



## Prairie Hills Homes Association Officers and Directors Manual

### **Welcome to the Board**

This manual outlines the responsibilities of the officers and directors of homes associations that are members of the Homes Associations of Kansas City (HAKC). Although each of the 41 associations in the HAKC is a separate and distinct organization, all are managed by an elected Board of Directors. Those Directors are accountable to the association's membership and are governed by Association's By-laws.

In addition to the officers specified in the By-Laws, many associations designate certain directors to be committee chairs or to oversee a specific aspect of the association's activities. Although these assignments vary from one association to the next, certain board positions are common to nearly all HAKC associations.

This manual describes the duties of both the legally designated officers of the association and the optional committee chairs. It also outlines the working relationship between the neighborhood board and the HAKC. Because the HAKC exists to serve its member associations, it is important for neighborhood board members to understand the full range of services offered by the HAKC.

After a section on general background information, this manual is organized by function. Each section first describes the duties of a particular Board position and then outlines the HAKC services available to support that person or committee. Hopefully, this information will enable busy, volunteer Board members to fully utilize the staff and resources of the HAKC.

Finally, the professional staff of the HAKC extends an open invitation to association board members. Please feel free to visit or call our offices whenever you have questions about the workings of HAKC or about any neighborhood issues.

### **Historic Background**

The concept of a "homes association" or alliance of land/homeowners is not unique to our country or even our century. In fact, the concept dates back to Seventeenth Century England when the Earl of Leicester built his London townhouse and set aside a nearby plot of land for a park to be known as Leicester Square. By 1700, the Square was surrounded by buildings and by

1743, the neighbors bordering the Square had drafted and adopted a legal document to insure that they, the property owners, would maintain and have exclusive use of this park.

A century later, the concept was introduced in America on Manhattan Island in New York City. There, Samuel Ruggles created Gramercy Park in 1831. Through a legal device still in effect today, Ruggles vested title to the park to a group of property-owner trustees and charged the trustees to maintain the park for the benefit of the owners of the 66 surrounding plots.

At almost the same time, Bostonians were adapting a similar model to develop the famed Louisburg Square on historic Beacon Hill. Although the park had been created, landscaped and enjoyed by several generations of the neighbors, there was no legal provision for the maintenance of the park until 1844. At that time, the owners of the 28 townhouses that faced three sides of the park drafted and recorded a land agreement which established the Committee of the Proprietors of Louisburg Square. This, the oldest known American development with a formal homes association, continues to this day, working to preserve not only the park, but the character, charm and high property value of the neighborhood.

A few decades later, other New England communities began to adapt the concept. In 1871, a group of property owners in Squirrel Island, Maine formed a neighborhood organization based on a 999-year leasehold agreement. This organization had the same mission, structure, and functions as a modern homes association. A year earlier, a group in Ocean Grove, New Jersey, used a similar but shorter -- just 99-year -- leasehold arrangement to maintain parkland and properties.

The charter, contracts or various legal devices used to empower these neighborhood groups were critically important. Without these instruments, the motivation to settle and conserve neighborhoods was often temporary. Some neighborhoods were developed because of a unifying religious or cultural force; others evolved due to commercial ventures, nearby business opportunities or geographic attractions.

Without the protection of a legal covenant, a once thriving and desirable neighborhood could deteriorate over time. Individual properties would fall into disrepair and without a concerned core of caretakers, public spaces would be neglected or abandoned. Eventually, the association would dissolve, leaving the properties and the residential values to further decline.

To stabilize values and lend permanence to the emerging neighborhoods, developers around the turn-of-the-century returned to the legal arrangement which provided for homes associations under covenants "running with the land." In other words, the rights and responsibilities of homeowners are permanently attached to the land, i.e., the deed. Ownership of the property may change but certain duties and benefits remain the same, regardless of who owns the property at any given time. It is not the individual who enjoys these privileges; rather it is the individual *property-owner* who enjoys the declared privileges.

