



Southeast Uplift
3534 SE Main St
Portland, OR 97214
p: 503 232-0010
www.seuplift.org

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION ELECTIONS

Annual elections are a great way to share successes, gain new membership, and build excitement for your neighborhood association. Being prepared will go a long way in making your board feel at ease and capable of showing enthusiasm the night of. The following checklist identifies the key steps involved in running a successful neighborhood election. The checklist is divided into three sections presenting steps to take **before, during, and after the election.** SE Uplift suggests you share tasks among board members or create a sub-committee to tackle planning and follow-up for this event. Additionally, there are page numbers that show where to find additional information.

Table of Contents

BEFORE THE ELECTION	2
Review Your Bylaws	2
Outreach & Notification	2
Example Blog Post	4
Prepare Materials for Meeting	5
Set the Agenda	5
DURING THE ELECTION	7
Greet & Verify Membership	7
Committee Updates	7
Running the Election	8
AFTER THE ELECTION	12
Follow Up With New Board Members	12
Follow Up With General Membership	12
Follow Up With Committees	13

BEFORE THE ELECTION

Review Your Bylaws

Each neighborhood association's bylaws have different requirements for annual elections. Therefore, it's important to review and familiarize yourself with your organization's bylaws specifically. Contact your SE Uplift liaison if you have any questions. **Areas to pay special attention to:**

- **Notification (time period and method):** 7 days prior notice (Oregon Revised Statutes Chapter 065). Your NA may have additional specifications outlined in your bylaws.
- Number of board members allowed.
- Length of term.
- Member eligibility.
- Board member eligibility.
- Quorum.
- Requirements around nominations or voting procedures.
- Specifications around when and how Officers can be appointed.

Outreach & Notification

Couple your election meeting with another topic that is of interest to your neighbors. What is a hot topic right now that people may be interested in? Who else could you get to present at your meeting? Couple that topic with a strong call to action that will get people interested and excited about neighborhood association happenings, including your annual board elections. Rather than focusing on the process or definition of a neighborhood association, try focusing on outcomes; what projects or events did your board work on throughout the course of the last year? It is easier for new-comers to understand the role of a neighborhood association if they understand their work. Not only will focusing on outcomes add clarity around what you are asking for from neighbors, it will also be more likely to build excitement around getting involved. Include a call for volunteers to participate on the board or on committees and with events and possible an explanation of who is eligible to be a board member and an invitation to election night.

Print promotion - try to create something that you'd put on your refrigerator, no need to get fancy, but thoughtful design will help decrease the chances of it being thrown away or forgotten. SE Uplift offers each NA 50 flyers and 100 postcards for distribution. If that seems

like too much, we can do less. Contact the SE Uplift Communications Manager to get started.

Electronic Promotion - consider writing an article with a call to action around elections for your website, Facebook and social media, or newsletter. Articles can often do double, or even triple duty; providing you with plenty of content to modify for printed materials or social media promotions.

Get the word out with a committee of volunteers. Solicit help from both the board and neighbors to distribute flyers and postcards around the neighborhood and generate interest. Typically, the April meeting is a good time to finalize details.

If you are spending the time and money on outreach materials, consider including a survey link to collect information about community priorities for the coming year and or share an events calendar.

For an example of an article that could be tailored for multiple uses see the next page.

Example Blog Post

Ever wonder how great things happen in our neighborhood?

Yes, we mean the community garden, public art, informational kiosks, tool libraries, community centers—and no, the list doesn't end there! Your _____ Neighborhood Association has been hard at work ensuring that our neighborhood is thriving.

On our upcoming election we want to celebrate living, loving, working, and uplifting alongside one another! We'd love the opportunity to share about our past accomplishments, our hopes for the future of the neighborhood and ultimately extend an invitation to you to be involved in big or small ways.

Help us as a neighbor* by joining us on

_____ and voting in our new leadership. Even if you haven't been to a meeting before we feel that it is important to involve as many neighbors as possible in the selection of our board members. Not only will you play an important role in our elections, you'll also be privy to insider information, and get the scoop on what's happening in the neighborhood and across the city.

Interested in getting your hands dirty and being a part of the month-to-month decision making? Then board or committee service might be for you. Feel free to join in the conversation and ask questions of current board members. Or, if you're ready to get to work, step on up and offer to fill one of our vacant seats—we'd love to have you on the board!

If you have ever spent time volunteering, you know that it takes all kinds of hard working and dedicated people to make things happen. Projects don't complete themselves, issues don't advocate for themselves, art doesn't magically appear—people are the driving force. The same is true for our

Provide a little context about what a neighborhood association does. NAs are more exciting when we focus on outcomes. Tailor this paragraph to reflect your neighborhood's recent activity. This first paragraph can do double duty as your intro and for use with social media.

