

NATIONAL LEADERS' FORUM – IS IT WORTH IT?

The Canadian Condominium Institute held its National Leaders Forum this past November in Kingston, Ontario. Although I've attended previous forums virtually, this is the first one I attended in person. Was it worth it?

I've been on the National Council for a couple years now and every meeting was held via Zoom. We accomplished a lot but having never met any of the council members in person, something was lacking.

At the Leaders' Forum, I finally had the chance to meet every one of them and get to know them a whole lot better. Whether it was during the sessions, at lunch or for a drink afterwards, we got to know each other better than we had before. To find out in depth what they do for a living, what their goals and families are like and their thoughts on the Council and CCI in general made for a better understanding of what CCI is made of.

It wasn't just the Council members. This was the chance to network with so many other CCI members who attended the forum. I found it extremely satisfying to meet them and hear their views on Condominiums in Canada.

The evening before the Forum, I attended the Joint National Executive and Council meeting. Aside from introducing ourselves and letting everyone know a bit about ourselves, we discussed the problems that existed in each chapter and learned what each chapter was doing to improve membership and their presence. It was a great exchange of ideas, some which I will bring to the Manitoba Chapter.

The next morning was a working breakfast with the National Council. We talked about business improvement plans, condo director's courses, and competition among other things.

The Forum began after breakfast with presentations by the Government Relations, Marketing, Operations and Finance committees. Each committee gave a summary of what they had accomplished over the past year as well as their plans for the coming year. Other

presentations followed after lunch with much the same format. It was a wealth of information, but I took as many notes as I could.

The Forum was held at the Four Points by Sheraton who provided the lunches and suppers. The rooms were great and the food was superb. Sheraton did a wonderful job.

I was particularly impressed by the session presented by Northern Alberta and Huronia chapters on Organizational vs Strategic Boards. I didn't know it, but it was what was in my mind for some time. Both chapters' boards focus on governance only with most work done by their committees. The Board concentrates on training, orientation and long-term support. They have efficient and short board meetings. Ours works similar to this but could use a few improvements.

It wasn't all work however. There was a team building exercise where we split into teams and assembled a furniture piece from IKEA. It was a lot of fun as I'm sure you know the problems putting these things together. The items were donated to Habitat for Humanity.

Lunch was provided every day and on the last night of the conference, CCI hosted an 80's themed banquet. A lot of the attendees dressed in their best 80's gear and after supper a band played well into the night with, of course, 1980's popular songs.

So is it worth it? I think so. Being able to meet everyone face to face, having private conversations at length, getting to know the ins and outs of the other Chapters all contributed to me having a better understanding of what makes the Canadian Condominium Institute tick.

The next leader's forum will be held in Saskatoon sometime in June. Keep watching for the exact dates and be sure to attend. You will come away with a wealth of knowledge and a keen outlook on the condominium industry.

JOHN POPOWICH, National Council Rep
CCI Manitoba Chapter 🍁

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