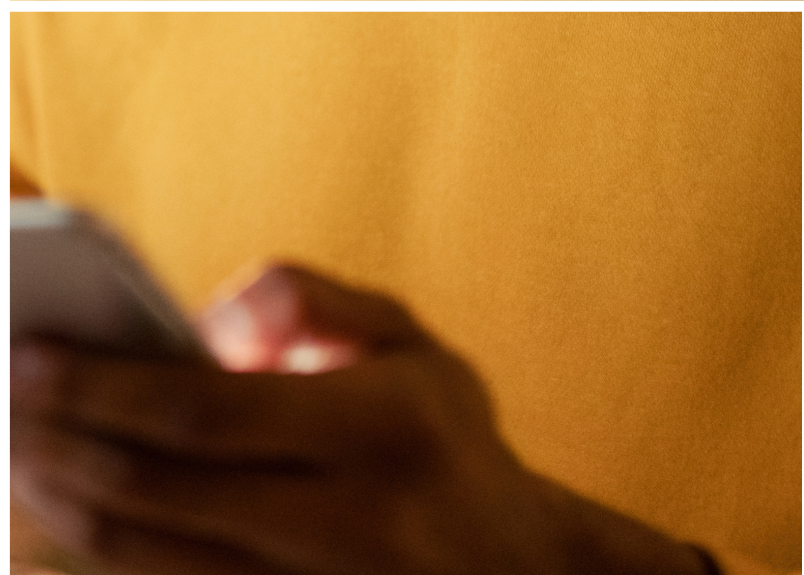




## MODERNIZING CONDO FINANCES WITH DIGITAL PAYMENT SOLUTIONS

A practical guide for condo board directors to increase control, transparency, and fraud protection.



Empowering boards to govern with confidence in a digital world.

## WHY THIS MATTERS TO CONDO BOARDS

Condo corporations today face growing expectations from owners, regulators, and auditors to operate efficiently, transparently, and securely.

At the same time, volunteer board members are expected to make sound financial decisions with limited time and resources.

This guide was created to help boards understand practical ways to modernize their financial and approval processes — without adding complexity or risk.

Inside, you'll find simple frameworks, and ready-to-use tools that make it easier to strengthen financial oversight, protect community funds, and save valuable time.

### You'll Find:



#### **Practical Resources —**

Step-by-step guidance, checklists, policy language, and comparison tools to support your transition.



#### **Actionable Guidance —**

A clear roadmap for planning, budgeting, and implementing digital workflows in your own community.



#### **Real-World Insight —**

A case study of a property management company that successfully modernized payment systems for their condo corporations.



# CHEQUE FRAUD: THE RISK BOARDS CAN'T AFFORD TO IGNORE

Every year, Canadian condo corporations and property management companies lose thousands — sometimes hundreds of thousands — of dollars to cheque-related fraud.

What makes it more concerning is that many of these losses occur after proper approvals — meaning the fraud didn't come from mismanagement, but from the cheque itself. Once that cheque leaves your office or mailbox, control is gone.

## Fraudsters know that a cheque reveals everything they need:

- Account numbers and branch details printed at the bottom.
- Director or manager signatures right on the document.
- Corporate name and address to mimic authenticity.

## Common Scenarios:

- Mail Interception: Cheques stolen, altered, or reissued to fake payees.
- Signature Forgery: Scanned or copied signatures used to create counterfeit cheques.
- Duplicate Payments: Fraudulent duplicates cashed before reconciliations catch up.
- Internal Misuse: Pre-signed cheques or lax controls exploited after hours.

**The Cost Isn't Just Financial.** Cheque fraud doesn't only drain funds — it erodes trust between the board, owners, and management.



***Every time a cheque is printed with your signature and bank account information, your corporation is one intercepted envelope away from a fraud incident.***

# PAPER-BASED CHEQUES VS. DIGITAL APPROVALS & PAYMENTS

Boards are often told “our process works fine.”

This side-by-side view helps explain why “fine” isn’t actually safe, efficient, or transparent.



## Fraud Exposure

### Paper Cheques

Board signatures and bank account info are printed on every cheque. Cheques can be intercepted, copied, altered, or forged.

### Digital Payments

No physical cheque. No exposed signatures or banking details. Encrypted transfers to verified vendors.



## Approval Process

Approvals often happen informally (email / text / “can you just sign this?”). Hard to prove who approved what.

Every approval is timestamped, linked to a named director, and stored. Dual-approval rules can be enforced automatically.



## Audit Readiness

At audit time, someone scrambles to pull invoices, signatures, and copies of cheques.

Full record is already organized and searchable. Auditors can be given read-only access.



## Convenience for Directors

Requires in-person signatures (often in bad weather / after hours).

Directors can securely review invoices and approve from anywhere.



## Oversight / Transparency

Directors only see fragments and often only monthly.

Directors can see activity in real time — what’s pending, what was paid, and why.

# YOUR 5-STEP PATH TO MODERNIZING PAYMENTS

**Modernizing your payment and approval process doesn't have to be overwhelming. Use this simple sequence to guide the transition.**

**01****Step 1. Assess your current approval and payment process.**

- Map how invoices come in, who touches them, who signs, and how payments are released.
- Identify if physical cheques are still being printed and signed.
- Ask: "Where do delays happen? Where could something go wrong?"

