, interpretation and compliance with governing documents, member issues and disputes, elections, voting and other day-to-day business operations and procedures.

He reviews and negotiates contracts for various services needed by community associations and assists various clients in Maryland and the District of Columbia with drafting, revising and amending governing documents. Mr. Andres is also active in two chapters of Community Associations Institute (CAI), the Chesapeake Region and Washington Metropolitan Region.



## Alicia Menefee, CMCA, AMS

### *D. R. Horton*

Ms. Menefee has over a decade of experience in the community association industry as a homeowner, volunteer, community association manager, and board member. At D. R. Horton, she oversees HOA operations in communities under construction in Maryland as well as portions of West Virginia and Virginia.

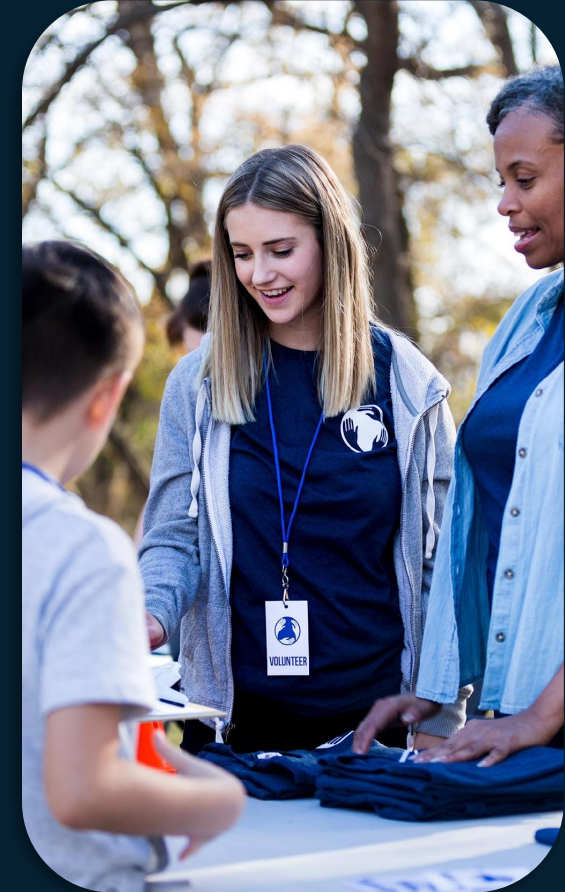
A former high school teacher, Ms. Menefee's goal is to provide educational resources and opportunities for homeowners and community leaders to engage in ethical self-governance, sustainable facilities maintenance, and stewardship of shared spaces.

Ms. Menefee is active in the Chesapeake Chapter Community of CAI through the Outreach and Legislative Committees. She also serves on the Board of Directors of the Maryland Building Industry Association and chairs the 55+ Better Housing Council.



# Did You Know?

According to the Foundation for Community Association Research, across the U.S., more than **2.5 million homeowners** serve on HOA boards or committees, contributing over **101 million volunteer hours** each year.