The groundwork for this kind of binding provision was laid in Baltimore, Maryland in 1891, with the development of Roland Park. Developer Edward Boulton and

renowned landscape architect Frederick Law Olmstead designed Roland Park, one of the first large-scale subdivisions built on the fringe of a growing metropolitan area. Their project was, in essence, the first American suburb. The beauty, stability and overall quality of this carefully planned community led Roland Park to dominate the market for gracious home sites in Baltimore for nearly a century. Still managed by a strong homes association, Roland Park remains one of the premier residential developments in the United States.

In 1909, the Kensington neighborhood in Great Neck, Long Island further established the principle of homes associations with assessments running with the land. Like Roland Park, Kensington flourishes today.

The early Twentieth Century witnessed the rise of such outstanding communities as Duncan McDuffies' celebrated St. Francis Wood in San Francisco; Frank Vanderlip's 3,200-acre headland over the Pacific Palos Verdes; and the Russell Sage Foundation's Forest Hills Gardens built just nine miles from Broadway in New York City. All of these developments were enriched by the participation of the Olmstead Brother's design firm and by a strong commitment to islands, green spaces and public art.

In Kansas City, developer J. C. Nichols demonstrated the same commitment to aesthetics in creating the Country Club District, a planned community that became a national hallmark of residential excellence. And like the other fine neighborhoods mentioned here, the J. C. Nichols Company utilized the homes association concept to preserve these local treasures.

The first true homes association in Kansas City was formed in Mission Hills in 1914. The J. C. Nichols Company then used that model to establish separate associations in each subdivision in the developing area south of Brush Creek.

By the mid-1940s, it became apparent that these associations had similar objectives and almost identical administrative needs. So, once again demonstrating foresight and a commitment to continuity, the J. C. Nichols Company formed the Homes Associations of the Country Club District (HAKC) to consolidate administrative services and activities through a central office.

Today, the 41 associations that make up the HAKC include over 9,000 acres of residential land, dozens of neighborhoods, fifteen shopping centers and over 20,000 homes. The HAKC operates a full-time office, managed by an Executive Director and four professional staff members. A ten-member volunteer Board of Directors oversees the operations.

## **Purpose of a Homes Association**

The primary purpose of a homes association is to preserve property values in the neighborhood or subdivision. Typically, the original developer of the subdivision creates the association to oversee the Declaration of Restrictions recorded on each property and incorporated in the Deed to that property.

To fulfill its mission, the association administers and enforces the deed covenants and restrictions and may, at its option, provide additional services. Such services typically include maintaining parks, islands, entry ways, and other lands owned by the association; preserving fountains, statuary and other assets

of the association; and working with the local authorities to insure safety and security in the neighborhood.

In some areas, the homes association may also provide trash removal, snow removal, private security patrols, and/or management of common recreational facilities.

In addition to these specific 'observable' duties, the homes association works to promote community spirit, cordial relations and pride in the neighborhood.

## **Declaration of Restrictions**

In most Nichols-developed subdivisions, the J.C. Nichols Company filed a "Declaration of Restrictions" before offering any lots for sale. In some older associations, the restrictions were added after homes were occupied.

The "Declaration of Restrictions," which was filed with the County Register or Recorder of Deeds, sets forth:

- The restrictions that apply to each property in the association;
- The term for which the restrictions shall apply;
- The method for revising the restrictions; and
- The parties having the authority to enforce the restrictions.

Although the actual restrictions vary among the individual associations, they generally cover acceptable use of the land, set backs, frontages, and building dimensions. They also include specific prohibitions regarding outbuildings, commercial enterprises, boarding houses or other multi-family use of properties, livestock or agricultural use, and other neighborhood intrusions.

In some cases, the restrictions also cover building materials, architectural styles, additions, fences, vehicle storage, and other aspects of the property.

The restrictions "run with the land." In other words, the restrictions apply regardless of who owns the property at any given time. Although some of the restrictions are similar to zoning requirements and city building codes, they are often more stringent than city restrictions. A homeowner in a protected neighborhood must comply with both city codes and the restrictions set forth in this Declaration.

