



Village of

Maywood

Illinois



Block Club Guide

Village Clerk's Office

40 Madison Street

(708) 450-6360

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Forming a Block Club

FORMING A BLOCK CLUB

Creating the Formal Structure

Disclaimer: This document was prepared to provide information regarding the topic covered. Any legal requirements and non-legal administrative practice standards discussed in the document are capable of change due to new legislation, regulatory and judicial pronouncements, updates, and evolving guidelines. This document is intended and was designed for the purpose of providing information for your reference, and does not constitute an engagement to provide legal, tax, or other professional services. If you require professional assistance on these or other tax or administrative law issues, please contact an attorney, accountant, or other professional advisor, or the relevant government agency.

Volunteers the Real MVPs: Neighborhood Block volunteers work on an endless stream of projects and commitments. The last thing that anyone really wants to think about is the legal and fiscal requirements of your neighborhood association. They are often tedious and confusing. This document will help unravel some of the complexities of these requirements.

Your neighborhood Block Club should be organized in a way that best suits your needs as it meets any applicable Village Guidelines and other legal requirements. There are certain things that all neighborhood Block Clubs **must do** (like writing **bylaws**). However, you do not need to take on more fiscal/legal responsibilities than are appropriate for your organization.

For example, if you are a small neighborhood Block Club that deals with small sums of money, you do not have to incorporate and/or apply for nonprofit tax-exempt status. You could simply write bylaws, apply for an assumed business name, receive a tax ID number, open a checking account and you are in business. Since neighborhood Block Clubs are not required to organize in a particular way, there are a few options open to your organization. There are some options you may want to consider and some that would not work for your group. Again, do what is best for your neighborhood Block Club. The material in this document can be divided into three sections.

Three Things:

1. Things you **must do**.
2. Things you **should consider**.
3. Things you **might want to do**.

Must Do –

Write By-laws. To be recognized as a legitimate neighborhood Block Club by the Village, you should have By-laws on file with the Office of the Mayor. Sample By-laws are included in this Guide.

Should Consider –

Keep written records of meetings. Minutes do not have to be typed, as long as they are written legibly and kept in a binder.

Bookkeeping: Even if you are dealing with small sums of money, you should set up a bookkeeping system. Keep it simple, document like you would your own bank statement, income, expenses, balance. In some cases, you may want to provide some detail so that members understand the entry. For example, with income might give a detail that is from dues collected.

Assumed business name: The least you should do as a neighborhood Block Club is to apply for a business name. This protects your identity as a “Community Block Club”.

Tax I.D. Number: Like a Social Security number for your neighborhood Block Club, this number is necessary to open a bank account.

Might Want to Do –

Incorporate. You can incorporate with the State of Illinois as a nonprofit corporation. This is necessary if you intend to apply for a nonprofit, tax exempt status. Corporations must comply with a number of legal and fiscal requirements.

Apply for tax exempt status. The Internal Revenue Service allows neighborhood Block Clubs to apply for a tax-exempt status. Apply for bulk mailing permit. The Post Office offers a special rate to nonprofit, tax exempt organizations.

Some research may be necessary before you decide which of these optional actions you need to take on. The size of your organization, level of activity and amount of money you have are among the factors that determine the best status for your neighborhood association. You may need to seek advice from an attorney or accountant (look for a volunteer from your neighborhood).

Getting Started

GETTING STARTED

PURPOSE/MISSION STATEMENT

Many times, after a Block Club identifies why they need to organize, they generally turn the purpose or reason for organizing into a mission statement. This is also considered your Public Relations or “PR” piece. When reaching out to others, you can say something like one of the statements listed below.

Example:

MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the 200 North Pine Block Club is to beautify our block, patrol for safety, and to provide a pleasant atmosphere for children and seniors to feel comfortable being a part of: or

The 400 South 14th Street Block Club was formed to raise money to have lights installed on all member’s property to help improve an atmosphere of safety and to help deter crime: or

The 200 North 5th Avenue Block Club was formed to solve issues and concerns that affect the homeowners on the block as well as others: or

The 1200 West 9th Avenue Block Club was formed to find ways to provide a safe haven for the children who live on our block.