Give your audience a brief run-down on what the night will be about—big picture, not details.

Writing up a blog post to share on your website/blog/Facebook Page will provide you the opportunity to express your neighborhood association's needs. If there is a position that needs to be filled, or if there are specific skills desired, say so!

Wrap up by setting the stage for how NAs work. Your NA is not here to act on behalf of neighbors, but rather to create a platform from which all neighbors can effectively work to improve and maintain the neighborhood.

One barrier to participation is jargon. Avoid it and include definitions for unfamiliar terms.

neighborhood, only in this case neighbors must be the driving force!

*Neighboring isn't just for people who reside here; if you work or own property in _____we consider you a neighbor, too!

Prepare Materials for Meeting

The board has announced their election meeting, crafted their call to action, done the outreach and reviewed their bylaws—don't get stuck without the proper materials on election night. Items you may need:

- Sign-in sheet with column for membership status (meeting sign-in sheet template available on website)
- Committee / Project sign-up opportunities
- List meeting best practices, include pronouns.
- Make sure folks know how/when to ask questions.
- Make sure people participating by phone know how to mute/unmute and engage.
- Have a plan for your ballots (if applicable) or ensure everyone knows how to vote.
- Share information about your neighborhood association's successes over the last year.
- Share information about the election process for the night, who is eligible to be a board member, and what the role entails.

Pro tip: have a back up for those who are interested in engaging, but not ready to be a board member. Can they support an event, special project, or committee?

Set the Agenda

Be sure to allow sufficient time for your election in the agenda. If you rush through it, there might not be enough time for those sitting on the fence about running for a board position to fully think about it. Talk briefly about the elections at the beginning of your meeting and then have committees give short presentations on what they accomplished during the past year (pg. 6) before making a call for nominees. Consider making your elections the main agenda item and spending the extra time sharing recent accomplishments and current neighborhood association goals. If you decide to have presentations on the night of the election, try to choose topics that will attract a diverse audience and won't be divisive or take too much time. For an example agenda see the next page.



Sample ELECTION Meeting Agenda
 Summer Meadow (SMNA) Neighborhood Association

Monday, May 23rd, 2022 7:00 at Summer Meadow Community Center 123 Tulip Lane

Welcome to your Summer Meadow Neighborhood Association (SMNA) meeting. Thank you for joining us! We aim to hold a warm and encouraging space for community action and input. This is a place for neighbors to come together to address various issues and hopes for our neighborhood. We aim to create a platform from which all neighbors can effectively work to improve Summer Meadow.

7:00 Welcome & Introductions

7:05 Approve March Meeting Minutes (Board Vote)

*Link to draft minutes

7:10 Overview of Election Process & Board Positions

7:20 Accomplishments of 2021-2022 & Committee Updates

Come learn what the neighborhood association has been working on this past year and what our committees currently have in the works, including our summer picnic, street tree inventory, litter patrol, web site redesign, & community garden...

7:45 Neighborhood Association Elections (General Membership Vote)

Interested in joining the Summer Meadow Neighborhood Association Board? I bet you have all sorts of questions. What's the neighborhood association? What's the board? What do they do, and is it a lot of work? Find out how you can support the work that is happening in our vibrant neighborhood.

8:30 Community Orchard (Poll to Gauge Interest)

Would you want a community fruit orchard and community garden with raised beds at 392 SE Fern Rd? Let us know by voicing your opinion.

*Link to background documents

8:50 Community Announcements

Have news to share with the neighborhood? Make a brief announcement during this portion of the meeting.

9:00 Adjourn

Make sure to give a quick overview of the agenda for the evening.

Sometimes the best way to get people excited about participating in something is to highlight its tangible effects.

Describe board service, explain how the elections will work, call for nominations and vote.

If you are going to have presentations on the night of the election, try to choose topics that are positive and brief.

Next Meeting: June 27th 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM at Summer Meadow Community Center
Neighborhood Picnic: July 23rd 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM at Strawberry Hill Park

DURING THE ELECTION

(NOTE, see SE Uplift's website for more information on hosting virtual elections)

Greet & Verify Membership

Greeters: Many people at your annual elections may be first time attendees, so it's especially important to make your neighbors comfortable and aware of who's who and what's going to happen during the meeting.

Verify Membership: Your board elections are held during one of your NA's general membership meetings, which typically draws a larger number of neighbors. As a result, it's crucial to provide an opportunity for neighbors to join and/or confirm their membership in your association on election night. The easiest way to do this is to have this selection on your virtual ballot, which asks people to check off a box if they are a member or would like to join and become a member (SE Uplift can help you create this). You can provide the membership criteria from your NA's bylaws in writing and also have your board greeters prepared to explain membership eligibility to anyone with questions. Your NA's specific membership criteria is included in your bylaws.