Initially, the J.C. Nichols Company, its assigns (those designated by the Nichols Company), the homeowner association or any property owner in the association had the right to enforce the restrictions. In the 1980s, the Nichols Company assigned its oversight and enforcement privileges to the HAKC.

The authority of the neighborhood homes association is found in the "Homes Association Declaration" for each subdivision. This document specifies which properties are under the jurisdiction of the association. It also outlines the means of assessment for determining association dues; establishes billing intervals; and confirms collection powers.

Any architectural variance or other deviation from the Declaration of Restrictions requires written approval from the HAKC Office and/or from the individual homes association. In some cases, a deviation may require that a percentage of homeowners in the association sign deed releases for the affected properties.

As the city evolves and communities age, these restrictions provide an important tool for preserving the residential charm and quality of the neighborhoods. For example, certain single-family neighborhoods may become targets for commercial development or for high-density townhouse or apartment projects. The "Declaration of Restrictions" gives homeowners the legal authority to resist unwelcome additions to the neighborhood.

Association Board members who have questions about their rights and responsibilities as enforcers of these restrictions are invited to contact the HAKC office. Our staff is experienced in and knowledgeable about these matters and will gladly share that expertise with association leaders. When appropriate, the HAKC will refer associations to qualified legal counsel and will work with the associations to seek legal remedies to neighborhood conflicts.

## **Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors of each association is responsible for the successful, efficient operation of the association. The Board plans, coordinates and conducts association activities so that members of the association are provided with a maximum of services.

### **Composition of the Board**

The Board of Directors consists of Officers and Directors elected annually by the association membership. All Board members must be members in good standing of the association.

All associations shall elect a President, one or two Vice Presidents, a Secretary and a Treasurer and as many additional board members as specified in the by-laws.

### **Duties of the Board**

The Board of Directors is responsible for the general management of the association. It reviews recommendations of Board members or other members of the association and takes appropriate action to resolve conflicts, address problems, preserve assets and generally improve conditions in the neighborhood. It authorizes or confirms the appointment of special committees and takes action on proposals submitted by such committees.

The Board is responsible for the financial condition of the association. It must approve all expenditures on behalf of the association and all investments of the association.

The Board approves and oversees the annual budget. The Board is responsible for making appointments to fill any vacancies which may occur among the elected members of the Board.

Roberts Rules of Order shall govern all meetings of the association, the Board of Directors and all committees.

### **Meetings of the Board**

The Board of Directors meets a minimum of four times per year or as often as necessary to conduct the business of the association in a timely and orderly fashion. A quorum of qualified members, as stipulated in the By-Laws of the association, is required for action on behalf of the homeowners.

### **Assistance for the Board**

If necessary, the Board may appoint and approve Associate Directors, Assistant Officers or Special Committees. At the invitation of the Board, these individuals may attend Board meetings, but may not (1) act as substitutes for elected members of the board in determining a quorum or (2) vote on proposals requiring board action.

To maintain continuity, all officers and directors should pass all pertinent records to their successors at the end of their terms of office.

Also, as outlined in this manual, the HAKC staff offers a variety of administrative services to assist Board members. As each Board position is described, this manual highlights the HAKC offerings that might be most useful to that Board member.

### **Association President**

The President of the association is its chief administrative and executive officer. It is his/her responsibility to see that the Board meets regularly and functions effectively. The President also confirms that each member of the Board understands and adequately performs his/her duties.

The President convenes all meetings of the Board and issues appropriate notice to members of the Board.

The President, if present, shall act as chairman at all meetings of the Board and of the association. In his/her absence, a vice president or some other Board member may be designated to chair the meeting.

The President, acting as chairman, shall have the deciding vote in case of a tie.

The President authorizes all expenditures of the association's funds upon approval of the board.

The President signs the minutes of Board meetings after they have been approved by the association board.

The President appoints the nominating committee each year.

The President signs liens to be filed and releases of liens on delinquent accounts.

### **HAKC Services:**

Association Presidents frequently call the HAKC staff for general guidance and assistance on neighborhood business. Topics discussed range from routine

inquiries about procedures to informal chats about how best to handle a troublesome situation to consultations about the legal rights of the association. The staff has many years of experience and hopes that Presidents will view the HAKC as a resource and a partner in association leadership.

