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This topic has 6 replies, 1 voice, and was last updated 1 month, 2 weeks ago by  [Paul Prescott](#).

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| November 9, 2020 at 6:42 am | #1514 |
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| The following posts are copied verbatim from the friendsfrombib.com forum. As discussed below, this | |



Paul
Prescott

Moderator

(136.144.35.130
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discussion started because posts on the 'Friends From BIB' Facebook group contained misinformation and accusations about the upcoming Board election.

As a side note- I posted the following on the friendsfrombib.com forum, and joined the 'Friends From BIB' group to try and explain the reasoning behind the actions of the Board. At first, Susanne Jefferson kicked me off from the Facebook group. Another group admin added me back, and for one whole day, we had what I thought was a good discussion. Unfortunately, Susanne Jefferson kicked me off again, and also removed the admin privileges of numerous other people. She also removed my wife and another community member who had just moved into BIB. As of this writing, none of us has been allowed back onto the group.

My only conclusion is that Susanne Jefferson, and the remaining admins who are acquiescing to her control, are not really interested in having any sort of discussion where their viewpoints are challenged. This is disappointing and unfortunate. Communication is a two-way street, and it is hard to see how this community could ever come together if one side flat-out refuses to hear what the other side has to say.

This episode also reinforced the Board's decision not to open this forum to unmoderated comments, because unfortunately, there are people in this community who still resort to name calling and profanity.

November 9, 2020 at 6:43 am

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Paul
Prescott

Moderator

(136.144.35.130
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From Paul Prescott, November 6, 2020 at 4:10 pm:

There has recently been some discussion, and misinformation, on the 'Friends from BIB' Facebook group about eligibility for voting in the upcoming BIB POA Board election. I will try to explain the situation here.

1) The BIB POA Bylaws state (Article 4): "1. A voting member is a member in good standing who is current on all membership fees, assessments, and fines". Please note that it says "all membership fees", and not "some" or "most".

2) At the September and October BIB POA Board meetings, we voted to finalize the guidelines and timing of the election. Please see the meeting recordings and notes available on the bibhoa.com website. The timeline for the election is as follows:

Deadline for POA fee payment to run and to vote: October 31, 2020 5 PM EDT.

Nominations accepted: November 1 through 10, 2020 5 PM EST.

Voting: November 15 through the 25.

In addition to the above being discussed and voted on at the September and October Board meetings, the BIB POA Board sent out an email to all owners on October 17, 2020 stating:

To be eligible to serve on the board and/or to vote in the election, you need to be a titled lot owner with no outstanding fees as of October 31, 2020 at 5:00pm EDT.


The BIB POA Board has established a clear set of guidelines for this election, and has communicated them with the BIB community. It is unfortunate that some people chose to pay their POA dues after the October 31 deadline, but we believe it is important to apply the rules equally to everyone.

3) A few weeks ago, a lot owner tried to give me cash to pay a past due balance. I did not accept the cash for the following reasons: We use an online accounting software which is linked to our accounts. Therefore, I am not able to accept cash here in Belize, because I have no way of depositing it into our accounts in the USA and Canada. Without being able to deposit the money, I am not able to credit the lot owner's account. This system is designed for full transparency and integrity, because it prevents anyone from simply going in and changing values in the accounts.

4) There are a few lot owners, who owe a small amount because of wire transfer or PayPal fees. It has been suggested that they should be allowed to vote. I will refer you to item #1 above, where the Bylaws clearly state that "all" membership fees must be paid to be eligible to vote. Yes, PayPal fees are complicated, however, there are numerous online sites for calculating them (Google "PayPal fee calculator"). Also, when lot owners have reached out to me to ask for assistance in calculating their fees, I have

helped them. The majority of lot owners who used PayPal simply added a few extra dollars to their payment to insure they covered the fees. Any resulting credit will be applied to next year's dues. At the next Board meeting, we will be voting on transferring all accounts receivable services to Axela Technologies. They will have an online portal for credit card processing, which should simplify this process. Other forms of payments will still be available, like mailing in checks.

This is not a question of being "flexible", this is about following the rules that we all live under. Again, these are the rules we all agreed to when we purchased property here at BIB. I personally think it is better to have a clear set of rules that are consistently followed and applied equally, rather than having a few people changing the rules whenever they see fit.