While all NA meetings are open to the public, members are the only attendees eligible to vote at general meetings. We recommend that you remind folks, this way it will be clear that the **ONLY people able to vote are those who have confirmed their membership either verbally or in writing.**

Make Sure You Have Quorum: Ensure you have the required quorum of general members & board members needed to vote. This will ensure that all votes will be valid.

Committee Updates

An election is also a chance to build excitement around the work that a neighborhood association does. Additionally, some people might not be ready for board service but could commit to a smaller task through a committee.

On election night, have each committee share what they have been working on during the past year, what they want to accomplish in the coming year, and which tasks they need additional help with. This can either be done through short reports made to the whole group or by having committees stationed at tables around the room and providing

an opportunity for those in attendance to mingle and talk informally with current board and committee members.

If your board decides to take the informal tabling approach, committee chairs will need to come early and set up their table with their materials. Materials should include committee sign-up sheets, committee information sheets, and visual displays such as event flyers or images from past activities.

If your board decides to do short committee presentations, make sure to begin by letting everyone know that there are committee sign-up sheets and that if they think they might want to participate on a specific issue or just get more information that they should sign-up. A committee member will follow-up with them after the meeting to discuss how they can get involved.

Running the Election

We've included some tips and sample language below to help with this process. Please feel free to use SE Uplift as a resource- we're here to help make your annual elections a success!

- **Explain the election process:** Not everyone in the room is familiar with board elections, so it's important to give a brief overview of the process. Make sure you explain who is eligible to vote and be a board member, as well as the voting procedures you will follow. You will need to customize the example language with additional details from your bylaws.

EX: "Tonight we will be electing members for a slate of xx to xx # board members and then at next month's board meeting the newly elected board will select and vote on specific officer positions. We have vacancies for the following positions... All members who have confirmed their membership status on the sign-in sheet tonight will be eligible to vote. Members are ___ (read language from your membership criteria here). In addition to voting, all members will be eligible to serve on the board, so we encourage you to consider one of the vacant positions, tonight."

- **Share why it matters:** Present the election as an opportunity for people to get involved, not as a chore.

EX: “You don’t need specific skills to serve as a board member, but rather a love and commitment to your neighborhood. We need people like you to work with us to help grow and shape the future of our community. Your fellow board members and staff from SE Uplift are here to help orient and support you in your new role, so no need to fear!”

- **Be clear about your ask:** You are more likely to get volunteers to be on the board if you explain the roles and responsibilities that the positions entail. Feel free to customize the language below as needed with specific board requirements.

EX: “The board is an elected group of neighborhood folks who make decisions and represent the interests of our neighborhood; make efforts to create an environment where all neighbors can be heard; and to follow the rules and processes outlined in our bylaws.”

“Being a board member generally requires ___#hours a month. We meet once a month for two-hour long meetings, and generally try to host ___# community events a year. In addition to attending neighborhood meetings, board members either take on an officer position or get involved with a committee, project or event of interest. It essentially comes down to being willing to show up and devote some of your time and energy into making the neighborhood a better place.”

EX: “We will be asking for nominations momentarily for all vacant positions. While nominees may express interest in a particular position, as general members you will be electing a slate of board members, rather than specific people for each board position. As a formality, the board will meet next month to elect board officers from within the group elected tonight.”

“Here is a brief description of each open board position....”

- **President/Chair:** The President/Chair acts as the leader of the association, serves as the main point of contact for neighbors and the city, sets the agenda, makes sure adequate notice is provided and facilitates all NA meetings.
- **Vice-President/ Vice-Chair:** Same as President/Chair in their absence, but also takes on some of President/Chair’s duties and/or performs additional supportive duties as needed by the board.
- **Secretary:** The Secretary is a critical member of the board. They are in charge of recording the decisions and work of the neighborhood association, drafting and finalizing meeting minutes and maintaining organizational records.

- **Treasurer:** The treasurer position ensures that the NA has the finances necessary to host events and make improvements in the community. They prepare our budget, manage our incoming and outgoing funds, and report on our financial health.
 - **Neighborhood Land Use Chair:** The land use chair receives and responds to development proposals in the neighborhood. They evaluate land use notices, help explain the land use code to neighbors and participate on the SE Uplift Land Use and Transportation Committee.
 - **Southeast Uplift Board Member:** As our nominee to SE Uplift, you will help to shape its programs and oversee its finances. In this role you will work with coalition members to advocate for coalition-wide issues.
 - **At-large/ Directors:** General at-large/directors are board members that serve as committee chairs, organize community events and participate in NA projects. Right now, we are looking for ____# people to get involved with the following... These positions can also be filled by interested local business and community organizations.
- **Ask for nominations:** All NAs allow members to be nominated or self-nominated from the floor on election night. Consider writing names as a list on a flipchart for all to see. You can later ask people for a motion to vote on the slate - the complete list- of nominated candidates.