If invited, the Executive Director of the HAKC will attend neighborhood Board meetings (or annual meetings of the full membership) to assist the President and advise Board members on association matters.

The HAKC staff will prepare routine correspondence for association Presidents. Staff will also prepare and mail Board meeting notices, meeting agendas and other materials to expedite board meetings.

The HAKC will appraise Presidents of any dues delinquencies that occur within the association and when authorized, will prepare, notarize and file lien documents against delinquent properties.

The HAKC office is the central repository for the official records of each association. When requested, the staff will photocopy and fax 'historic' documents (by-laws, contracts, correspondence) to association Presidents.

To encourage mutual support and dialogue among association Presidents, the HAKC sponsors regular luncheon meetings for Presidents, an annual All Boards Dinner and an annual business meeting. If issues arise which affect more than one HAKC neighborhood, the staff organizes joint meetings, which include two or more associations, to encourage a constructive exchange of information.

The HAKC also publishes a bi-monthly newsletter for all Board members of neighborhood associations.

### **Association Vice President**

The Vice President shall act as chairman in the absence of the President.

The Vice President is responsible for such regular or special duties as may be assigned by the President with the approval of the Board of Directors.

The Vice president acts as a liaison with other associations.

The Vice President orients and trains new board members

### **HAKC Services**

To assist in training new Board members, the HAKC prepares and mails Board Member Orientation packets to all newly elected Board members. Also, to assist vice presidents and other board members in contacting their counterparts in other neighborhoods, the HAKC maintains rosters of all association Boards and will provide mailing labels, as requested.

### **Association Secretary**

The Secretary acts as the official record-keeper and liaison between the association and the HAKC office. It is the Secretary's responsibility to present communications to the Board for appropriate action.

The Association Secretary issues notices of the Board and association meetings, prepares agendas in consultation with the president, maintains a record of attendance, prepares minutes of the meetings and submits copies of such minutes to the HAKC office.

The Secretary informs the HAKC of the results of the association elections and Board and/ or committee assignments.

### **HAKC Services**

The HAKC offers a variety of clerical services to assist association secretaries, not the least of which is serving as the official address and telephone contact for the association. The HAKC staff routinely field telephone calls from residents and when appropriate, relay messages to Board members. (In most cases, the HAKC staff can respond to caller's inquiries without, disturbing association Board members.)

When instructed by the association President or Secretary, the HAKC staff will prepare and distribute Board meeting notices or will provide mailing labels for association Secretaries. After Board meetings, HAKC staff will work from the Secretary's notes to compile and distribute the minutes of the meeting (always retaining a copy for HAKC's permanent files).

The HAKC works with the association Secretary to maintain current rosters of all association Board members. The HAKC can also provide the Secretary with an accurate, current list of the names, addresses and dues status of all association members.

### **Association Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall be responsible for the funds of the association. He/she monitors all association income and expenditures, serves (with the President) as a signatory on all association accounts, and reviews monthly financial statements provided by the HAKC office.

On a quarterly basis, the Treasurer presents the financial status to the Board of Directors for approval.

The Treasurer presents all bills against the association to the Board of Directors. Upon approval of the Board, he/she forwards bills and payment authorizations to the HAKC office.

The Treasurer reviews the association's annual financial budget and presents that budget to the Board for approval.

The Treasurer collects additional funds, as appropriate, at the association annual meeting or other special events of the association and forwards those funds to the HAKC office for deposit in the association's account.

The Treasurer reports any dues delinquencies to the Board and takes the necessary steps to collect delinquent dues.



Upon receipt of a monthly statement documenting disbursements made by the HAKC on behalf of the association, the Treasurer signs and returns to the HAKC a monthly reimbursement check to cover payments made from the HAKC revolving fund.

### **HAKC Services**

The HAKC services greatly reduce the burden on association Treasurers. In short, the HAKC performs all of the routine bookkeeping functions of the association. It handles all billing and dues collection activities, including routine billing, second billings, collections and, when necessary, liens. The HAKC receives, posts, and deposits all funds in the association's account.