This reply was modified 1 month, 2 weeks ago by  Paul Prescott.

November 9, 2020 at 6:44 am

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Paul
Prescott

From Susanne Jefferson, November 6, 2020 at 10:53 pm:

I don't think there was any 'misinformation'. You just confirmed that someone who owes as little as 2 cents is not eligible to vote. To me it feels like all the deadlines for paying your dues and for getting sent to collections in order to be

Moderator

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eligible to vote is an effort on the board's part to limit the amount of eligible voters. The fact that you wouldn't tell that person to just hold on to her 2 cents and apply it to next year's dues clearly shows that this board has an agenda that's not in the interest of the entire community. My bad, if I'm wrong, but I think not.

I'm sure you have figured out by now that a whole lot of people are VERY unhappy with the way business is being conducted. Yes, a lot of positive things have happened on the grounds at BIB, but why would you turn around and do things like THAT?? I think with this latest display of 'a rule is a rule' you have just reiterated what this board is really all about. When I say 'the board' I'm talking about the members that agree with you, not the ones who got overruled.

I agree that we need rules. Without them it would be chaos, but this board consists of people, not computers, and as such has the capability to show leniency, empathy and compassion. You show none of the above. I don't care how many times you tell everyone what 'the rules' are. We ALL are well aware of them, but nobody would fault you for telling that person 'hey, no problem, keep your 2 cents and just pay it with the next dues'. What would be the big deal about doing that? This person has done more for people here than all of you together. Give her a break!!

I'd like to know who else in this community thinks you are doing the right thing here, that your strict abidance by the rules, to the low point you have just reached, is necessary

and welcomed? What kind of place were you living in before to think this is the right thing to do?

If you don't get what I'm talking about, here is an example: you get pulled over for speeding. The law absolutely states that it's against the law to speed. By all means the cop has every right to give you a ticket and sent you to court, but he doesn't HAVE to. He can give you a warning and tell you to watch your speed next time. Have you personally ever had an infraction like that and weren't persecuted to the fullest extent of the law?? Did someone give you a break? I would sure hope so, that's what makes us human.

If you still don't get it, I know a fantastic proctologist who's an expert. And please, stop quoting the rules.....we can all read.

November 9, 2020 at 6:45 am

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Paul

Prescott

Moderator

(136.144.35.130

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From Paul Prescott, November 6, 2020 at 11:15 pm:


If we have rules that are consistently followed, then everyone knows where they stand. I prefer that to a system where favoritism allows certain people preferential treatment.

In terms of POA dues, we have applied the rules consistently to everyone. Unlike past years, no one has received any special treatment. You do not get to pay late with impunity

because you have a house at BIB, or you've lived here the longest. Those actions are not fair to everyone else.

When I informed Renie on October 7 that I could not accept cash (for the reasons stated in my first post), I suggested that she pay via PayPal, and that if she wanted to be able to vote in the upcoming election, she needed to do so by October 31. I have no idea why she chose to wait until after October 31 to pay. And remember, the HOA fees were originally due January 31.

The language of the Bylaws is unambiguous, a lot owner must be paid in full in order to be eligible to vote. If you want to change the Bylaws, then there is a procedure for that. But to just arbitrarily ignore the Bylaws is indefensible.

This reply was modified 1 month, 2 weeks ago by  Paul Prescott.

November 9, 2020 at 6:45 am

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Paul
Prescott

Moderator

From Paul Prescott, November 8, 2020 at 6:35 pm:

We have been having a worthwhile discussion about this topic on the Friends From BIB Facebook group, however, Susanne Jefferson keeps removing me from that group. She also removed admin privileges for many other people in that group.

(136.144.35.130) My only conclusion is that she is not interested in having an actual discussion when she encounters differing viewpoints.

As I have always said, I am happy to discuss this, or any issue, on any platform.

November 9, 2020 at 6:46 am

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Paul

Prescott

Moderator

(136.144.35.130)

From Susanne Jefferson, November 8, 2020 at 8:56 pm:

Sorry, I had to take care of my animals.