**02****Step 2. Identify risk points and bottlenecks.**

- Are board members physically signing cheques?
- Are signatures or banking details exposed on paper?
- Are approvals happening by email/text with no audit trail?
- These are liability zones — and they're what auditors/fraudsters both look at.

**03****Step 3. Engage the board — focus on control and security, not 'software.'**

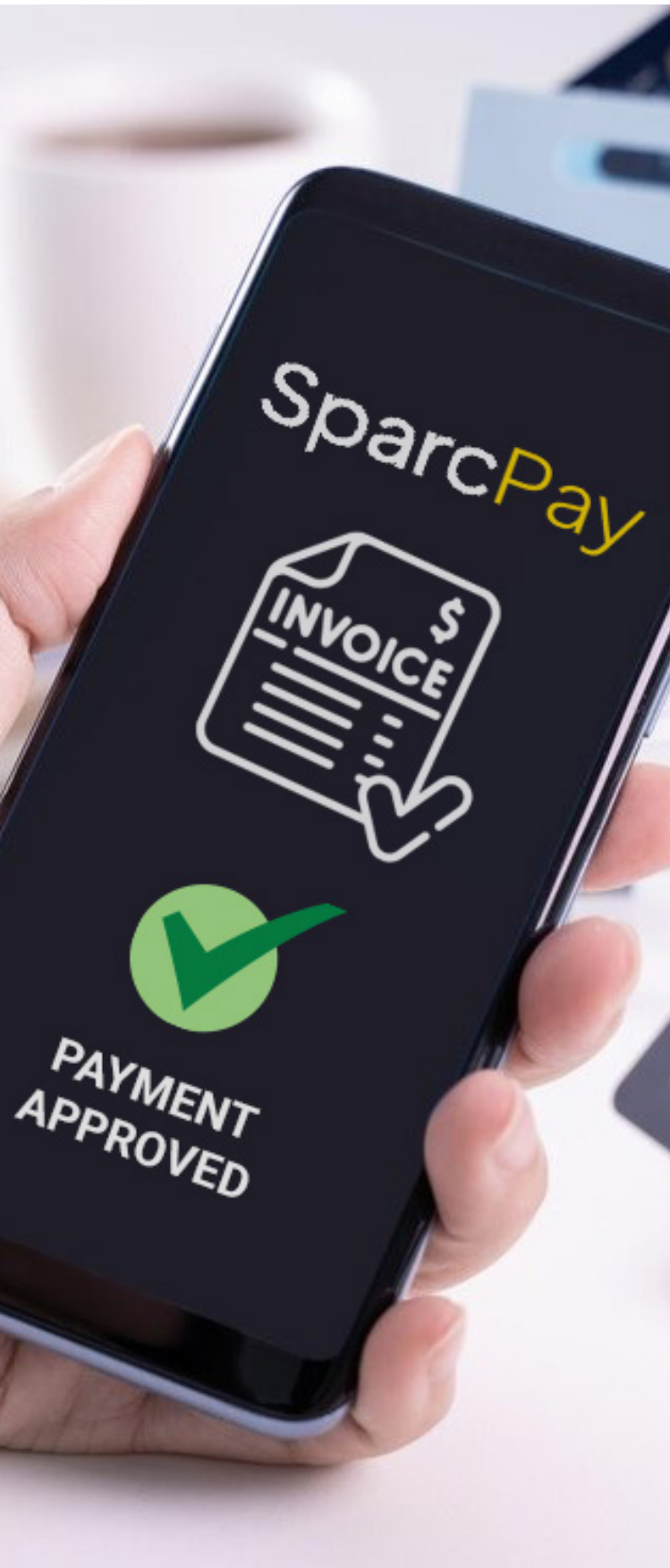
- Position modernization as financial protection, not an IT project.
- Emphasize convenience (remote approvals), transparency (real-time visibility), and reduced exposure (no cheque signatures floating around).
- Make it clear: this protects directors personally.

**04****Step 4. Adopt a payment workflow that actually supports governance.**

- Look for a digital approval and electronic payment flow that enforces your condo's approval rules and documents them automatically (dual approval, timestamped activity, read-only audit access).
- The goal is fewer manual touchpoints, fewer printed cheques, and permanent traceability.

**05****Step 5. Use technology to strengthen financial control — not bypass it.**

- Digital doesn't mean "rubber stamp."
- Directors should still review invoices, ask questions, and hold payments if something looks off — they just shouldn't have to drive across town in a snowstorm to do it.



## BOARD DUE DILIGENCE CHECKLIST

When evaluating a digital approval and payment solution, directors should ask the right governance questions. Use this checklist to guide conversations and protect the corporation.

