

SUN CITY INDEPENDENT

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Guest Commentary

Bylaw change would eliminate meetings

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Call to Action for residents to attend the Recreation Centers of Sun City Board of Directors meeting 7 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 29 Mountain View Recreation Center, 9749 N. 107th Ave.

On the agenda will be a proposal to change quorum requirements to convene quarterly membership meetings to override board actions and recall elections.

The quarterly membership meeting quorum is 100 members present in person or by proxy. The board plans to change it to 1/10th of the eligible voting members, which is about 35,000, meaning 3,500 would be needed for a quorum. And the board wants to require the same number of ballots be cast before a recall election is deemed valid.

That means the Board Majority (a.k.a. the “Omnipotent Gang of Five”) turns the 35,000 mandatory assessment payers into their “deep-pocket slaves.”

The August and September monthly board meetings had huge crowds by RCSC standards. The board, through a technicality, did not allow motions by member Noel Kasper that could have stopped the \$500 preservation and improvement fund increase and the misuse of the Sundial insurance proceeds to fund Fairway. The board saw from the hostile and raucous audience response to the denial that Mr. Kasper had the support to pass both the motions that would have then brought the issue to a membership vote in January 2010.

Board member Denny Nichols calmed the crowd by claiming the board would take heed. Yet, the board proceeded to vote for the increase and the misuse of funds, anyway.

This upcoming motion is an outrageous abuse of board bylaw creation authority. Its goal is to remove all membership power the articles of incorporation promise when it states that in a conflict with the board the action of the members shall prevail. A membership meeting is where members act.

To be sure, the board would not put a 3,500-votes-cast threshold requirement on board elections. In December 2006, 1,787 votes were cast; in December 2007 there were 2,742 votes cast; and in 2008 there were 860 ballots cast. With a 3,500 votes-cast minimum requirement, none of the board members would be serving; and none

can claim a mandate from the estimated 35,000 eligible voters.

With miniscule support, the board should be treading lightly; but it is not. Fear of being overruled by member action has pushed them over the edge to arrogantly stop membership meetings entirely.

Motions and standing votes at membership meetings bring controversial issues to the next quarterly meeting to be put on the agenda for discussion, or to a formal printed ballot vote. Without the membership meeting, there is no mechanism for getting something on the ballot, except for a 3,500-signature petition. However, in order to circulate a petition the board must first give its approval, according to the board-created policy No. 5!

Our August petition request to change Article IX to remove the board’s ability to recall another board member without a membership vote was denied overnight. In September, we re-submitted it, implementing the board’s suggested changes. We are still waiting approval.

Six board members recalled duly-elected Director Ann Ullman, yet the board wants the members to cast 3,500 votes before a recall can take effect against any of them. No board member got elected with that level of participation.

This egregious action to virtually end membership meetings and recall of directors demonstrates the need to remove the board’s power to write bylaws or board policies without a vote of the cardholders.

The board meeting is being conducted at night for the first time, at a time when most Sun Citians are settled in their homes and many cannot drive at night. The board also takes the vote near the end of the meeting, after people leave in a huff, are tired or feel defeated.

However, if you show up with your pillow, blanket, and folding chair; refreshments; entertainment and squeeze into the auditorium, spilling out into the parking lot, ready to stay all night, if necessary, the board might table this motion, never to be revisited.

Editor’s Note: Mrs. Stewart is Sun City Formula Registry spokeswoman.