Several times during the year, the HAKC hosts an orientation meeting for association Treasurers. The purpose of this meeting is to familiarize Treasurers with the procedures for conducting association business and to introduce Treasurers to staff members who will assist them.

The Treasurer receives regular reports on collections and when delinquencies occur, the Treasurer works with the HAKC staff to correct those delinquencies.

The HAKC also manages all disbursements for associations. When bills are submitted against the association, the HAKC seeks payment authorization from either the President or the Treasurer. Once payments are authorized, the HAKC pays all association bills within five business days.

The HAKC reports to the association all bills paid against on-going accounts, such as utility bills or contracted services for lawn maintenance, trash collection or snow removal.

The HAKC pays all association bills from a revolving fund account. Then, at the end of each month, the HAKC sends association treasurers a list of all checks drawn from that fund on behalf of the association. With that statement, the HAKC submits to Treasurers a reimbursement check, drawn on the association's account.

The HAKC prepares financial statements for all associations and forwards those statements to the Treasurers for presentation to the full Board. The HAKC also produces year-end financial statements for presentation at the association's annual meeting.

A certified public accounting firm conducts an annual audit of all HAKC and association accounts and reports the results of that audit to the HAKC Board of Directors and to association presidents.

Finally, the HAKC prepares and files all tax returns and reports for the association.

### **Complaints Director**

The homes association serves as the "watchdog" for the neighborhood. In this capacity, it seeks to protect the investments of all homeowners by insuring that properties throughout the neighborhood are well-tended and well maintained.

Further, the association works to peacefully and reasonably resolve differences among neighbors and to eliminate annoying situations in the neighborhood. Finally, the association seeks to promote a friendly, cooperative spirit in the neighborhood and to remedy complaints in a constructive manner.

Complaints from homeowners are an effective tool to identify problems in the neighborhood. In addition, routine surveillance by Board members may also identify problems before they become crisis situations.

The Complaints Director investigates and reports problem situations to the association Board and presents his/her recommendations for handling homeowner complaints.

The Complaints Director reports property violations to the Board and if appropriate, to the municipal code enforcement authority.

The Complaints Director works with the HAKC office to communicate with negligent homeowners and with residents who express complaints about a neighbor's property, actions or pets.

### **HAKC Services:**

On a daily basis, the HAKC office receives calls from residents complaining about a situation or condition in their neighborhoods. These are what the staff refers to as the proverbial "barking dog calls" because the clear majority of such calls refer to pet-related problems. However, other complaints cover the full range of homeownership issues: maintenance problems, neglected properties or plantings, noisy neighbors, parked cars or stored boats, unwelcome fences or anything else that might annoy neighbors.

The HAKC staff records the information and explains our procedures to the caller. The staff then reports the complaint to the designated member of the local association Board.

After confirming the troubling situation, -the association Board can direct the HAKC office to send a letter to the negligent neighbor. If the association Board requests further action, the HAKC staff will pursue the situation through a municipal authority. In some cases, the Executive Director of the HAKC visits the negligent neighbor to discuss the situation and pursue a peaceful resolution to the problem.

Although complaint calls are frequent and sometimes trivial, the HAKC staff recognizes that handling complaints is an important function of every neighborhood association. The staff is experienced and well-trained in responding to these calls. Working with the association Boards and with other concerned neighbors, the staff has successfully resolved literally thousands of troubling situations.

### **Municipal Relations Director**

The purpose of this activity is to create a channel of communication between the City and the homes association. Open communication enables the association to

collaborate with the city to enforce applicable codes; to convey homeowners' views on pending legislation, zoning changes and other municipal issues; and to insure that neighborhood needs are considered -- fully and fairly -in municipal spending plans.

The Municipal Relations Director serves as a liaison between the association and the city government. He/she remains informed about city ordinances and legislation to solicit support for -- or rally opposition to -- new policies that affect homeowners.

The Municipal Relations Director attends meetings of the city Planning Commission to inform homeowners of potential changes within their community.

