

# COOCVE President's Report

By DONNA CAPOBIANCO, President of COOCVE



Why are standard, well run condo complexes less complicated, confusing, stressful compared to CVE? The answers involve documents, management, expectations, and willingness to respect the laws that govern condominium living.

Standard condo complexes have one set of up-to-date documents and one board governing all unit owners. Property managers (**PM**), 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 PM on site full time that unit owners and board members go to when any problem arises. PM handles most issues, start to finish and is a buffer to help prevent hostility between owners and board members. PM brings 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, etc. Proper notice of meetings and subsequent minutes are posted.

CVE's 253 condos all have different sets of documents, their own boards and management companies. Our 191 garden condos range from 16 to 24 units and our 62 high rises range from 56 to 144 units, limiting the type of property management available to them. We have much inconsistency in the way boards treat owners, presidents treat board members, owners demanding special treatment and a general disregard by all for their documents. When a property or unit owner problem arises,

property management may get called and may provide a response. Normally problems and complaints go to the board. Depending on the issue, management contract, quality of PM and how many condos' PM is handling, boards may get assistance from the property manager. Most often boards must handle most of the issues themselves. Unlike expectations in standard condos where the full-time PM handles almost everything and manages according to the documents, CVE's associations often handle issues inconsistently, which makes expectations unclear.

New requirements in engineering surveys, repairs and reserves, insurance demands and pricing, and coming laws changing administration, reporting and communication will all contribute to more work for our small associations and their PM's. How much help the various management companies will provide and at what cost remains to be seen. Given we already hear escalating complaints about lack of timely and correct financial reporting, PM's spread thin, high turnover and lack of customer service call response, it's hard to predict.

Single docs, a single board, size (300+ units) and professional management allow standard condo complexes to take advantage of economies of scale to save money, operate more efficiently, have more open communication, all contributing to a less complicated, confusing, stressful environment.

Although our associations are independent and small, we have some very progressive people in our midst doing some pretty terrific things. CIAC is working with and certifying our associations that choose to simplify their lives and that of their owners by simply living within the law. Unit owners in those buildings feel the difference. COOCVE is about positive thinking and finding ways to improve our lives in CVE. Getting CIAC certification is one of

those ways. COOCVE is in the middle of a project right now that may help many associations move toward simpler, easier, less stressful ways to operate. Take a moment to look at our 2-page spread in this edition for the scoop on that project.