

**Sylvan Glen
Homeowners
Association
(SGHA)
Membership Team
and Block
Captains
Procedural Guide**

Sylvan Glen Homeowners Association

Membership Team and Block Captains Procedural Guidelines

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Roles and Responsibilities of the Membership Team

The Database Manager is responsible for the following duties:

- Maintaining a database of all homes within the boundaries of SGHA.
- Maintaining up-to-date information on members of SGHA including name, address, phone number, e-mail address, involvement in SGHA committees or groups, block captain assignment, and services provided by members (e.g. babysitting, etc.).
- Checking and updating member information yearly when new membership forms are turned in and as necessary throughout the year as new residents move into the neighborhood or as member information changes.
- Maintaining a current list of who has submitted membership dues.
- Providing database reports to other SGHA membership team members, Board members, or block captains as needed (e.g. for the purpose of membership drives, collection of delinquent dues, or filling block captain vacancies).
- Attending SGHA Board meetings and providing reports and membership input to the newsletter as needed.

The Membership Chairpersons are responsible for the following duties:

- Organizing and distributing materials to the block captains that are needed for the annual membership drive, including: the database manager's "reports-by-block" of residents who have not submitted their annual dues, membership applications and any other special accompanying information as needed (e.g. letters, new directories, copies of deed restrictions, etc.).
- Acting as liaison between the SGHA Board and block captains.
- Providing orientation to new block captains through a yearly block captain meeting to be conducted prior to the Annual Membership Meeting in the fall and as needed through phone and e-mail contact.
- Getting materials to block captains for distribution to members (e.g. new directories).
- Receiving payments and membership forms from the block captains or directly from members, and then forwarding the payments to the treasurer and the membership forms to the database manager.
- Attending SGHA Board meetings and providing reports and membership input to the newsletter as needed.

Block Captains:

Serving as a block captain is entirely voluntary. However, block captains receive a 50% discount on their membership dues for their service.

Block Captains are responsible for the following duties:

- Meeting with the membership team at least yearly prior to the Annual Membership Meeting in the fall.
- Making personal contact with neighbors to distribute membership applications to those who have not submitted their yearly dues during the annual membership drive.
- Collecting payments and completed membership applications and relaying them to the membership chairperson.
- Distributing other information to members on their block as needed at other times during the year, such as updated directories.
- Greeting residents who are new to the neighborhood and providing them with information about SGHA and welcome packets (membership applications, recent newsletter, brochures on city services, etc.).
- Maintaining friendly contact with block residents throughout the year and availing themselves to block residents' questions and concerns.
- Relaying concerns of block residents to the SGHA Board as needed.
- Providing the SGHA Sunshine Chairperson with information about significant events of block residents (e.g. new move-ins, marriages, births, deaths, illnesses, etc.).

- Block captains are also requested to seek their own replacements when they are no longer able or willing to act as block captains. A desirable process would be to have a set of two or three block captains on the block who can fulfill the duties on a rotating schedules. Block captains are requested to inform the Membership Team of changes in block captains so that the database can be updated. When a block captain cannot find a replacement, the Membership Team will assist in securing a new one through solicitations in the newsletter and direct inquiries of potential candidates.

The procedures for the Annual Membership Drive are as follows:

- The membership drive will begin with an application in the newsletter with a request that residents send in their updated membership application and yearly dues.
- The SGHA Membership Team will meet with block captains prior to the fall Membership Meeting to review procedures and to distribute information for the membership drive.
- Block captains will be informed of their assigned contact person on the membership team. When there is more than one membership chairperson, blocks will be divided equitably among them.
- Block captains will be provided with all materials needed for the membership drive including a “by-block-report” of residents who have not yet submitted payment for the upcoming year.
- Block captains will be provided with pre-labeled membership application forms for each resident that did not send in their dues.
- As soon as possible, block captains will attempt to make personal contact with residents of their block who have not yet paid their yearly dues. If the resident is not home, block captains will leave the resident the membership application and directions for how to contact the block captain. Block captains should follow up with a phone call when face-to-face contact was not made.
- When the block captains collect a payment from a member, they are asked to record the method of payment in the note-taking section of

the “by-block-report.” When residents pay by check, block captains are also asked to record the check number on the “by-block-report.”