The Municipal Relations Director receives mailings from the city and when appropriate, relays that information to the Board and/or the membership of the association.

### **HAKC Services:**

The HAKC office monitors municipal activities and pending actions on both sides of the State Line and serves as a conduit of information between the associations and the municipality. When specific issues arise which affect homeowners, city-wide or at the neighborhood level, the HAKC staff assists associations in their efforts to influence legislation or address specific situations.

To maintain the flow of information and orchestrate constructive responses to municipal actions, the HAKC sponsors a regular luncheon series for association Presidents and/ or interested other board members. The bimonthly HAKC newsletter serves as another channel of communication on municipal issues.

To assist Municipal Relations Directors, the HAKC maintains mailing and contact lists for city officials, legislators and other governing bodies.

### **Newsletter Editor**

The neighborhood newsletter is the primary channel of communication between the association and its membership. The purpose of the newsletter is to inform the membership about the activities and services of the association, announce neighborhood events, and relay information about municipal issues that affect homeowners.

The Newsletter Editor plans the publication schedule for the association year and determines the content of the newsletter.

The Newsletter Editor contacts members of the Board and other association members to collect news items. He/ she then compiles that information and oversees printing and distribution of the newsletter.

### **HAKC Services**

The HAKC staff offers a variety of desktop publishing, printing and mailing services. If requested, the HAKC staff will provide any or all of the following services:

- Format and typeset newsletters and fax proofs to newsletter editors;
- Handle newsletter printing;
- Consult with newsletter editors on current postal rates and mailing requirements;
- Prepare mailing labels for newsletters; and
- Prepare newsletters for mailing and deliver newsletters to the post office.

## **Meetings Director**

The purpose of this activity is to insure that facilities are available for association meetings and that meetings proceed in an efficient and orderly manner. The schedule of meetings for the association will include, at a minimum, four meetings of the Board of Directors per year and one annual meeting for the full membership.

The Meeting Director confirms all physical arrangements for association meetings. He/ she communicates with the management of the chosen facility to insure adequate seating and if appropriate, food service. He/she confirms the menu and the costs for meals and room fees, if applicable.

The Meeting Director works with the association Secretary or the HAKC staff to prepare and distribute meeting notices or invitations.

The Meeting Director arranges for any special equipment required by speakers at the meeting. Such equipment might include audio-visual projection systems, screens, blackboards, microphones, lecterns and display tables.

In collaboration with the association President, the Meeting Director plans the agenda for the meeting and prepares copies of the agenda and other hand-outs for the participants.

The Meeting Director acts as the informal timekeeper for the meeting to insure that the meeting proceeds on schedule.

## **HAKC Services**

If requested, the HAKC staff will:

- Prepare and mail meeting announcements, flyers, invitations or postcards;
- Accept and record reservations from neighborhood residents and work with the Meeting Director to confirm meal counts;
- Prepare reservation lists and nametags for participants; and
- Attend association meetings and answer questions about the activities of the HAKC.

## **Special Events Director**

Many homes associations sponsor special events to promote good will and community spirit in the neighborhood. Whether social or 'purposeful,' these events remind neighbors that the association is actively working on their behalf.

These gatherings also give neighbors an opportunity to meet one another, greet new neighbors and involve themselves in the community.

The Special Events Director organizes activities which include the entire neighborhood, young and old alike. He/she publicizes the event through flyers and/or signs and banners posted in the neighborhood.

The Special Events Director secures permits for Block Parties and other events in public areas. He/she may also arrange for municipal services, such as police or special fire truck demonstrations.

The Special Events Chair confirms food service or food donations, when necessary, and monitors trash collection and clean-up after the event. He/she may also arrange to rent equipment such as tables, chairs, or cooking apparatus.

In the past associations have hosted one or more of the following:

- Neighborhood Picnic or Barbeque Ice Cream Social
- Halloween Party' or Pumpkin Carving Contest Christmas Caroling Party or Holiday Homes Tour
- Garden Tour
- Concert or Picnic in the Park Easter Egg Hunt Neighborhood Garage Sale Neighborhood Clean-up Day

### **HAKC Services:**

Upon request, HAKC staff will:

- Prepare and mail flyers or postcards to announce the event;
- Assist the Special Events Director in securing necessary permits; and
- Accept reservations for the event.

