

A New Chapter for Highland Lakes

Member Questions and Answers

Updated August 28, 2026 to include questions regarding the transfer of HLAoR assets and expenses, passage of the ABoR Bylaws amendment establishing a Chapter framework, and an update to the HLAoR proxy submission methods.

The Highland Lakes Association of REALTORS® and the Austin Board of REALTORS® have agreed to combine into one organization. If members approve, HLAoR continues as the Highland Lakes Chapter of the Austin Board of REALTORS®, and Highland Lakes MLS unifies with Unlock MLS.

Your Board initiated this, negotiated its terms, and is recommending a vote in favor. The decision belongs to you. Highland Lakes members vote on September 8, and it takes two-thirds approval to pass.

This FAQ document is updated as new questions come in and/or open items are settled. Please visit www.hlaor.realtor/newchapter for the latest FAQ.

1. WHY NOW

Why is our Board doing this now?

Because we would rather choose our future than have it narrowed for us. Every small association in the country is facing the same squeeze — softening membership, rising platform and technology costs, rising member benefit expenses, and margins that get thinner each year. The reality is, those pressures are real and they are not getting better anytime soon.

Your Board decided to act while Highland Lakes is still viable: strong reserves, a valuable MLS, and a respected local brand. That is exactly what let us negotiate on our terms rather than someone else's. Waiting two or three years would have shrunk both our options and our leverage.

Are we in financial trouble? Is that the real reason?

No — and that is the point. We are acting from strength, not distress. Like every small association, we face rising platform and technology costs alongside softening revenue, and we are not going to pretend those headwinds do not exist. But we are healthy today, and doing this while we are healthy is what earned us the commitments below. Waiting until our options had narrowed would have been the mistake. Your Board looked at where that line goes if nothing changes, and decided it's smarter to act from strength now than to wait until "healthy" isn't the word anymore.

Who's on our Board, and why should we trust their read on this?

[Your directors](#) are working agents and brokers in this market — the same softening membership numbers and rising platform costs hit their own businesses. They're not outside consultants recommending something they don't have to live with. They've asked the hard questions and are recommending this because they care about the future of their association.

What did acting early actually buy us?

Terms we could not have commanded from a weaker position. These were negotiated by your Board, not offered to us:

- The Highland Lakes name continues as the chapter name.
- The Marble Falls office continues, committed for a minimum of five years.
- Our current staff transfer with the combination.
- Our 2026 Board of Directors continues as the Highland Lakes Chapter Council.
- A permanent Chapter seat on the ABoR and Unlock MLS Boards, with the first director appointed by our own Board.
- A dedicated Highland Lakes Policy Team, TREPAC events, Chapter luncheons, education programming, and support for the local Affiliate Expo.
- No application fee for transferring members.

Did the Board look at other options?

Yes — the Board looked at this from every real angle before landing here: staying fully independent, cutting expenses to close the gap, and partnering with others. None held up the way this deal does. Independence doesn't solve the problem members already feel — roughly two-thirds of our own MLS subscribers already pay for a second Unlock MLS subscription today, because one system doesn't cover their whole market.

Cutting costs doesn't work either, since nearly everything HLAoR spends goes to benefits members actually rely on — "cut expenses" just means less service by another name. And weighed against other partnership options, this deal was the only path that gave us terms we negotiated rather than terms handed to us later, with a partner strong enough to maintain and build on what Highland Lakes has already done, not replace it.

Is this Austin pushing into our market?

No. Any licensed agent in Texas can already work anywhere in the state — our market was never fenced off, and this does not change who can list or sell where. What changes is our cost structure and the back office behind us. Your local knowledge, your relationships, and your reputation remain your advantage, and this market stays yours.

Doesn't a bigger association mean we get standardized into it?

Both organizations agree that would be a bad outcome, and neither is arguing that bigger is better. The chapter structure exists precisely because some things are distinct and need to stay distinct. Everything local stays local, with more behind it when you want it.

2. WHY THIS WAS CONFIDENTIAL, AND WHY THE TIMELINE LOOKS TIGHT

Why did we hear about this only now?

