



## C.O.V.A.R. CORNER

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President  
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Information

In the February COVAR meeting, we discussed a new organization being formed called **Seabrook Island Village, Neighbors Helping Neighbors**. The following is a summary of the presentation.

The purpose of Seabrook Island Village, Neighbors Helping Neighbors is to provide assistance and services to area residents using local, trained volunteers. The goal is to empower residents to remain independent at home as long as it is safe to do so and to enable them to remain engaged in the community. It does not include emergency services for which people will continue to call 911.

Villages are being formed not only across the United States but is also an international movement. The Seabrook Island Village is still being designed and will be formed to meet the needs of Seabrook Island. Seabrook Island Village is part of a national and international organization called Village to Village Network ([vtvnetwork.org](http://vtvnetwork.org)). This organization provides expert guidance, resources and support to help communities establish and manage their own Villages. The first Village was started in Beacon Hill, Boston 16 years ago. Currently there are 250 Villages in the United States, with 150 others in various stages of development. Nearby Villages, I'On at Home in Mount Pleasant and Staying Connected in Sun City, Bluffton, have been most helpful to the Seabrook volunteers by sharing their experiences and resources.

The history behind Seabrook Island Village started as an "aging in place" volunteer organization on Seabrook conceived by Sally Kimball and Barbara Burgess about a year and a half ago. They approached Heather Paton about their idea and were told that there had been a similar organization years ago but it was abandoned due to liability concerns. After Barbara and Sally visited I'On, they learned about the National Village to Village Network and that liability insurance was

available. They arranged for Seabrook Island to join the VTV Network as an "exploratory" member allowing them to access their resources. Sally and Barbara reached out to others in the spring of 2018 to form a committee to determine the feasibility of starting a Village on Seabrook and to coordinate the scale-up if feasibility looked positive. For most Villages, this is a 2 year process from start to launch. The committee started meeting regularly last year and has been meeting twice a month ever since.

Services are dependent on the needs of the area being served. If this organization receives support from the community, it will start slowly on services so that they are sure that they can deliver what they promise. Moving forward additional services will be added based on the demand and the ability to provide the volunteers with the right skills.

Transportation is found to be the most requested service based on some peoples' inability to drive to medical appointments, the supermarket, pharmacy, dry cleaners, library, church, malls for shopping, hair and nail salons or social appointments. Transportation to the airport is also being considered. Other possibilities may include assisting with simple household tasks, such as changing hard to reach light bulbs or checking fire alarms, daily check-in for people who may be at risk or friendly visits for social interaction or reading to clients.

There will be an annual charge for belonging to the Village. The organization has not yet established what the budget will be that will determine the charge. I'On Village charges an annual fee of \$500 for a family of 2 or more and \$350 for someone living alone. The organization will be pursuing Grants, Corporate donations and donations from local hospitals to help subsidize the costs so that the annual charge can be as reasonable as possible.

What distinguishes this program from previous ones on Seabrook is that all volunteers will be vetted through a professional background check. Volunteers will also go through a training program. The Seabrook Island Village will be a great benefit for our current residents and also will appeal to potential buyers.

We have found our little piece of paradise when we found Seabrook. As we begin to age, we wonder where we

can or will go or how we can continue living on Seabrook. The Village to Village concept is a possible way for us to stay in our home for a longer period of time. A recent Seabrook populations survey noted that our resident population tends to be older, more affluent and better educated than average. Keeping this in mind, having a Village on Seabrook makes perfect sense. It is estimated that Seabrook residents have a median age of 66 and it is projected to be 68 by 2023.

Milestones to date:

- Barbara and Sally attended the national VTV Network conference last fall.
- John Gregg has agreed to be the legal consultant.
- The Articles of Incorporation as a 501(C) 3 not for profit corporation has been filed with the federal government with the official name as Seabrook Island Village, Neighbors Helping Neighbors but they have not received confirmation yet.
- Bylaws are being drafted and nearly complete.
- Meetings held with Mayor Ciancio (Town) and Heather Paton (SIPOA). Both are very supportive.
- Met with Villages in I'On and Sun City Bluffton. Both organizations are helpful and impressive. They each provide slightly different services tailored to the specific demographics and needs of their communities.
- Starting campaign to spread awareness to Seabrook residents to assess their interest.
- Beginning to reach out to local businesses and individuals as potential advocates and donors to help fund the start-up costs and as advocates.

### Next Steps for Seabrook Island Village, Neighbors Helping Neighbors

The immediate next steps are to market the plan to the Island. A meeting is scheduled on Tuesday, March 26th at 4:00 in the Live Oak Room at the Lake House. If participation in this meeting shows real interest then small meetings will be scheduled to determine what services the Island desires in addition to surveys.

To prepare for an official launching there is a need:

- To get a computer system up and running

- Get a Telephone number and mailbox
- Prepare a training manual
- Recruitment and training of volunteers
- Form a Board of Directors and form committees
- Begin fundraising. There is a need to raise start-up costs. Until then the Core Committee is chipping in to pay expenses

For more information about Seabrook Island Village, Neighbors Helping Neighbors, please contact one of the following individuals:

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### Other COVAR Business

COVAR has been discussing parking issues with Owners and SIPOA Security. One of the issues is too many vehicles parked in the street overnight that could be a safety issue. Some parked vehicles would not allow the Fire Engine to access the area. This parking issue seems to be due to rental guests arriving in numerous vehicles that do not fit in the driveway or the parking spaces for the unit they are renting. Other issues with too many vehicles, are parking on the pine straw, over irrigation systems, on landscaping and in the street but blocking a neighbor's driveway.

SIPOA is circulating a letter about Rental Guest Vehicle Parking. They are requesting that Regime/Association Presidents or Rental Companies provide accurate information on the number of vehicles that can be parked at a specific property in the driveway or parking spaces allotted. This information will be loaded into the Gate Access software for Security to be able to limit the number of gate passes issued to that property during the same period of time.

For a special event, that would require exceeding the number of vehicles documented, the Owner should contact Security to provide the vehicle information.

SIPOA Rules & Regulations prohibit overnight parking on SIPOA roadways or rights-of-way. This includes some roads within Regime/Association neighborhoods. The entire letter was emailed by COVAR to all Regime/Association Presidents, Representatives and Property Managers.

Another topic discussed is the ongoing data gathering of Capital Improvement projects. Alison Standard, VP of COVAR, is coordinating this effort. The purpose is to share information, experiences and possibly negotiate group rates for some projects being completed in multiple neighborhoods. Alison will be distributing more information to Regime/Association Presidents, Representatives and Property Manager to gather more information.

### Next COVAR meeting

A decision was made in the February meeting that COVAR will begin to meet every other month instead of monthly.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, April 16th at 4:30 in the Live Oak room at the Lake House. Jennifer Miller, Director of Security, will present a demo of the Gate Access software including new features. She will also discuss enhancements coming in the future and the gate procedures. All Owners are welcome to attend.▲