

COOCVE President's Reports

Compiled from Mar, Apr, May 2025 reports by Donna Capobianco, President of COOCVE



I've received several emails from owners who live in large condominiums up north in the summer, asking why it is so confusing to live in CVE. Their other condos have one website, one office manned 9-5 by a property management team that handles everyone's questions, complaints, problems, sales, rentals, etc. Everyone shares the same documents and rules, attends budget and annual meetings, and elects one board of directors to vote on items the community association manager (CAM) has no decision authority. Descriptions used include "less complicated", "less confusing", "less stressful" for owners and boards.

The root cause why CVE is the way it is goes back to how it was built. It was easier and quicker for him to incorporate and build each building separately and sell the percentage of units required before starting another. Worked great for him. Created complex governance and management for us owners. Swansea is the only area in CVE where both buildings are incorporated as one.

In the "standard" world of condominium development, mostly outside of Florida, it is normal to have all buildings, property, recreation, and services incorporated under one association. During buildout of the project, the developer is responsible for everything associated with recreation, transportation, roads, landscaping, lake systems, security, cable, all property, units, owner issues, etc. Once the project is completed, the developer turns all of this over to the condominium who elects its governing board, that in turn takes over total operation and management.

With 300+ unit owners, that board normally hires full-time, on-site, professional day-to-day community association management so they can govern while enjoying (in 55+ communities like CVE) more of their retirement time. More units means more economy of scale, which allows more opportunity to provide more for less.

In CVE's case, three different things occurred. First, each time our developer finished one of the 253 small, separately incorporated condominiums, he turned

it over to that association to do everything needed to maintain property values and a safe living environment.

Second, until all condominium construction was finished, the developer was responsible for managing transportation, roads, landscaping, lake systems, security, cable, etc. Once the project was completed, with no single association to turn it over to, the developer formed and assigned all that responsibility to CVE Master Management Company, Inc. (see Master Management Agreement in your documents). All 8,508 owners contribute equally to share in that ownership and enjoy all the property and services offered by that corporation. That economy of scale allows us all to enjoy more services, i.e., cable, security, transportation, road maintenance, etc. for less.

Third, CVE's developer retained ownership of all recreation property under a "LONG-TERM LEASE" (see in your documents if dated before 2022). Owners were required to pay a monthly fee that included rent to the developer for use of the recreation facilities plus an additional amount to cover all its maintenance and management costs. In 2020 that lease was bought out by CenClub Homeowners Association, Inc. on behalf of all CVE unit owners (see CenClub's documents). All 8,508 owners pay to enjoy all the property and services offered by that corporation. Again, that economy of scale allows us all to enjoy more services, i.e., clubhouse, pools, sports, activities, etc. for less.

Why are standard, well run condo complexes less complicated, confusing, and stressful compared to CVE? The answers involve documents, management, expectations, and willingness to respect the laws that govern condominium living. And if over 300 units, enjoy an economy of scale often meaning getting more for less.

Standard, well run condominiums govern under one set of up-to-date documents and one board governing over all unit owners and property. The Community Association Manager (CAM), and the board they report to, govern by those docs, and set consistent expectations everyone is to abide by. Everyone is treated the same as specified in the docs. Normally, standard condos with 300+ units have a CAM on site full time for unit owners and board members go to when any problem arises. The CAM handles most issues, start to finish and is a buffer to help prevent hostility between owners and board members. CAM's bring to the board, in regularly scheduled, open board meetings, all items to be discussed and voted on, i.e., contract decisions, off-budget spending

approvals, legal issues, etc. They prepare proper notice of meetings and often, provide the minutes.

CVE's 253 condos all have different sets of documents, their own boards and management companies. Our 192 garden condos range from 16 to 24 units and our 61 high rises range from 56 to 144 units allowing for no economy of scale or property management options.

We have much inconsistency in the way boards treat owners, presidents treat board members, owners treat each other, and a general disregard by all for their documents. When a problem arises, the CAM may get called and may provide a response. Normally all problems and complaints go to the board. Depending on issue, management contract, quality of CAM and how many condos the CAM handles, assistance varies. Often boards handle most issues themselves.

Unlike expectations in standard condos where the full-time CAM handles almost everything and manages according to the documents, CVE's associations often handle issues inconsistently, which makes expectations unclear. New engineering requirements, repairs, reserves, insurance, pricing, laws for reporting, communication etc., are changing how condominiums are to be administered. This all means more work for our small associations and their CAM's. How much help the various community association managers will provide and at what cost remains to be seen. Given we already hear escalating complaints about lack of timely and correct financial reporting, CAM's spread thin and not helpful, high turnover and lack of customer service call response, it's hard to predict.

Single docs, size (300+ units), a single quality board and quality professional management allow standard condo complexes to take advantage of economies of scale. Higher efficiency and effectiveness contribute a less complicated, confusing, stressful environment.

Among our small and independent associations are some very progressive people doing some pretty terrific things. COOCVE is about positive thinking and finding ways to improve our lives in CVE. One is the President's Forum, where these progressive leaders come together to learn and educate others. Another is offering a low cost, standard document package to any association that has old documents and is struggling with the cost of updating them. CIAC is an organization some COOCVE officers and directors participate in that teaches and certifies associations that operate in a proper and legal financially manner.

Unit owners in condominiums operating fairly and equitably under their documents and condo law by a trusted, caring board that communicates effectively feel their life in CVE is “less complicated”, “less confusing” and “less stressful”. COOCVE hopes to help more of our boards and owners achieve the same.