

## Co-op Coalition Survey: Member Participation (1-2024)

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**Sent:** Friday, January 5, 2024 at 09:45:17 AM EST

**Subject:** CO-OP SURVEY - MEMBER PARTICIPATION (REP) ( DUE 1-19)

A coalition member wants to know about how other cooperatives increase it's members' participation in the community in governance issues such as committee and board membership as well as social activities. Please reply by January 19, 2024.

Thanks in advance for helping another Coalition member. The questions follow:

1. Has membership activity in your cooperative been decreasing or increasing?
2. What have you done to increase activity by your members?
3. If you have taken action to increase member participation, what has been the result?
4. If you would describe participation of members' as either high or low, what is your understanding of the meaning of low or high participation?
5. Is there a difference in the amount of members' participation between governance activities and attendance at social activities?
6. What strategies have you pursued to increase members' participation? What worked and what didn't work?

Best regards,

Janet Sten, Director

DC Cooperative Housing Coalition

[www.CoopsDC.org](http://www.CoopsDC.org)

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<p>&lt;30 units</p>	<p>1. Has membership activity in your cooperative been decreasing or increasing? <b>Decreasing</b></p> <p>2. What have you done to increase activity by your members? <b>Emphasized importance of participation, continued virtual board meetings after covid for increased participation</b></p> <p>3. If you have taken action to increase member participation, what has been the result? <b>No significant increase in participation</b></p> <p>4. If you would describe participation of members' as either high or low, what is your understanding of the meaning of low or high participation? <b>Joining board meetings, supporting/volunteering time for ongoing building projects/maintenance coordination that requires member involvement.</b></p> <p>5. Is there a difference in the amount of members' participation between governance activities and attendance at social activities? <b>Yes, but social activities are ad hoc and not coordinated by the board.</b></p> <p>6. What strategies have you pursued to increase members' participation? What worked and what didn't work? <b>We are exploring this at the moment and are looking at short-term rotating non-voting mandatory board participation for new members.</b></p>
<p>&lt;30 units</p>	<p>1. <b>Membership activity is holding steady.</b></p> <p>2. <b>We have not felt the need to increase that activity.</b></p> <p>3. <b>N/A</b></p> <p>4. <b>We would describe it as average, defining that as sufficient for our needs.</b></p> <p>5. <b>There is certainly greater participation in social events, but only because we don't need 100% of the residents to be involved in governance at any one time.</b></p> <p>6. <b>As a small building, it is important to have significant resident participation. The Board encourages non-Board members to serve on committees and our committees are usually well-staffed. We also have an active Social Committee, which has the effect of making shareholders feel part of a community that they can participate in. When new shareholders enter the building, the Board takes a good look at their skill set and will soon consider them for committee service.</b></p>
<p>30-60 units</p>	<p>1. Has membership activity in your cooperative been decreasing or increasing? <b>Although some members are reluctant to get involved, our coop has a steady participation from slightly more than half of the shareholders.</b></p> <p>2. What have you done to increase activity by your members? <b>We find that constant communication and updates from the board keep the</b></p>

	<p><b>community fairly interested in ongoing activities. This changes from board to board with some boards being less communicative than others. When co-op shareholders don't know what the board is doing, they seem to lose interest. Keeping everyone in the loop helps keep their interest and involvement in important matters.</b></p> <p>3. If you have taken action to increase member participation, what has been the result? <b>Constant communication from the board has increased overall participation.</b></p> <p>4. If you would describe participation of members' as either high or low, what is your understanding of the meaning of low or high participation? <b>The participation is relatively high.</b></p> <p>5. Is there a difference in the amount of members' participation between governance activities and attendance at social activities? <b>We haven't had a social activity but that's an idea worth pursuing.</b></p> <p>6. What strategies have you pursued to increase members' participation? What worked and what didn't work? <b>Other than the answer provided to question number 2, we've not tried other strategies.</b></p>
<p>30-60 units</p>	<p>1. Has membership activity in your cooperative been decreasing or increasing? <b>Participation by membership evolved throughout the pandemic, with strong initial interest when our Board switched to Zoom meetings that has now moderated to about the same as what we saw 5 years ago. A controversial topic (e.g. pet policy) on the agenda will bring interested parties to the table, but they are usually single-interest participants.</b></p> <p>2. What have you done to increase activity by your members? <b>We have added one or two after-work social events in our courtyard garden each year.</b></p> <p>3. If you have taken action to increase member participation, what has been the result? <b>Reasonably good attendance at social events, but little interest in making commitment to Board service.</b></p> <p>4. If you would describe participation of members' as either high or low, what is your understanding of the meaning of low or high participation? <b>I would consider high participation as over 50%. Low participation would be more Board members than non-Board at an event or information session.</b></p> <p>5. Is there a difference in the amount of members' participation between governance activities and attendance at social activities? <b>We always have high participation at Annual Meeting. Other activities and events are dependent on topic and scheduling, usually moderate participation and considered worth the planning effort.</b></p> <p>6. What strategies have you pursued to increase members' participation? What worked</p>