Because the early work was a study, not a decision. Boards work through a question like this privately before there is anything real to decide — talking publicly about a possibility would have created uncertainty for members and staff, put our subscriptions and our negotiating position at risk, and stirred worry about something that might never happen.

The moment there was an actual proposal – and terms had been carefully negotiated so that we could answer all your questions, and you could make an informed decision – it came to the membership. That moment is now.

Why does the schedule feel so fast?

The early evaluation was confidential for the same reason any board studies a major decision privately before it's real — so it doesn't create uncertainty for members and staff over something that might never happen. The moment there was a real proposal, it came to the membership, and members hold the deciding vote. The timeline is set by NAR approval for 2027 dues billing, not by anyone forcing it through.

Who actually decides?

You do. This happens only if two-thirds of voting members approve in September. Our Board brought it forward and shaped every term; the membership has the final say. There is no version of this that gets done to us.

3. WHAT CONTINUES

What stays in place?

- The Highland Lakes name, as the Highland Lakes Chapter of the Austin Board of REALTORS®.
- The Marble Falls office, with a local staff presence, committed for a minimum of five years.
- Our current employees, who transfer with the combination.
- Local advocacy, community involvement, volunteer opportunities, and dedicated Highland Lakes events.
- Your Supra eKEY and lockboxes, with no interruption in service. Forewarn continues as well.
- Local association dues at \$175, and the same MLS and key billing dates — March 31 and September 30.

How will Highland Lakes members be represented?

Three ways, all specific:

- A **Highland Lakes Chapter Council** made up of Highland Lakes REALTORS®. Our 2026 Board of Directors becomes the initial Council. It sets chapter priorities and shapes chapter programming and local initiatives.
- A permanent **Chapter Director seat on the ABoR Board of Directors**, held by a member whose business mailing address is in Burnet or Llano Counties.
 - Because ABoR and Unlock MLS elect the same slate of directors, that seat carries a vote on both boards.
 - The HLAoR Board appoints the first Chapter Director who will serve through the end of 2028. From 2029 onward the seat is filled by election, and the Highland Lakes geographic requirement stays attached to it permanently.
- A dedicated **Highland Lakes Policy Team**, so local issues are worked by people who live and sell here.

Are the Highland Lakes Chapter and Chapter Director Seat Permanent?

As of August 28, a Chapter model and governance framework – including the Chapter Director seat and its geographic requirement – now has a permanent home in [Article X of ABoR's Bylaws](#). Every Chapter Director must be an agent with a business mailing address in the Chapter's geographic area. In the future, these amendments can only be changed the way any Bylaws provision can be changed: by member vote. There is no sunset

provision attached to the Chapter, its Chapter Director seat, or its Council in any governing documentation.

Where does ABoR provision a Highland Lakes Chapter Council?

Should Highland Lakes members vote yes, the ABoR Board will update its [Governing Policies](#) to specifically direct a Highland Lakes Chapter and Chapter Council. This is consistent with how all ABoR, Unlock MLS, and ABoR Foundation volunteer groups are documented today. ABoR cannot proceed with formally creating the Highland Lakes Chapter until the HLAoR vote passes.

Does my REALTOR® membership change?

You remain a REALTOR® and a member of Texas REALTORS® and the National Association of REALTORS®. Your local association becomes ABoR, and you belong to the Highland Lakes Chapter within it. You do not submit an application, and there is no application fee. Both organizations already use the same membership system, so records transfer directly.

What happens to volunteer leadership opportunities?

Current HLAoR committees and volunteer positions will continue through 2026. HLAoR members will be able to apply for 2027 committee and advisory group positions through ABoR's annual Volunteer Call from October 5 to November 6. Highland Lakes members can apply for all available ABoR volunteer positions – including the Highland Lakes Policy Team and (starting for the 2028 year) the Highland Lakes Chapter Council.

4. WHAT CHANGES

We are not going to tell you nothing changes. Here is what does.

What happens to Highland Lakes MLS?