EX: “So far, we have received the following nominations. We will now take nominations from the floor. Does anyone want to nominate themselves for the board? Does anyone want to nominate someone other than him/herself? Last call!Ok, if there are no more nominations, we will begin the voting process.”

- **Vote:** There are a few different ways that your NA can vote on election night. If your bylaws don't have any specific requirements around how voting is done, it's up to your board to determine what the best process will be depending on the number of people expected to attend and whether any positions will be contested. The two primary methods are by show of hands and ballot.
- **Show of Hands:** This is the most common and easiest option for voting on election night. Simply ask for a show of hands for each position (or slate (meaning, the entire list of nominated folks)) and record the number of votes for, against and abstaining.

EX: “Now that all nominations have been received, we will ask all eligible voting members to cast their vote for each position (or for full slate of nominees) by a show of hands. Again, to vote tonight you must confirm your membership status on the sign-in sheet and meet the following criteria (from bylaws).

“We have the following slate of nominees for the board. I would entertain a motion to elect the candidates listed as a slate. So moved, seconded, Please raise your hand to vote in favor of the slate. Opposed? Abstaining?” (Typically all will vote in favor of the slate, but be sure to record any opposing or abstaining votes in the minutes. Also, it is possible that someone may move to vote each individual in one by one, in which case you would do so via [Robert’s Rules](#)).

- **Ballots:** If there will be a large crowd and you know in advance that there will be one or more contested positions, we recommend that you use ballots. SE Uplift has a template for ballots, so check with your liaison for more information. SE Uplift staff are available to count paper ballots and provided third-party confirmation oversight of elections. Please request support in advance!

EX: “Now that all nominations have been received, we will ask all eligible voting members to cast their vote on the ballot by writing the names of **_up to 15_** (# of vacant board slots) nominees. Again, to vote tonight you must confirm your membership status on the sign-in sheet and meet the following criteria (from bylaws). We will come by to collect and tally the completed ballots.”

- **Wrap it up:** After the board is elected, it’s important to collect contact information from the new board and provide orientation packets to each board member. Your liaison from SE Uplift will likely be in attendance on election night or will provide you with these materials if they cannot be present. Additionally, it’s key to thank everyone for their part in the election process.

AFTER THE ELECTION

Follow Up With New Board Members

As soon after the election as possible you will want someone (preferably the chair, if the position didn't turn over) to follow-up with new board members to help them get oriented. See our [Board Member Resources page online](#) for welcome packets and more information.

- **Send a welcome email** thanking them for becoming part of the board and let them know that you are excited to work together. Information on when the next meeting is, specifics around their role & responsibilities, a link to the neighborhood bylaws, and encouragement for them to either reach out to other board members or their SE Uplift liaison if they have any questions or need support.
- **Schedule a (virtual) social gathering** to welcome new board members and allowing all board members to get to know each other. This could be as simple as inviting all board members have a virtual happy hour or allow for networking after a board meeting. *Note, as long as board members stick with social conversation (do not discuss board business), these gatherings are not subject to [Robert's Rules/Notification](#).
- **Connect new members with a mentee.** Connect a new board member with a longer-standing member to connect and learn more about the role and organization. This can be someone they can lean on for questions and support throughout their first year.
- Make sure they attend an upcoming SE Uplift **New Board Member Orientation**. Typically provided after May election season *and* often again in the Fall.

Follow Up With General Membership

Make sure to follow up with everyone in attendance at your annual election in the day or two proceeding. *If people feel that their presence was noticed & valuable, they are more likely to keep coming back.* A follow up email can be a simple blast thanking everyone for their time and announcing new board members or it can be more in depth; sharing information about projects, committees, long and short-term goals, things to look forward

to, linking people back to websites or Facebook Pages, etc. Following up is instrumental to getting longer term commitments from everyone who participated.

Follow Up With Committees

Make sure to email or call anyone who has signed up for a committee and/or project in the day or two post-election. Follow up should be personally tailored to each individual and should not be an email blast. Don't lose the opportunity by waiting too long, or not making contact.

Items of importance to include:

- Date/time/location of next committee meeting
- Contact information for other committee members
- Recap of recent activity and future plans
- Links to background information

Inquire:

- How would they like to be involved?
- Do they have expertise they would like to share with committee?
- Are they familiar with any resources you may be unaware of?