The 1200 West 9th Avenue Block Club desires to assist its neighbors in becoming more active by encouraging their participation and channeling information on subjects such as neighborhood beautification, community policing, housing, political awareness, and other civic responsibilities that will strengthen our community. Its mission is to also serve as a liaison to the Village in making information available to residents on various issues and providing feedback to the Village on issues and concerns that affect individuals, their families, and/or their financial resources.

Generally, these types of purposes or concerns affect other residents on the block, and knowing that you share a common goal to correct a problem or achieve a success story brings others to the table as well.

BY-LAWS

BY-LAWS FOR BLOCK CLUBS

By-laws are guidelines and can provide direction on how the club will operate. Members come and go; by-laws will always be there to provide direction. They should not be too specific and provide a process to change direction when necessary. The process of developing and adopting by-laws could take more than one meeting. If necessary, an ad hoc committee could be formed to help expedite the progress, making sure everyone has read through each article and has the opportunity to provide feedback. A sample of block club by-laws is attached. A description of each article is included in the following template.

TEMPLATE:

Article 1: Name and Boundaries

Section 1 - the name of the group

Section 2 - boundaries of the block club

Article 2: Objectives

Section 1 - state the mission/purpose

Section 2 - initiatives (neighborhood watch, beautification)

Article 3: Finances and Records

Section 1 - state who are signers on the bank account.

Section 2 – state where funds will be deposited.

Article 4: Membership

Section 1 - describe who is eligible to be a member (persons or businesses living within-the boundaries of the club)

Section 2 – term of membership

Article 5: Officers

Section 1 – state what officers Club will elect.

Section 2 – when will officers be elected and how.

Article 6: duties of officers (see roles and responsibilities section for descriptions)

Section 1 – President

Section 2 – Vice President

Section 3 – Secretary

Section 4 – Treasurer

Article 7: Meetings

Section 1 - describe when regular meetings will be held, the date and time, and describe how many members will designate a quorum.

Section 2 – annual meeting date

Section 3 – meeting location

Article 8: Executive Board

Section 1 – which officers will constitute the executive board.

Section 2 – duties of the executive board

Article 9: Standing Committees

Section 1 – state president’s authority to appoint representation to the committees you have identified will be ongoing committees.

Section 2 – Membership Committee

Section 3 – Publicity Committee

Section 4 – Beautification Committee

Section 5 – By-laws Committee

Article 10: Liability

Article 11: Amendments

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF OFFICERS

When starting a block club, the initial organizers may be identified as an “ad hoc” committee. This group serves as temporary officers, convening the meeting, taking meeting notes and collecting funds until an election of officers is held. The description of officers should be included in the by-laws.

The following description is a sample and shows what they can be, however roles should be modified to fit your own block club. There are many ways to define a leader. Here are just a few.

ROLES

Volunteer – a person willing to give of their time and talent for the worthy goals of the block club. Make sure to give specific duties with time frames for finishing a task. For example, serving as an officer, chair or serving on a special committee, arranging for refreshments, etc. This shows respect to them and for their time. Always acknowledge every volunteer, no matter what position or task.

OFFICERS

President – the president shall be the principal executive officer of the organization. The president will preside at all meetings, encourage neighbors to become members; represent at functions or designate another officer; appoint committee chairs and serve as spokesperson for the organization.

Vice President – the vice president shall perform by the president and in the absence of the president shall perform the duties of the president.

Other Suggestions:

Secretary – the secretary shall be responsible for keeping the organization’s record of meetings, confirming the meeting place, and notifying all members of the scheduled meetings. The secretary may be other duties from time to time by the president.

Treasurer – the treasurer shall have charge of and be responsible for the maintenance of books of account for the organization, have custody of all funds of the organization, and be responsible for the receipts and disbursements. The Treasurer shall perform all duties incident to the office and other duties as may be assigned by the president.

FORMS AND OTHER INFORMATION

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AGENDA

Recording minutes can be easy by staying focused on the discussion and not so much on who is talking.

Example: write the name of your block club in the heading, the day, date, time, and location of the meeting ...