Highland Lakes MLS unifies with Unlock MLS, so both markets sit in one complete, cooperatively maintained record. A complete record is what keeps a market accurate and fair, and it is what makes your advice to a client hold up.

I use Paragon. Will I have to learn Matrix?

Eventually, yes. About 65% of Highland Lakes MLS subscribers already subscribe to Unlock MLS and already work in Matrix. For the remaining 35%, this is a real change to how you work, and we are not going to minimize it. The migration is planned for 2027, and you will have several months of

dedicated training and support — hands-on here in the Marble Falls office and online — before you move.

What happens to what I have saved in Paragon?

Carrying Highland Lakes listing and sales history into the combined record is a priority in migration planning. Our goal is to migrate over as much as Paragon and Cotality can feasibly migrate. The specifics on saved searches, contacts, CMAs and history are being worked out now, and we will publish them well ahead of any conversion rather than guess at them today.

What legally happens to HLAoR?

The proxy materials use precise legal language, and we encourage you to read them. Members are asked to approve a Plan of Distribution under which HLAoR would wind up its business, satisfy its debts and obligations, transfer its remaining assets to the Austin Board of REALTORS®, and formally terminate as a Texas nonprofit corporation. The assets that transfer include the Marble Falls building, contracts and licenses, our trademarks and name, our website and phone numbers, employment relationships with current staff, and the shares of Highland Lakes MLS, Inc., which then combines into Unlock MLS.

That is the legal mechanism that allows one organization to continue rather than two. Nothing is sold, no member receives any payment or distribution, and your REALTOR® membership carries over without a lapse. What continues, continues inside ABoR, but under the Highland Lakes Chapter name.

Does this mean HLAoR is giving its assets away?

HLAoR isn't giving its assets away – it's bringing them along. Highland Lakes members don't hand assets to strangers and walk away — they become voting ABoR members and bring the assets with them. Nothing is sold, and nothing is cashed out. Even if HLAoR were to wind down on its own, the law requires those assets to be sent to Texas REALTORS® or another REALTOR® association. The HLAoR Board approached ABoR about combination to ensure those resources continue to serve Highland Lakes' interests.

What is ABoR taking on as part of this combination?

ABoR is taking on HLAoR's overhead and operating costs – not just its revenue and reserves. Should the combination proceed, ABoR and Unlock MLS immediately assume the bills associated with those assets — building costs, staffing, vendor contracts, and the cost of running two MLS systems simultaneously until conversion is complete.

What are we giving up?

Three things, plainly.

- 1) HLAoR ceases to exist as a separate corporation and NAR-chartered association.
- 2) We stop electing our own association and MLS board, but our local voice is carried through Highland Lakes Chapter Council and Chapter Director seat on the ABoR and Unlock MLS Boards. Following an initial appointment by the 2026 HLAoR Board, the Highland Lakes Chapter Director would be elected by a vote of the combined ABoR membership beginning with the 2029 term.
- 3) Highland Lakes MLS is governed under Unlock MLS rules going forward, with our voice on MLS matters carried through the Chapter Board of Directors seat and Chapter Council.

5. IMPACT ON ASSOCIATION DUES & MLS FEES

Will my costs go up or down?

It depends on whether you work one market or both. Your local association dues stay at \$175 either way, and billing dates do not change. Where costs move, it is on the MLS and Supra eKEY lines. These figures are annual and after tax:

Your situation today	Annual change
Agent, Highland Lakes and Unlock MLS	\$575 less
Broker, Highland Lakes and Unlock MLS	\$745 less
Agent, Highland Lakes only	\$177 more
Broker, Highland Lakes only	\$6 more

So, members who work only this market pay more.

Some do. If you work only the Highland Lakes market, MLS and eKEY fees will be higher than Highland Lakes-only pricing is today — about \$177 a year for an agent, about \$6 for a broker. What that buys is the full Unlock MLS toolset, a larger suite of education offerings, and member benefits that a smaller association cannot fund on its own.

And members who work both markets?