- Block captains are asked to record any questions or comments of their block’s residents in the comments section of the “by-block-report” especially when residents decline membership or are dissatisfied with the association.
- Once completed membership forms and payments are received by the block captain, the block captain should contact their assigned membership chairperson or deliver the applications, payments, and annotated “by-block-report” personally.
- The membership chairperson will then forward the completed membership applications to the database manager and payments to the treasurer.
- The database manager will update the database and provide new reports as needed.

The following are tips from past block captains about how to handle block captain duties more successfully:

- Maintain at least friendly and casual contact with your block residents throughout the year so that they do not just associate you with asking for money once a year.
- Give some thought to when you approach your neighbors. They tend to be more agreeable if you visit them on a pleasant day at a reasonable hour.
- Be pleasant, friendly and receptive when you approach your neighbors. If they decline membership, accept their decision gracefully.
- If possible, have something to give your neighbors when you approach them about membership, such as the new directory or newsletter, so that you are perceived as providing a service and not just asking for money.
- If neighbors do not respond to the membership letter you left for them and a follow-up phone call, let it be. Pestering has not been successful in soliciting new members, and continued efforts on your part would likely be wasted time.
- Be prepared to answer questions your neighbors have about the Association. (See the Appendix of Procedural Guidelines for some examples). If you are not sure of how to respond, don't be afraid to say, "I don't know." However, do contact the Board and try to get back to your neighbor with an answer.

- Make the process as easy as possible. A neighbor is more likely to pay on the spot when you visit them if all they have to do is write a check. If they also have to fill out the membership form too, they are more likely to put it off and possibly forget about it. (Modifications to the membership form may help with this. See Appendix.)

APPENDIX

The following are some answers to common questions about SGHA:

“What are the benefits of joining SGHA?”

Membership in the SGHA secures your opportunity to participate in community decisions that can affect us all. The SGHA ensures that common areas such as cul-de-sacs, signage and entranceways are properly maintained. A SGHA Board member also represents the neighborhood on larger community issues at the monthly Council of Troy Homeowner’s Association (COTHA). Members receive a newsletter at least quarterly to keep you informed with what is happening in the neighborhood. Members also receive a membership directory of other members, which is a very convenient and handy resource. Members who have certain services to offer, such as landscaping, baby-sitting, etc. also have the opportunities to promote their services in this directory. The SGHA members also sponsor and/or organize various community social events, including an annual garage sale, neighborhood party, and dinner dance. SGHA members also sponsor and/or organize other activities such as parenting and play groups, euchre parties, golf outings, and child-oriented activities such as Halloween activities and an Easter Egg hunt. Most importantly, membership fosters a sense of community and neighborhood awareness.

“All I know about the association is they have an annual dinner dance. I don’t participate in that, so why should my membership dues go to that?”

The majority of membership dues go to ensuring that common areas are properly maintained and updated so that our neighborhood remains an attractive and desirable place to live. All neighbors benefit from these services, and the more paying members we have, the more funds we have to accomplish much-needed projects, such as replacing the deteriorating signs at our entrance-ways. The funding for most SGHA social events comes from those who participate in the events and not from the general fund.

“I live on Creston or Trinway or Sylvanwood. We have no common areas to maintain there and no entrance signs. Why should we contribute?”

The SGHA encompasses the whole square mile between Rochester Rd. and Livernois Rd. between Long Lake and Square Lake. It is true that traditionally, neighbors in some of the earliest-developed areas of the neighborhood have not joined the SGHA and may perceive themselves as isolated from the other streets more commonly thought of as “Sylvan Glen.” This is unfortunate, because all members within this square mile can benefit from the work of the SGHA. Even if you do not have common areas to maintain in your end of the neighborhood, by nature of your proximity to “Sylvan Glen,” any improvements or updates done to one part of the neighborhood increases the desirability and property value of all homes in this square mile.

“I complained to the Board a bunch of times about my neighbor not cutting his grass or about his dogs barking, and they didn’t do anything. That’s why I don’t want to join.”

The SGHA Board is not the neighborhood police nor enforcers. The part of the neighborhood known as Sylvan Glen III does have deed restrictions, and the Board will enforce them. Although the Board will not get involved in neighborhood disputes, they could possibly facilitate a neighborly resolution to disagreements by providing a forum in which disagreements can be discussed.