I think we have all conceded that Paul is absolutely right in saying that every penny needs to be accounted for, even an amount as small as 2 cents, so now we need to look for an amicable solution that will let those people that haven't been able to get that small amount in to be able to vote after all.

To go back to a little to early this year the board had issues getting everything in place to collect POA fees. They were technically due on the 31st of January, but due to the difficulties the board (no blame) had in setting up a bank account that these fees could be sent to, EVERYONE was TOLD to hang onto their money and by April they were finally able to collect. Everybody was patiently waiting for the board to get their ducks in a row. After all, they are volunteers.

Now the elections are coming up and deadlines were made so it would be a smooth path to the election process. In the past the elections sometimes were from end of November and sometimes beginning of December, I'm not exactly sure of the previous dates.

Again, it is agreed upon that only owners who are fully paid up have a vote. We all (the rest of the owners) had to be patient when the board got themselves organized and now we are asking for a little patience also.

Since quite a few people have not been able to get 'legal' for the vote it would now be a nice gesture by the board to be a little bit patient in return. I would think that the board would want to have someone voted in with as many voices as possible to so you have someone working with you who has the confidence of the majority, especially from people who have always supported and paid their dues on time or have made a honest effort to pay in time to be eligible to vote.

One excellent suggestion was made by Looey to extend the deadlines. Very simple thing! There is no urgency to know who the newly elected person will be until the end of the year in time to take their position in January.

My suggestion would be to postpone the elections until everyone who wants to vote is eligible, like by the end of this month. It wouldn't hurt us at all to have the election a month later. What would be so detrimental about that? It would show that the board sticks to the rules, as it should, but is

also willing to work with the rest of the owners. There are no rules that say it can't happen. The board is wasting a lot of time discussing why they cant or don't want to do instead of spending time on a solution. Every time someone brings a good solution, the board finds a reason why it can't be done. If this is so much effort for some of the members, maybe they don't have the capacity and capability it takes to fulfill their position. We could help out then and elect someone who's up for the challenge. Nobody would fault you at all. You guys have done a lot of work and it would free up your time to do the things you really enjoy, because it looks like it is putting a big burden on you and you should be able to enjoy this community like everyone else. Let someone else come on board and help you out.

This gesture would definitely make you look like the great bunch of people you say you are and show that you care about the whole community, not just the people in your small circle. You get to be right AND great.

November 9, 2020 at 6:46 am

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Paul
Prescott

Moderator

From Paul Prescott, November 8, 2020 at 10:19 pm:

Thank you Susanne for finally acknowledging that we should be following the bylaws. What a long trip you have taken from using profanity and calling me names yesterday to agreeing that following the rules is a good idea today.

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The BIB POA opened our Canadian bank account in January, our US account in June, and our PayPal account in July. So the Board has had “its ducks in a row” for some time now. On October 17, an email was sent to all owners informing them that to be able to vote they needed to be paid in full by October 31. Any owner with a past due balance had ample time to use PayPal or send a wire transfer to cover any outstanding balance. After all using PayPal just takes a few minutes, at most.

According to our bylaws, we are required to have our Annual Meeting in December, where the positions (President, VP, Secretary, Treasurer) are set. Therefore, we need to have our elections before the December meeting. The dates the Board set for the nomination period (Nov 1-10) and for the election (16-25) are to allow enough time to get everything in order.

The Board and all the committees are comprised completely of volunteers, so we wanted to allow plenty of time to perform all the necessary work to run this election. The timing is also consistent with those used in previous years.

The election dates were set in the September and October Board meetings. If a delay had been requested at those meetings, we could have possibly pushed the election back a week or two at the absolute most. But a month would just not be possible. And waiting “until everyone who wants to vote is eligible” is simply not realistic.

Yes, it is unfortunate that some people did not pay their HOA fees in time in order for them to vote. However, ample notification was given of the deadline. And after all, each owner is responsible for paying their HOA fees.

Thank you Susanne for your offer to help out, however, the last time you served on a committee, you abruptly quit because you weren't getting your way. So because of that and your proven inability to have civilized discussions (see my previous post), I personally, am a little leery of whatever assistance you offer today.

Author

Posts

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Reply To: BIB POA Voting Eligibility

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