About 65% of Highland Lakes MLS subscribers already carry both subscriptions and pay twice for overlapping coverage. That stops. An agent saves about \$575 a year and a broker about \$745 a year.

Are there other fees?

Unlock MLS offers an optional Leasing Management Service at \$85 a year. If you do not handle leases or property management, you do not buy it. Full price sheets for both organizations are published side by side at

hlaor.realtor/newchapter so you can check your own situation rather than take a summary's word for it.

How would combination impact September 2026 MLS billing?

On September 1, you'll receive a six-month MLS invoice from either HLAoR or Unlock MLS (due September 30). If you only subscribe to HLMLS, you'll receive your invoice from HLAoR as usual. If you subscribe to both HLMLS and Unlock MLS, you'll only receive an invoice from Unlock MLS.

How would combination impact 2027 Association dues billing?

HLAoR members would move to ABoR's annual dues billing schedule. Invoices for 2027 Association dues would be sent on December 1, and due on December 31 – one month later than they're currently due today.

How would my Supra eKEY billing change?

Currently, you pay Supra directly every month. Starting in March 2027, your Supra eKEY subscription would be billed directly by Unlock MLS in tandem with MLS subscriptions due March 31 and September 30. Unlock MLS will work with Supra to transition your existing keys and will communicate well in advance if any action is needed on your part to do so.

How do annual dues change for Affiliate members?

ABoR offers a Corporate Affiliate membership (\$267 per year, comparable to our Bronze Tier of \$217 per year) and Individual Affiliate membership (\$55 per year, comparable to our Affiliate Associate of \$50 per year). Annual Texas REALTORS® Affiliate dues (\$117 per year) remain unchanged.

What happens to current Affiliate sponsorship commitments?

ABoR will honor all existing HLAoR Affiliate sponsorship commitments.

6. THE VOTE

What am I voting on, and when?

Date	What happens
Mon., Aug. 24	Proxy ballots and voting instructions sent.
Mon., Aug. 31, 10:00 a.m.	Annual Meeting and Town Hall, Marble Falls office — leadership walks through the proposal and takes questions.
Fri., Sept. 4, 5:00 p.m. CT	Proxy deadline
Tue., Sept. 8	Member vote

You may vote in person or by proxy. Approval requires two-thirds of the members voting, and a quorum must be present for the meeting to act at all — so submitting a proxy matters if you cannot attend on September 8, and even if you intend to vote against.

How can I vote by proxy?

Proxy can be submitted online through Simply Voting or by submitting a [signed hard copy of the proxy form](#) to the Highland Lakes office. Your proxy **must be received no later than 5:00 PM CST on Friday, September 4, 2026**. Mailed proxy forms must arrive by this deadline — a postmark of September 4 is not sufficient.

Who is eligible to vote?

All HLAoR Primary and Secondary REALTOR® members in good standing as of the Record Date, August 24, 2026, are entitled to vote.

How do I know the HLAoR member vote results are valid and accurate?

HLAoR has engaged a secure, third-party voting platform (Simply Voting) that provides each eligible voter with a unique, single-use credential. This allows a proxy to be submitted once and only once. The link cannot be reused by anyone else. HLAoR members received a unique voting link from hlaor@simplyvoting.com on Thursday, August 27, 2026. In addition, HLAoR will have a third-party CPA onsite on September 8 to validate in-person votes.

What happens to any proxy submissions that were sent via the Member Portal before August 27?

Anyone who submitted their proxy via the Member Portal between August 24 and 27 will need to resubmit their proxy via one of the proxy methods listed above. HLAoR staff will individually contact the members who submitted a proxy via the Member Portal to encourage them to resubmit their proxy.

Do ABoR Members vote on anything?

Yes. The week of August 24, ABoR members [overwhelmingly approved an amendment](#) to their Bylaws that creates a Chapter framework and a Chapter Director seat that meets the Chapter's geographical eligibility requirements. Visit www.unlockmls.com/bylaws for the full Bylaws amendment details and voting results. Note, the HLAoR vote to unify with ABoR must still pass on September 8 for unification to proceed.