	<p>and what didn't work?</p> <p><b>We have tried meetings/events at different times of day or different day of week.</b></p> <p><b>Social events work best at 5:30 or around 8. Zoom meetings best at 6:30. Don't meet on weekends.</b></p> <p><b>We actively solicit for more Board/Committee participation, but have found that strong-arming a reluctant member leads to an inactive participant.</b></p>
30-60 units	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Membership activity has been steadily decreasing.</b></li> <li><b>2. We have encouraged members to get involved in committees and task forces as well as to run for the Board.</b></li> <li><b>3. We have had very limited success with the above measures.</b></li> <li><b>4. High participation would mean an engaged membership that shows up to monthly and annual meetings, voices constructive opinions on building matters and contributes talent to help the community. Low participation means low turnout for meetings, only hearing from a handful of the same people with many complaints and having a lack of volunteers to help the community with projects.</b></li> <li><b>5. We haven't had that many social activities since the pandemic but it's fair to say that both governance and social activities are sparsely attended.</b></li> <li><b>6. We have done some outreach, particularly to get Board members. Many who have joined reluctantly have not stayed on or have resigned.</b></li> </ol>
30-60 units	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Has membership activity in your cooperative been decreasing or increasing? <b>No change</b></li> <li>2. What have you done to increase activity by your members? <b>None</b></li> <li>3. If you have taken action to increase member participation, what has been the result? <b>N/A</b></li> <li>4. If you would describe participation of members' as either high or low, what is your understanding of the meaning of low or high participation? <b>Neither low or high</b></li> <li>5. Is there a difference in the amount of members' participation between governance activities and attendance at social activities? <b>We do not do social activities.</b></li> <li>6. What strategies have you pursued to increase members' participation? <b>N/A</b> What worked and what didn't work? <b>N/A</b></li> </ol>
100-150 units	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Has membership activity in your cooperative been decreasing or increasing? <b>Stable</b></li> <li>2. What have you done to increase activity by your members? <b>Wine and cheese with board members for new shareholders</b></li> <li>3. If you have taken action to increase member participation, what has been the result? <b>Poorly attended!</b></li> </ol>

	<p>4. If you would describe participation of members' as either high or low, what is your understanding of the meaning of low or high participation?  <b>LOW = 1 in 5 response to specific invitations; 1 out of 20 attendance to listen at board meetings</b></p> <p>5. Is there a difference in the amount of members' participation between governance activities and attendance at social activities?  <b>Yes—every board meeting begins with a brief open forum for shareholders to speak to the Board, and 1 or 2 (of 100) aggrieved shareholders have something to say at most meetings.</b></p> <p>6. What strategies have you pursued to increase members' participation? What worked and what didn't work?  <b>I think the open forum at monthly meetings works well. Not sure the other social outreach efforts work well. I am a firm believer in our elevator notices—everyone sees them and usually has time to read them while waiting for the elevator. Low tech—easy to disseminate and easy for shareholders to access.</b></p>
100-150 units	<p>1. Has membership activity in your cooperative been decreasing or increasing?  <b>Some Committees are more popular than others BUT we have a 7 member Board and 11 committees.</b></p> <p>2. What have you done to increase activity by your members?  <b>The Social Committee has started doing gatherings again now that Covid is behind us. We also have Quarterly Owners meetings and we use that time to thank volunteers and remind people of the volunteer opportunities. The Board also did a direct personal outreach to owners that were not signed up for anything.</b></p> <p>3. If you have taken action to increase member participation, what has been the result?  <b>The Board's outreach in person or by phone worked to get additional people.</b></p> <p>4. If you would describe participation of members' as either high or low, what is your understanding of the meaning of low or high participation?  <b>As a manager who worked with condos not coops I would say participation is High. The Board thinks it's lower than prior years but I am still impressed by the participation and heavy lift done by owners compared to other buildings. It may have to do with the Admissions committee during the process. They speak about how important it is in our community and also let them know what those volunteer opportunities are.</b></p> <p>5. Is there a difference in the amount of members' participation between governance activities and attendance at social activities?  <b>All meetings are announced and open. Regular monthly BOD meetings are not well attended but I think that's because the Board does a great job. I was very worried about meeting Quorum when I started here knowing they had quarterly meetings. No issues- they are always very well attended. They were by ZOOM but the association wanted to return in person. The very few offsite owners wished it was still Zoom but in person seems to build a better connection.</b></p> <p>6. What strategies have you pursued to increase members' participation?  <b>See above</b>  What worked and what didn't work?  <b>Committee chairs also get involved to recruit, that helps. They did try the old school sign up sheets for committees which have worked in the past but this year people did not physically go to the hard copy sign ups at the desk. They responded better by email or phone.</b></p>

300+ units	<p>Has membership activity in your cooperative been decreasing or increasing?  <b>increasing</b></p> <p>2. What have you done to increase activity by your members?  <b>we have a Social Committee</b></p> <p>3. If you have taken action to increase member participation, what has been the result?  <b>trying different events and asking for suggestions</b></p> <p>4. If you would describe participation of members' as either high or low, what is your understanding of the meaning of low or high participation?</p> <p>5. Is there a difference in the amount of members' participation between governance activities and attendance at social activities?  <b>more at social activities; governance more so during budget season</b></p> <p>6. What strategies have you pursued to increase members' participation? What worked and what didn't work?  <b>ask them to be a part of the process, so they can affect the outcome. Avoid being the Monday morning quarterback!</b></p>
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