“I don’t want to join because I don’t want some Board to tell me what I can do on my own property.”

Sylvan Glen III is the only part of the neighborhood with deed restrictions, and those restrictions apply whether or not you join the association. The Board does provide a process by which neighbors in Sylvan Glen III can seek release from deed restrictions when they wish to make additions to their house, for example. Furthermore, for the most part, these deed restrictions are rather lenient.

“I’m very busy. If I join, aren’t I going to be pressured to volunteer services? I don’t have time for that.”

Participation in SGHA is entirely voluntary. Furthermore, all Board and committee positions are voluntary. Therefore it would be great if you could volunteer sometimes. Many hands make lighter work! However, with membership you are not obligated to do anything other than to pay your membership dues.

“Are these membership dues reasonable?”

Yes! Thirty dollars a year is very reasonable for the kind of services the SGHA provides. A review of the fees of nearly thirty homeowners associations in Troy revealed that the average yearly dues is nearly \$75, with one association charging as much as \$550 per year!

“I had some problems with past Boards so I don’t want any part of this association.”

It is unfortunate if anyone has been disappointed with past Boards. We must believe that we all have the same goal of bettering and maintaining this community, and that all Board members, past and present, have done their best. Board positions are voluntary and may change yearly with new elections. A different Board may have fresh new energy and fresh new ideas. Neighbors with concerns about past Boards are highly encouraged to volunteer for a position on the Board themselves at the next election.

“Do residents who are new to the neighborhood get their first year of membership free?”

When new residents move in, they are welcomed by their block captain with a neighborhood directory, the most recent newsletter, and a membership application. At this time, they acquire a temporary membership status from the time of their move-in until the time of the next membership drive. The amount of time they receive the benefits of membership without paying dues will depend on the time of year they move into the neighborhood. In most cases, this will be less

than one year. To maintain their membership status, they must pay membership dues at the time of the next membership drive.

Please refer neighbors to the SGHA website, www.sgha.freeservers.com. From there they can e-mail Board members and committee members directly, view the latest newsletter, and download copies of deed restrictions and SGHA bylaws.

SGHA MEMBERSHIP FORM AND DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Dear Neighbor,

The Sylvan Glen Homeowners Association (SGHA) is a voluntary association that has been in operation for many years. Membership in the SGHA secures your opportunity to participate in community decisions that can affect us all. The SGHA ensures that common areas such as cul-de-sacs, signage and entranceways are properly maintained. A SGHA Board member also represents the neighborhood on larger community issues at the monthly Council of Troy Homeowner's Association (COTHA). Members receive a newsletter at least quarterly with information on what is happening in the neighborhood. Members also receive a membership directory of other members, which is a very convenient and handy resource. Members who have certain services to offer, such as landscaping, baby-sitting, etc. also have the opportunities to promote their services in this directory. The SGHA members also sponsor and/or organize various community social events, including an annual garage sale, neighborhood party, and dinner dance. SGHA members also sponsor and/or organize other activities such as parenting and play groups, euchre parties, golf outings, and child-oriented activities such as Halloween activities and an Easter Egg hunt. Most importantly, membership fosters a sense of community and neighborhood awareness.

Membership is only \$30 per year. Please return this form with your payment to your block captain: _____

[**Insert label here**] Check payable to SGHA enclosed Cash enclosed

Check box if name, address, phone number, e-mail address, committee membership and / or directory information are all same as last year. Otherwise, provide corrections below.

Last name: _____ First name(s): _____

Address: _____ Phone number: _____

E-mail address: _____

(By including my e-mail address here I authorize SGHA to use it to send Association information by e-mail. No personal information is ever shared or sold by SGHA). Check box to publish e-mail address in directory.

Please indicate activities in which you would like to participate below.

Adult Social Committee Children's Social Committee Common Grounds
(entries, signs, cul-de-sacs)
 Block Captain Picnic Committee Couples Pinnole

Other _____

Please indicate any service you or a member of your family can provide that you wish to have published in the SGHA directory, for example: babysitting, housework/repair, yard work, snow removal, etc.

Name	Age (optional)	Phone	Type of Service
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