5th Avenue Block Club Organization Meeting
Tuesday, August 3, 2021, 6:00 p.m. at Olsen's Backyard
Agenda

Then follow with **Call to Order** and the other items on our agenda. See the sample agenda for the first meeting attached. If used properly, agendas can be the success of your meetings. By identifying the topics for discussion for the meeting in advance and letting all members present know that you are following an agenda, this gives the impression of the organization and that you respect other people's time.

An Agenda should not be overloaded. Meaning, if too many topics are on the agenda, the meeting could run for hours and people will walk away with info overload, or with a sense that nothing was really done because the meeting was all over the place.

KEEP IT SIMPLE!

The sample agenda shown on the next page is for a first-time meeting.

**14th & Van Buren Block Club
Organization Meeting - Olsen's Backyard
Tuesday, August 3, 2021, at 5:00 p.m.
Agenda**

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Introductions/Attendance**
- 3. Discussion of Officers**
 - a. President**
 - b. Vice President**
 - c. Treasurer**
- 4. Discuss Bylaws**
- 5. Neighbors' Concerns**
- 6. Election of Officers**
- 7. Set the Next Meeting Date and Agenda Items**
- 8. Adjournment**

MINUTES

Minutes can be very easy by staying focused on the discussion and not so much on who is talking speaking.

EXAMPLE:

Place the heading of your minutes the same as the agenda, however, remove the meeting time and the word Agenda, and start with: Minutes of the...

Minutes of the
14th & Van Buren Block Club
Organization Meeting - Olsen's Backyard
Tuesday, August 3, 2021

Then use your agenda outline to write your meeting notes:

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at (insert time) p.m. Present were:
(Write names from your sign-in sheet)

From here continue to follow your agenda writing pertinent discussion or any action the group decided upon for each item on the agenda.

Sample:

2. Unfinished Business:

- Overnight parking - because of a lengthy discussion we were still unable to complete the topic of overnight parking. The matter was referred to the Committee to bring back more information that could provide a resolution and will be further discussed under unfinished business at the next meeting.

3. New Business

Fall Leaves - discussion centered on residents' concerns of letting leaves pile up in the street which clogs drains and creates problems for homeowners after heavy rain. The consensus was to contact the Public Works Department to report the issue and for a possible resolution, i.e., have leaves removed/vacuumed.

4. Announcements – a reminder of the Bataan Day celebration on September 8th.
5. Next meeting is September 7th at 5:00 p.m.
6. Meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Meeting Recorder:

(Print the Name of the Person Taking Notes and once approved, the meeting recorder will sign.)

**SAMPLE
FLYER
ANNOUNCING
FIRST MEETING**

Block Club Organization Meeting



Residents of: _____

Who wants to learn more about it?

Community Safety and Crime Prevention

Neighborhood Beautification

Youth Development

When:

Where:



If you are unable to attend this meeting, please make an effort to have someone from your home if possible, represent you and your views.

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

VILLAGE OF MAYWOOD GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

The Village Board of Trustees meets every * (1st and 3rd) Tuesday of the month, at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 125 South 5th Avenue, second level of the Police Department, unless otherwise posted. (*Summer schedule changes). Visit the website for the agenda and other information – www.maywood-il.org.

The Village of Maywood’s governing body is comprised of the following elected officials; a Village President (Mayor), Village Clerk, and six (6) Trustees:

MAYOR

Nathaniel George Booker
Office: (708) 450-6329

VILLAGE CLERK

Tori Love-Garron
Office: (708) 450-6360

TRUSTEES

Isiah Brandon
(708) 261-9217

Melvin Lightford Sr
(708) 646-6574

Miguel Jones
(708) 288-8604

Aaron Peppers
(708) 574-5450

Rahmaan “Ray” Williams
TBA

Antonio Sanchez
(708) 359-7341

VILLAGE TREASURER

Steve Kuptz
(708) 473-0931

VILLAGE MANAGER*

Jim Krischke
(708) 450-6301

***Responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Village of Maywood**

SIGN-UP SHEET

SIGN-UP SHEET

NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE NO.	E-MAIL ADDRESS