## **Neighborhood Committees**

In most homes associations, the Board appoints one or more committees to manage specific tasks. These committees typically include neighbors who are not Board members, but who are willing to assist the association and serve the neighborhood. Most associations find it useful to assign a specific Board member to serve as the liaison to each committee; this insures that the committees and the Board are working in concert.

Many associations have some or all of the committees described here.

## **Welcoming Committee**

This group welcomes new residents. Members of this committee typically contact new neighbors, introducing themselves and the association. They also assist newcomers by providing information about neighborhood services, traditions and upcoming activities.

This committee is responsible for making that critical first -- and often lasting impression. Remember, newcomers chose this neighborhood; it's up to the welcoming committee to help confirm the wisdom of that choice.

Activities of the Welcoming Committee might include: Personally contacting or visiting new neighbors, possibly delivering a gift basket or information packet;

Listing new neighbors in the association newsletter;

Keeping the HAKC office supplied with newsletters, flyers and other information for inclusion in the official welcome packet mailed by HAKC.

### **HAKC Services:**

Because membership in the homes association is a legal requirement and is therefore stipulated in the property deed, title companies contact the HAKC office whenever properties are sold (to insure that all association dues are current and paid).

The HAKC staff then collects information from the title companies about the new homeowners and the expected closing date. After the property has closed, the HAKC forwards that information to the neighborhood association.

Also, upon confirming the closing, the HAKC staff send a welcome letter and information packet to each new homeowner. The packet includes information about the neighborhood association, a neighborhood newsletter and roster (if available), and a brochure about the HAKC.

### **Neighborhood Roster**

Many associations publish a roster or neighborhood directory, which lists the names, addresses and phone numbers of all neighborhood residents. In addition, some rosters also include neighborhood maps, information about city services and contact numbers for various municipal or public offices.

These directories generally include both an alphabetical listing of neighbors and street-by-street listing.

These rosters are a popular offering of associations and have proved helpful for both long-time residents and neighborhood newcomers. They facilitate contact among neighbors and promote a spirit of community.

### **HAKC Services**

The HAKC will work with association committees to compile directory information from the HAKC database. (At present, the HAKC database does not include telephone numbers for residents; so the HAKC staff works with association committees to collect these numbers for inclusion in the directory.).

When requested, HAKC staff will sort and format the information and prepare camera-ready artwork for neighborhood directories. Finally, the HAKC will supervise publication and distribution of directories.

## **Crime and Security Committee**

The security of our neighborhoods is a top priority for HAKC and its associations. By maintaining a vigilant watch over the neighborhoods and by monitoring any crime that does occur, HAKC neighborhoods have maintained high standards of safety.

The homes associations' approach to neighborhood security is twofold, involving both prevention and monitoring.

Possible activities of the Crime Committee include:

- Sponsoring programs to improve outdoor and street lighting;
- Maintaining contact with the local police and participating in community policing efforts;
- Requesting monthly copies of neighborhood crime reports from the police to detect any emerging patterns of crime;
- Preparing regular Crime Watch articles for the neighborhood newsletter;
- Inviting a police representative to speak at the association annual meeting;
- Working with local police to establish a Block Watch program; and
- Posting signs indicating that this is a Crime Watch or a privately patrolled neighborhood.

## **Private Security Patrols**

Several of the HAKC neighborhoods have contracted for private security vehicles to patrol the neighborhood. These patrols supplement regular police surveillance and offer additional security and escort services to neighbors.

Typically, the decision to contract for private security requires a vote of the full membership of the association. The cost of the service is then allocated among the membership and neighbors are individually billed for the service on a monthly or quarterly basis.

## **HAKC Services:**

To assist the association Crime Committee, the HAKC staff will provide information about crime prevention programs used in other neighborhoods. The staff will help the Committee locate appropriate municipal and police resources and will forward to the Committee any security-related information that arrives in the HAKC office.