### Checklist:

- ☐ Is the system simple and easy to use?
- ☐ Does the system eliminate the need for physical cheques?
- ☐ Will all or most payments be completed by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT?)
- ☐ Are board member signatures and banking details protected if a cheque is required?
- ☐ Can two directors simultaneously approve payments conveniently from anywhere?
- ☐ Is every approval tracked, timestamped, and tied to a named person?
- ☐ Can we see a full audit trail at any time — without asking management to “pull it together”?
- ☐ Can directors view invoices, supporting documents, and payment status from anywhere, securely?
- ☐ Can vendor banking details be verified and controlled so payments aren’t redirected to a fraud account?
- ☐ Does it support our condo’s approval policy (e.g. two-signature rule) instead of forcing us to bend to software limitations?

If you can’t confidently check these boxes, you’re carrying board-level risk you shouldn’t have to carry.



## SAMPLE BOARD APPROVAL & PAYMENT POLICY LANGUAGE

Directors don't just need tools — they need policy.  
Below is sample wording boards can adapt to formalize safe, modern payment practices.

### Suggested Template Language:



#### Approval Requirement

- All invoices require approval from two authorized board members.



#### Digital Approval Method

- Approvals may be completed through an approved secure digital system. Email, text message, or verbal approval is not considered sufficient.



#### Payment Method

- Payments should be issued electronically to verified vendors.
- Physical cheques should only be used in exceptional cases and must not display board member signatures or full banking information.



#### Audit Trail

- All approvals and payment releases must be stored in a way that is time-stamped, attributable to a specific approver, and accessible to the board on request.



#### Access & Oversight

- Board members and auditors must be able to view current payment status, invoice history, and approval records without manual document assembly.

Adopting clear written policy protects the corporation — and protects individual directors.

# HOW TO BRING DIGITAL WORKFLOWS INTO YOUR OWN COMMUNITY

This is where boards usually get stuck: “How do we actually roll this out?”  
Use this page as your implementation roadmap.



## Planning

- Define what “good governance” looks like for your board.
- Examples: two-director approval, full visibility into spending, no more cheques with exposed signatures.
- Document the pain points you refuse to live with next year (ex: driving across town to sign cheques, vendors calling about late payment, scrambling for audit backup).
- Align: make sure all directors agree this is about protection and control — not just convenience.



## Budgeting

- Consider: platform/service cost, onboarding, and training/admin time.
- Also consider the savings side:
  - Elimination of cheque stock, postage, envelopes.
  - Stronger fraud prevention (which protects reserve funds and reputation)
- Frame it not as “spend on software,” but “reduce financial exposure and operating friction.”



## Implementation

- Establish the approval rules (e.g. “2 directors must approve anything over \$5,000”).
- Make sure directors know how to access invoices, approve, and hold/reject payments.
- After 30-60 days, review:
  - Did directors feel in control?
  - Did cheque usage drop?
  - Did audit clarity improve?



Implementation is not an IT project. It's a governance upgrade.

**REAL-WORLD INSIGHT: A CASE STUDY  
ON HALLMARK MANAGEMENT**

## **FREEING UP TIME AND SIMPLIFYING VENDOR PAYMENTS WITH SPARCPAY**



## **OVERVIEW**

Hallmark Management transitioned to SparcPay in July 2025 and quickly saw transformative results. Within just three months, the platform became a game-changer for every part of their organization — from their Condo Board Members to their Accounts Payable Department.



*With the ever-increasing workload on Managers, SparcPay has been a true game-changer—freeing up valuable time for the work that really matters.*

**- DARCIE REA**

President - Hallmark Management

## **KEY RESULTS**

### **Streamlined Workflows**



Managers now spend more time planning ahead rather than chasing signatures and managing cheque runs.

### **Elimination of Cheques**



Monthly stacks of paper cheques are officially a thing of the past.

### **Secure Two-Board Approval**



Every transaction still maintains the integrity and control of dual Board Member approvals.

### **Seamless Integration**



The integration with Hallmark's software Condo Manager is the icing on the cake — automatic real-time updates eliminate manual data entry and ensure accuracy across every transaction.

### **Vendor Adoption**



Most vendors were already registered with SparcPay — the few holdouts quickly embraced EFT once there was another Canada Post strike.

### **Smooth Onboarding**



The SparcPay team ensured a fast and frictionless rollout.

### **Loved by Everyone**



The Board members love it, the Managers love it, and Accounts Payable can't get enough of it.

## SPARCPAY DIGITAL PAYMENTS - SECURE, SIMPLE AND DESIGNED FOR CONDO GOVERNANCE

SparcPay is a digital approval and payment platform built specifically for property management firms and condominium corporations.

It replaces paper cheques and manual approvals with a streamlined, auditable, and fraud-proof digital workflow — giving boards the control, visibility, and protection they need.

### Key Benefits for Boards:



#### Convenience

Approve invoices anytime, anywhere, from any device.



#### Control

Enforce dual-approval rules and customize workflows that mirror your condo's policies.



#### Visibility

View every invoice, approval, and payment in one secure platform — no more chasing information.



#### Protection

Eliminate cheques, signatures, and exposed banking details. Every transaction is secure and traceable.

If your board still relies on cheques, it's time to modernize.

Join thousands of condominium corporations already using SparcPay to approve and pay invoices digitally, securely, and with full transparency.



[www.sparcpay.com](http://www.sparcpay.com)



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