

New Board Member Document Checklist

In request order. Work top to bottom — ask for the whole list in one email, then tick things off as they arrive. Knowing what's missing is as valuable as knowing what you have.

What to request	Why it matters	Where to ask	Requested	Received	Notes
1 · Money — ask for these first					
Bank statements — last 12 months	Money in and money out. Without them you are deciding from a balance, not a picture.	Outgoing treasurer · bank · management company			
Current year budget	What was planned for this year.	Outgoing board · management company			
Last year's budget	So you can compare what was planned against what actually happened.	Outgoing board · management company			
Outstanding invoices and unpaid bills	What you already owe before you make a single decision.	Outgoing treasurer · management company			
Reserve account balance	If there is no reserve fund, that is your most urgent problem.	Bank · treasurer			
Date of the last reserve study	Tells you whether the balance means anything.	Outgoing board · management company			
Monthly financial statements	If nobody is producing these, that is your second most urgent problem.	Outgoing treasurer · management company			
2 · Governing documents					
Declaration (CC&Rs) and all recorded amendments	Your constitution. Everything else answers to it.	County recorder · management company · title company			
Bylaws	How the board actually operates.	Outgoing board · management company			
Articles of incorporation	The filing that makes the association a legal entity.	Secretary of State · management company			
Rules and regulations currently enforced	Check each one against the declaration before you enforce it.	Outgoing board			
→ Section: maintenance responsibilities	What the association maintains vs. what owners handle. Causes the most disputes.	Inside the declaration			
→ Section: assessments	How dues are divided and what it takes to raise them.	Declaration, sometimes the bylaws			
→ Section: voting thresholds	What each kind of decision requires. Get this wrong and the vote does not hold.	Declaration and bylaws			
3 · Insurance					
Master policy — full document, not the certificate	The certificate is a summary. The policy is what pays.	Insurance broker · management company			
Confirm it is current — not expired, not lapsed	A lapse is the single most expensive administrative mistake available to you.	Broker · carrier			
What it covers and what it excludes	There are gaps in most standard policies that will surprise you.	Broker			

What to request	Why it matters	Where to ask	Requested	Received	Notes
How the premium is paid — is it on auto-pay?	Coverage should never lapse because someone forgot to write a check.	Bank · treasurer			
Claims history	Tells you what has already gone wrong in this building.	Broker · carrier			
4 · Vendors and maintenance history					
Vendor contracts — landscaping, snow removal, cleaning, elevator	Whatever you are paying for, know what it costs.	Outgoing board · management company · vendors directly			
Cost and expiry date for every contract	Expiry dates are where lapses hide. Put each one on a shared calendar.	The contracts themselves			
Past inspection reports	What a professional has already told this building about itself.	Outgoing board · management company			
Capital improvement history	What has been replaced, when, and for how much.	Outgoing board			
Deferred maintenance list	The work everyone knows about and nobody has scheduled. This is where surprises hide.	Outgoing board · walk the building yourself			
5 · Where it all lives					
A shared folder every board member can reach	When a member steps down, whatever lives in their personal account walks out with them.	Set this up yourself — day one			
A single board email address that forwards to everyone	Gets association business off personal email.	Set this up yourself			

Copy-paste request email

Send it to the outgoing board or your management company. Ask for everything at once — a single dated request is also a record that you asked.

Subject: Records request — new board member

Hi [name],

I was recently elected to the board of [association name] and I'm getting up to speed on where things stand. Could you send me the following, or point me to where they're stored?

Financial

- Bank statements for the last 12 months
- The current budget and last year's budget
- Any outstanding invoices or unpaid bills
- The reserve account balance and the date of the last reserve study
- Monthly financial statements, if they're being produced

Governing documents

- The declaration (CC&Rs) and every recorded amendment
- The bylaws and articles of incorporation
- Any rules and regulations currently being enforced

Insurance

- The master policy document, the current declarations page, and the claims history
- Confirmation of how the premium is paid

Vendors and maintenance

- Current vendor contracts with costs and expiry dates
- Past inspection reports and capital improvement history
- Any deferred maintenance that's been identified but not scheduled

If some of this doesn't exist or can't be located, that's useful to know too — just say so and I'll note it. Happy to take everything digitally into a shared folder.

Thanks,

[your name] · [role] · [association name]