Often, after an incident, individual neighbors call the HAKC office to report the event. HAKC staff will promptly relay that information to the Crime Committee.

For those associations considering or using a private security patrol, the HAKC staff will:

- Provide information about security companies;

- Obtain competitive bids and assist associations in negotiating private security contracts;
- Prepare and mail flyers as requested by the association or the security company;
- Handle security billings and collect security fees from neighbors; and
- Distribute security company decals and telephone stickers to neighbors.

## **Parks and Islands Committee**

The Chamber of Commerce touts Kansas City as having "more boulevards than Paris, more fountains than Rome." To that description, most residents (and visitors) would add "the finest neighborhoods in the United States."

The homes associations are the custodians of this lush legacy. They maintain a variety of islands, neighborhood parks, entryways, fountains and statuary, all of which is the property of the associations. In fact, to many residents, this is the most visible achievement of the homes associations.

The responsibilities of the Parks and Islands Committees of individual associations vary, depending on the existing common areas in the neighborhood and on the aspirations of neighbors to enhance those areas. Typically, an association Park and Island Committee will undertake several of the following duties:

- Negotiate and monitor contracts for island maintenance, including mowing, fertilizing, watering and raking;
- If necessary, install and monitor sprinkler systems;
- Plant and maintain flower beds in public spaces, using neighborhood volunteers or professional landscape services;
- Maintain signage and plantings in entryways;
- Replace, repair and when appropriate, purchase statuary;
- Contract for or recruit volunteers to maintain fountains;
- Plant, trim and replace trees and shrubbery;
- Negotiate and oversee contracts for pool service and repair;
- Maintain lakes, ponds and other bodies of water; and
- Maintain playing fields and recreational areas.

## **HAKC Services**

The HAKC staff will support the Park Committee through the following services:

- Make payments to landscape contractors, as authorized by the association;
- Assist associations in bidding, awarding and monitoring service contracts; and
- Manage disbursements for materials purchased by neighborhood volunteers.



## **Nominations and Elections Committee**

It is the duty of this committee to recruit, screen and orient candidates for positions on the association's Board of Directors. The committee also oversees the election of Board members, which occurs at the association's annual meeting.

The responsibilities of the Nominations and Elections Committee are as follows:

- Contact and interview neighbors about serving on the Board;
- Confirm the eligibility of board candidates;
- Present the slate of candidates at the annual meeting;
- Confirm the credentials of all neighbors present and voting at the elections. (Only members in good standing are eligible to vote in association elections.)

## **HAKC Services**

To insure that association elections are in full compliance with the association's by-laws, the HAKC staff confirm the eligibility of Board candidates. The staff will also provide a list of the names, addresses and dues status of all members of the association to verify eligible voters.

Also, as stipulated in most association by-laws, the HAKC will mail annual meeting (and election) notices to all members of the association

## **Association Elections**

Each Association holds an Annual Meeting at a time specified in the by-laws. One purpose of this meeting is the election of directors and in some cases, officers. (In most of the associations, the Board of Directors, once elected, chooses the officers,)

The association should observe the following election procedures:

1. President asks the Chair of the Nominations Committee to present the report of the committee.
2. The President calls for a motion to accept the Committee's report and slate of candidates.
3. The President announces that additional nominations may be made from the floor, providing that the nominee is a member in good standing of the association.
4. The President entertains a motion to close nominations. (5) If the number of nominees equals the number of Board vacancies, the President requests a motion to unanimously elect the slate of nominees.
5. If the number of nominees exceeds the number of board vacancies, the Secretary shall distribute ballots, noting that only one ballot may be cast for each property in the association. (NOTE: More than one member of a household may attend the meeting, but only one vote per property may be cast.)
6. The President announces the election results.
7. The Secretary reports the results of the election to the HAKC office.

If Board vacancies occur during the year, the association's by-laws include provisions for filling those vacancies. Most association by-laws permit the Board to appoint individuals to replace resigning members. The HAKC office has copies of all association by-laws and will advise board members on procedures for filling vacancies.