What happens if HLAoR member vote doesn't pass?

Both associations keep operating exactly as they do today — no immediate change. But the pressures we described above don't reverse on their own just because the vote fails. Absent this agreement, your Board would be facing real decisions on its own: adjustments to dues, to member benefits, and to staffing, on a timeline we don't control as well as we do today. We're not telling you the outcome is decided — it isn't, and the vote is genuinely yours. We just want you deciding with the full picture, not a partial one.

Does anyone else have to approve it?

Yes. Should HLAoR members vote yes, the combination goes to the National Association of REALTORS® for administrative approval, which needs to land in time for 2027 dues billing.

7. WHY ABOR IS THE RIGHT PARTNER

What is the market overlap between HLMLS and Unlock MLS?

Roughly 65% of Highland Lakes MLS subscribers already carry both subscriptions, and buyers and sellers have moved between these markets in both directions every year for the past six years. The market has been working this way for a long time; our associations and our MLS simply haven't been.

Residential Active Listings (as of 8.19.26)	Burnet County	Llano County
HLMLS	463	539

Unlock MLS	665	391
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Residential Sales (6.01.26-8.19.26)	Burnet County	Llano County
HLMLS	135	114
Unlock MLS	211	81

What else to HLAoR and ABoR have in common?

ABoR is not a partner we had to reshape ourselves to fit. Operationally, both associations already have a great deal in common. Both offer Supra eKEY (with an existing key reciprocity agreement) and very similar billing schedules. ABoR also operates on the same association management system – Tangilla – meaning that combining membership records and back-ends will be seamless, and you won't have to learn a new Member Portal.

Has ABoR been willing to negotiate on our terms?

Yes, throughout the entire due diligence process. Because the HLAoR Board came to the table now, we secured commitments we could not have commanded from a weaker position two or three years down the road: our name, our Marble Falls office, local staff, a Chapter Council of our own, and a permanent seat at the ABoR and Unlock MLS Board tables.

How can we be sure ABoR is committed to maintaining Highland Lakes' identity and culture?

ABoR worked with us to design a deliberate, Chapter-based structure designed specifically to preserve what makes Highland Lakes, Highland Lakes. Highland Lakes has its own distinct culture, community, and marketplace, built on decades of local expertise. Neither we nor ABoR want a monolithic, one-size-fits-all association. A chapter-based model strengthens both organizations for the long term while preserving Highland Lakes' identity — because some things are distinct and should stay that way.

8. WHAT WE DO NOT KNOW YET

Some answers are not settled, and we would rather list them than fill the space with something vague. Each of these will be published at **hlaor.realtor/newchapter** as it is resolved, and the substantive ones will be addressed at the August 31 town hall.

- The firm date Paragon is retired, and Matrix conversion completes, and whether there is a period of access to both systems.
- Confirmation from Paragon and Cotality that all HLMLS records (listing and sales history, saved searches, contacts, CMAs, photos) can be transferred to UnlockMLS — and if not, what limitations exist.
- How your existing Supra accounts will transition to Unlock MLS, and what members need to do to make that happen.
- What brokers need to file, and by when — office paperwork, participation agreements, designated broker documentation.
- IDX feeds, broker data feeds, and website vendor integrations during conversion.
- Whether locally raised TREPAC funds stay allocated to Highland Lakes-area advocacy.
- The scholarship program, 2026 awards already committed, and local sponsorships.

8. WHERE TO GET ANSWERS

I have a question that isn't here.

Bring it to the Annual Meeting and Town Hall on Monday, August 31 at 10:00 a.m. at the Marble Falls office — that is what it is for, and questions submitted beforehand get answered there. You can also contact Luanne Coleman, CEO, at luanne@hlaor.realtor, or submit a question through the form at **hlaor.realtor/newchapter**.

Where do I find the documents?

hlaor.realtor/newchapter carries this FAQ, the transaction documents, fee comparisons and both organizations' price sheets, and the transition schedule.

Will this be updated?

Yes. It is a living document, updated as questions come in and as open items are settled. When something changes, we will say what changed.