# Understanding Obstacles to Volunteerism



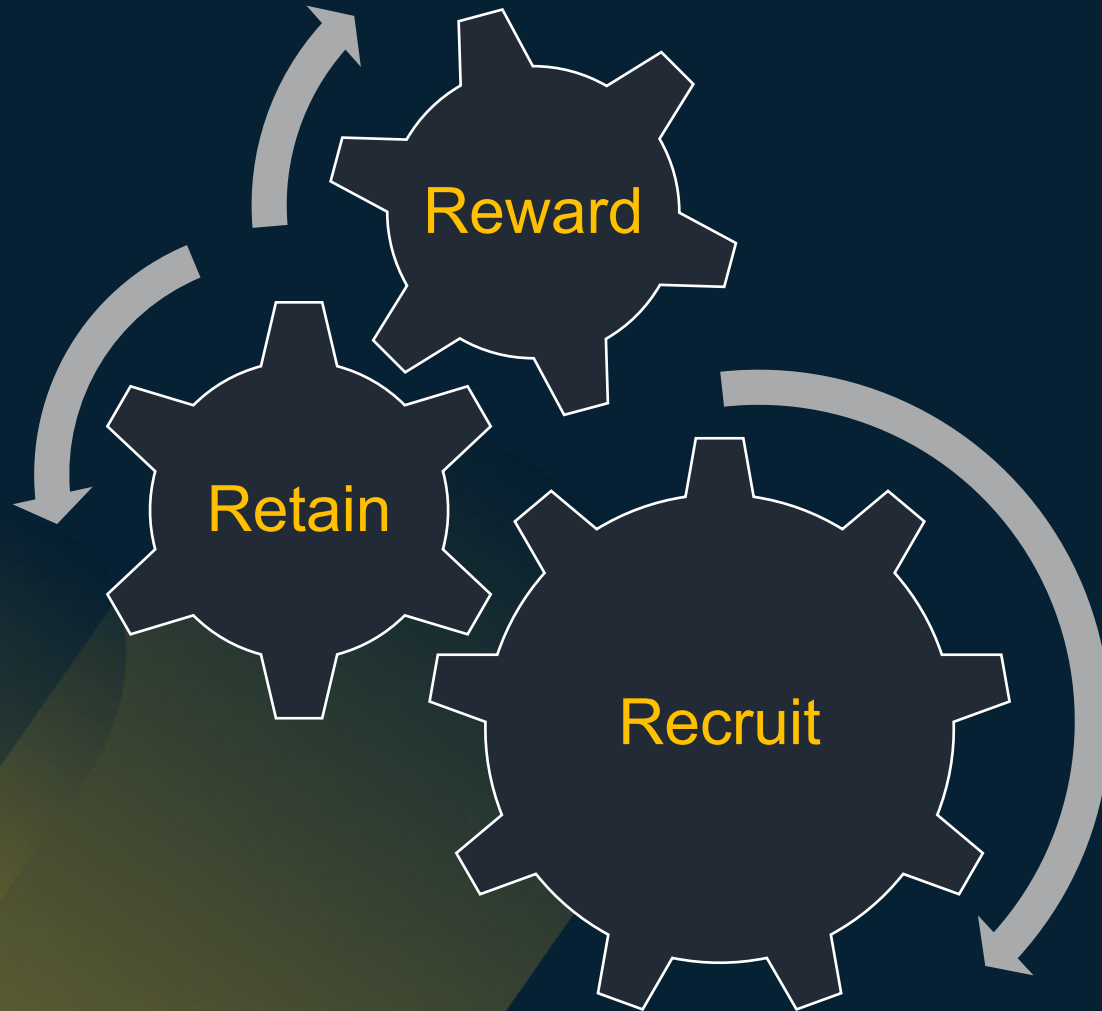
- Negative perceptions
- Poor meeting culture
- Time commitment
- Fear of liability
- Lack of awareness
- Perceived lack of impact
- Misunderstanding of role

# Receivership & Liability

What happens when a governing body cannot fill sufficient vacancies to constitute quorum?



# *Business-Based Best Practices*



## Craft a strategic plan to address volunteer needs

- Identify immediate and long-term needs
- Understand volunteer lifecycles
- Adopt committee charters
- Implement standard volunteer forms
- Schedule activities
  - Recurring and ongoing
  - Need-based



# Shift the Narrative

- Great neighborhoods don't happen; they're built by neighbors like you.
- It takes a village. Be part of ours.
- Less scrolling, more strolling. Volunteer today!
- Two hours a month. A lifetime of community.
- Shape where you live.
- Your street. Your say.
- Don't just live here. Lead here.
- Meet your neighbors. Make a difference.
- Exceptional communities are built by exceptional people.
- Where distinguished neighbors become dedicated leaders.



# Committee Charters & Forms

- Purpose statement
- Composition and Term Limits
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Decision-making authority
- Operational Guidelines
- Anticipated time commitment
- Skills Needed & Skills Gained
- Code of conduct



# Recruitment Activities

- Engage All Audiences
- Utilize Digital Platforms
- Volunteer Placement
  - Activity-based
  - Skill-based
- Annual Volunteer / Committee Fair
- FAQ Events for New Owners
- Ongoing Recruitment Mindset



# Volunteer Placement

## Offer a diversity of volunteer activities

- Activity-based (cleanup day, potlucks & social events)
- Skill-based (photography, financial skills, architectural skills)



# *Maintaining Motivation*



- **Regular Communication**
- **Constructive Feedback**
- **Growth Opportunities**
- **Mentoring & Training**

# Layers of Recognition

- Digital platform shoutout
- Newsletter acknowledgement
- Board meeting acknowledgement
- Formal Award Ceremony
- Casual gathering
- Personal Awards or Certificates
- Tree/Bench dedications
- Volunteer “Spotlights”
- Branded swag
- Encourage feedback
- Personal thank-you letters
- LinkedIn endorsements
- Collect and display photos



# Conclusion

## Importance of Volunteers

Volunteers are crucial for building vibrant communities and supporting effective organizations.

## Understanding Needs

Successful volunteer recruitment starts with understanding community and organizational needs

## Crafting Clear Messages

Clear and compelling messages attract and inspire volunteers to join and stay engaged.

## Valuing Volunteers

Recognizing and appreciating volunteers helps retain support and sustain impactful programs.



# Questions?

**Thank you!**

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# Thank

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