


The UCOM Press



Spring/Summer 2022

UCOM IS BACK!

We are excited for the education to once again begin! Look for future quarterly newsletters on our website at www.ucomonline.org.

A Message from the UCOM Office

Websites, emails, texts, computers, I Pads, and cell phones are today's methods of communication. Before 2020, the year of the virus UCOM delighted in presenting live speakers to live audiences. Covid-19 dealt us a heavy blow, from which we are still recuperating.

With a forward thinking, progressive board of directors, some of whom specialize in communications, UCOM has redesigned our educational offerings to make available to membership both live educational seminars and on- line remote presentations.

Help us get the word out about upcoming events by giving us your email addresses. Let your management companies know that it is fine to share your contact information with us. Postal mailings on a regular basis are cost prohibitive. We will be offering valuable information and want to be sure that it is available to you. Your mailboxes will not be flooded, we promise. Spread the word to family and friends in other condo associations.

Just send a short email with your name, association, and email address to info@ucomonline.org and we'll get back to you

with updates. Thank you for your trust and support!

It's all about keeping up with today's reality. Knowledge is power. Be strong!

By: Eva Veller

Exec. V.P.

Positive Changes Ahead!

I'm taking this opportunity to familiarize you with the UCOM Board of Directors.

We've had some positive changes and additions. Our newest members are the very hard working and talented Cheryl Curley and Dawn Miller. Cheryl is with Jarvis Property Restoration/BMS CAT of Michigan. Dawn is the President of Key Association Management in Clinton Township. They have somehow managed to find time and energy to help UCOM get back on its feet.

Long time directors, Clara Sumeghy, Cindy Locke and Neal Moore are still with us and working hard. Clara is the Board Secretary of long standing, while Neal Moore has agreed to take on the position of Treasurer.

Thanks to all of them for staying the course.

UCOM has made a lot of changes and improvements. Check out our website to learn about our plans and upcoming events. We are looking forward to the new UCOM developing plans for this year and making plans for the new year.

I want to take time to thank Eva Veller, our long-time office manager and new Executive Vice President for the great job she is doing.

I look forward to seeing everyone at our upcoming live and actual mini seminars.

Carol Hoggard

President

UCOM

Rentals in Condominiums

Real estate investors have found condominiums to be an attractive investment compared to single family homes for much of the same reasons as condo owners.

The exterior maintenance and some interior issues are the responsibility of the condo association which clearly reduces the effort required to manage a condo investment.

There are however, some adverse consequences of high percentage of investor owned condos for condo associations. The three major consequences:

1. Inability to obtain mortgage financing
2. Rising insurance premiums
3. Renters may create more issues than owners

The Michigan Condominium Act provides that co-owners may amend the bylaws to adopt restrictions against rentals of units. If your bylaws already have a cap on rental units, enforcement should be maintained. If not, the bylaws will need change and approval of 2/3 of eligible owners. The task of revising bylaws is formidable and should be guided by the condo board's legal counsel.

By: Neal Moore

Secretary

The Importance of a Restoration Company Relationship

It is important to develop a good relationship with a property restoration company for your community. They can assist with keeping the community safe and also develop an emergency plan for the entire complex. Service is available 24/7, 365 days a year. Your restoration company can also provide maintenance tips and assist with small jobs as well as large community improvement projects with little or no interruption in your day to day living. Developing a relationship is crucial for the safety and well-being of your community.

By: Cheryl Curley—Board Member-Hospitality Director UCOM/

Commercial Account Manager-Jarvis Property Restoration/BMS CAT of Michigan

Responsibility as a Board Member

As a Board of Director of City Center Estates Condominiums for 22 years, I have held many different office titles, but the most important is that of a director. Early on, I would pick the brains of any director I could locate with experience from another Association to help me learn the best way to be a good Board member. Then I heard about UCOM and that was where I received the most knowledge in the shortest period of time. The knowledge was so immeasurable that I decided I needed to be on that board as well. I have now served on the UCOM Board for approximately twelve years.

Most Associations are run on a shoestring budget and have to make good decisions on how they can get the best return for their money. They need to stay in contact with their attorneys for many decisions needed to stay out of trouble while doing what is best for the Association.

This knowledge generally costs more than \$200 an hour and is limited to specific information needed at that time. Joining UCOM, since their main agenda is to educate directors with knowledge from all sources such as attorneys, insurance companies, and expert replacement reserve studies, is money well spent. In many cases, for less than \$200 a year to join, all five directors had access to a six-hour seminar full of information from attorneys and other professionals needed to help manage their Associations. Also Included, were newsletters with opinions from attorneys and other professionals on important subjects at least three or four times a year. I saved most of these articles and have referred back to them many times when I needed specific information that I knew I had filed away. This was of course, all before COVID-19.

Board members also do not like to spend money to update their documents. Original Bylaws and Master Deeds are usually done with attorneys hired by the builders and developers and are generally generic in content and not specific in many cases to the condominiums themselves. We found this to be the case with our documents, and it made it difficult to manage the Association as there were many interpretations that were not specific to our complex. Any documents from the 1990's is probably obsolete and need to be brought up-to-date. You can always negotiate the costs with an attorney. Updating our documents was probably one of the most important things we ever did. When completed, we had them placed in binders which included the Second Amendment to the Master Deed, Restated Condominium Bylaws, and Rules and Regulations with the Table of Contents. Having everything in one place made it easy for the co-owners to find what we were referring to when we had to send violation notices. This also allows us to add updated content as needed in the future, a page at a time, without having to redo the entire documents again.

Directors can never have enough knowledge no matter how many years they are on the Board. There are always important changes coming from Lansing that we need to be constantly aware of. UCOM helps keep us informed of those as well. By staying informed you can always feel good about the fact that you are doing the best you can for your Association with the confidence needed to get things done correctly. Following a strict policy based on knowledge also makes it less likely that a co-owner can successfully challenge fines issued pursuant to that policy. Knowledge equals success.

Cecilia Locke

UCOM Board Member

Role of the Management Company

It's important to understand the role of your management company. Management companies serve as your agent whose purpose is to advise and consult a board of directors (whether a board takes the advice or not), they are not your employee. Management companies act on behalf of the board and facilitate the decisions of the board. Remember that they are professionals, not referees and should be treated as such. It can be detrimental to a board and its community to consistently be at odds with their management company. Management companies are needed to offer expertise based on their experience, training and education. The management company does its best to ensure that your property remains stable both financially and physically. A board should trust and rely on their management company's vast experience and unlimited resources.

By: Dawn Miller/Communications Director at UCOM

President of Key Association Management

Help Us Spread the Word!

Do you know any other community board members that could benefit from being a UCOM member? We're back, help us spread the word!

Educational programs have begun.

Virtual seminars have begun. Virtual presentations will be available on the UCOM website. You will not need a password or pin this year.

Live seminars will begin in July (we will keep you posted as to the date and location). Legal counsel (UCOM members) will be sharing their knowledge with you at actual, live events. These meetings will take place at various venues for your convenience.

A newsletter will post on the website quarterly.

Look for information on the website:

www.ucomonline.org

Emails will be sent to you from:

ucommich@gmail.com.

Add these addresses to your list of contacts so it doesn't end up in your spam folder.

Share your email info with us. Send your email address to info@ucomonline.org.

See us on Facebook.

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