



Resident-Owned Community Living

Living in a Resident-Owned Community (“ROC”) is different from living in an investor-owned park. This type of community living is unique – homeowners in ROCs are not simply tenants in a park, they are *members* of a ROC and *owners* of a business. As a ROC member it is important for you to understand that:

- The ROC is a nonprofit organization incorporated under applicable Massachusetts laws. It is owned by its members. Individual homeowners do not own the land underneath their homes; the ROC does. Despite its nonprofit status, the ROC is run much like a business.
- The ROC has member-approved Bylaws, which spell out how the business is governed.
- The ROC is democratically governed by a one-member, one vote system. Each member (that is, each household), has equal decision-making authority.
- New homeowners moving into the community are required to become members, binding them to the Bylaws and Community Rules and enter into an Occupancy Agreement, which is the tenancy agreement with the ROC. The Occupancy Agreement also refers to and is subject to the Bylaws and Community Rules.
- Members elect a Board of Directors to carry out the day-to-day tasks of running a business. The Board then appoints committees to take on other tasks.
- Members have control over big decisions, such as carrying charges (rent), approving the annual budget, electing a Board and amending the Bylaws or Community Rules.
- Members can be expelled from the ROC (which is *different* than being evicted from the community) for obstructing the management of the ROC. This is a serious matter and not to be taken lightly – members who are expelled typically lose voting and other privileges.

The Board, officers and the appointed committee members must adhere to the ROC’s Bylaws and Community Rules, as well as to state and federal laws. They are also ROC members, and are accountable to their fellow members. They must run the ROC in a fair, consistent, democratic and businesslike manner.

ROC membership has rewards, rights and responsibilities. The strength of a ROC is directly related to the participation and commitment of its members. By participating in the ROC, members can help reduce costs, build a vibrant neighborhood, and grow as

leaders. Participation includes everything from baking brownies for the annual community barbecue to operating the well system, from an hour a month to a two-year commitment on the Board of Directors.