

## Hosting a Candidates' Forum

Since most of the issues that concern manufactured home owners living in land lease communities deal with the home owner and the land owner it makes sense for state and individual home owners' association to host a manufactured home owners can educate and meet people running for election and/or re-election to state

There is nothing difficult about hosting a Candidates' Forum but there are some basic rules that if followed will be a successful event. The following check list is a good place to start and if you need further information please contact us.

1. Do not organize it alone – have a committee
  - a. It is always a good idea to have a group of people work on any project related to manufactured housing
  - b. People on a committee are invested in a good outcome for the event they helped to organize.
  - c. They are able to encourage others to attend the event.
  - d. They can help find volunteers to take on some of the detailed tasks required to ensure success.
  - e. A group of 3-5 people who will commit and who can be relied upon to follow through on the tasks assigned to the event.
2. Find out who is running for election and for which offices
  - a. Candidates for office usually have to register with the Secretary of State's office and usually there is a cut-off date for registration.
  - b. Those currently in office also need to declare their intent to run again.
3. Host the candidates' forum prior to the state primary elections
  - a. Manufactured home owners should have the opportunity to hear from candidates prior to the state's primary elections. Host a candidates' forum in late July/early August.
  - b. If this is not possible then invite the top 2 candidates to your forum sometime in October so that people will have heard from them before the election.
  - c. Be sure to invite all candidates – you do not want to appear partisan – the issues facing manufactured home owners are the hearts and minds of any candidate, regardless of political persuasion.
4. Email the candidates to invite them to the event and be sure to give them a deadline by which to respond. Follow up with a phone call if you have not heard from them by the date certain.
5. Be sure to provide the candidates with information about your HOA and the bills/issues you want them to comment on.
6. Possibly ask them to complete a questionnaire and have them return it to you prior to the event so that everyone in the audience know the candidate's thoughts on a particular issue.
7. Reserve your clubhouse or other meeting venue in good time and make sure it is filled!
  - a. You will not leave much of an impression with candidates if your forum is sparsely attended.
  - b. Make sure people fill the room starting with chairs at the front first.
  - c. It is often a good idea to keep some chairs stacked at the back so that they can be used if needed – the chairs scattered around the room.
  - d. If you do not have a clubhouse, then consider asking a local church if you could use their meeting space. A school gymnasium would not be an appropriate venue for a candidates' forum unless you have a large group (a school gymnasium would not be an appropriate venue for a candidates' forum unless you have a large group).
8. Invite people not only from your own HOA but from other manufactured housing communities in the District. They will have much to say if they show up to speak to an empty room.