

Grove Senior's Co-Operative Housing

... a proven model



Founded in 1992, the Grove Seniors Village Housing Cooperative Ltd. has become a model community that provides safe, affordable, comfortable accommodation for active and independent seniors. It has prospered through the dedicated volunteer commitment of its members and continues to evolve to meet the needs of all of its member residents.

Key to its sustainability is the fundamental requirement that all members understand and commit to cooperative effort to maintain the physical assets while participating in the social life of the Village.

This paper provides insight into the bylaws, occupancy agreement, policies and administrative structures that have evolved and expanded during the past 25 years. We believe that our model is one that can easily and economically be replicated in other communities throughout Alberta and beyond.

Joe Acker, President
Grove Seniors Housing Cooperative Ltd.
May, 2016

1 CONTENTS

- 2 Overview..... 3**
- 3 Community Design Elements 5**
 - 3.1 Community Facility Design..... 5**
 - 3.1.1 Office/Clubhouse (Community Hall) Facility..... 5
 - 3.1.2 Village Workshop..... 6
 - 3.1.3 Village Woodworking Shop..... 6
 - 3.1.4 Our Park..... 6
 - 3.1.5 Housing Units..... 7
- 4 Life in the Village 8**
 - 4.1 Lou Simon Village Association..... 8**
 - 4.1.1 Library..... 9
 - 4.1.2 Coffee Club 9
 - 4.1.3 Games Night 9
 - 4.1.4 Fund Raising..... 9
 - 4.1.5 Hall Rental..... 9
 - 4.1.6 Gardening Club 10
 - 4.1.7 Village Improvements..... 10
 - 4.1.8 Member Volunteer Services 10
 - 4.2 Grove Seniors Housing Cooperative Board Activities..... 11**
 - 4.2.1 General Meetings 11
 - 4.2.2 Board Meetings 12
 - 4.2.3 Committees of the Board 12
 - 4.2.4 Member Information & Website 14
- 5 Administration 15**
 - 5.1 Budget Process 15**
 - 5.2 By law Enforcement..... 15**
 - 5.3 Utilities..... 15**
 - 5.3.1 Water 15
 - 5.3.2 Natural Gas 15
 - 5.3.3 Electricity 16
 - 5.3.4 Cable TV 16
 - 5.3.5 Internet..... 16
 - 5.3.6 Telephone..... 16
 - 5.3.7 Solid Waste Disposal..... 16
 - 5.3.8 Recycling..... 16



2 OVERVIEW

Every region of Canada is facing the problem of providing safe and comfortable accommodation at reasonable cost for our aging population. This paper outlines an extremely successful model that has been in place since 1992 in Spruce Grove, Alberta.

Founded by a group spearheaded by Royal Canadian Legion Members, the Grove Seniors Village is an 89-unit cooperative housing development consisting of 71 two-bedroom bungalows and 18 one-bedroom duplex units. When fully occupied, this development provides affordable, safe and comfortable accommodation for 160 seniors aged 55+. Up to eighteen of the units are eligible for subsidy under current federal/provincial agreements and the entire development is funded under an index-linked mortgage arrangement through CMHC.

Key to the success of a senior's cooperative is the commitment of its member residents to active volunteerism. This paper will document the approaches and resulting success of the Grove Senior's Village and will detail the high level of community support enjoyed by its members who provide educational, social and support services to one another – thus freeing public health and social service agencies from the burden of our needs.

Through the generous initial support of the City of Spruce Grove who provided the land and through a myriad of local businesses who provided – and continue to provide – reduced cost goods and services, the Grove Seniors Village can provide accommodation and related services well below market levels. The model that has developed and proven itself over the past 28 plus years is a sterling example of an attractive, well maintained urban community.

All property management and maintenance services are performed by volunteer members of the co-op board and its committees without compensation. All development and construction costs secured by the CMHC mortgage will be repaid. All street cleaning and lighting, storm sewer, water and sanitary sewer maintenance and solid waste are self-managed thus relieving the local municipality of the burden of those services.

Fundamental to the success of the Grove Seniors Village Housing Co-Operative Ltd. is the selection process utilized to admit new members into the co-op. A rigorous procedure is followed to educate applicants on the principles of cooperative action and for their responsibility to contribute to the welfare of the Village through their active and ongoing volunteer commitment. This process recognizes the myriad of individual health, talent and specific interests of each applicant and focuses on their record of community service and volunteerism. Their individual commitment to actively participating in community development is the single most important element in their selection for membership.

Included in the analysis of each application is an in-depth review that includes an examination of the potential value of the networks that each applicant brings to the table. As seniors, each applicant has developed a wealth of contacts which can be accessed through that member to secure favourable benefits for the Village. The

knowledge, expertise and access to preferred pricing for goods and services of any individual member's personal network is of great benefit to the Village community.

As a housing cooperative, each member is required to execute an Occupancy Agreement which replaces a traditional lease and details clearly their commitment to volunteerism as a condition of their continued membership and residency.

Unlike traditional government-provided social housing which is predicated on a means-tested entry system to ensure that those most in need are able to secure accommodation at below market prices; the Grove Seniors Village Housing Co-Operative Ltd. applies means testing only for those seeking subsidized housing. This coupled with the rigorous selection process that seeks those who are oriented to both self-improvement and the improvement of their community, results in a neighborhood of mutually supportive residents focused on maintaining and improving our collective assets.

From a government perspective, the value of a cooperative housing project versus a publicly operated low-income development is that there is no need for ongoing support for asset maintenance and administration or for supports to assist the residents aging in place independently.

Because the member residents of the Grove Senior's Village work together to support one another; the Village ensures that all of its members have transportation to medical and shopping services, bereavement and other social supports, regional attraction trips, and a multitude of on-site recreation opportunities. As our members age in place, those who have the skills and vigor to remain more active take up the challenge of providing volunteer services to assist the frail and handicapped to remain in the community. These services include routine home maintenance, cooking, cleaning, shopping and transportation as required to allow the elderly to remain independent and thus delay their entry into assisted living facilities.

This paper outlines the Grove Seniors Village Housing Co-Operative Ltd. experience over the past 28 years and the successful implementation of the cooperative model for senior's accommodation. Our model is unique in community design and in its ongoing development and is one that should be replicated in communities across Canada as a cost-effective mechanism to provide safe, comfortable, affordable accommodation to our aging population.

3 COMMUNITY DESIGN ELEMENTS

Today's aging population consists of a significant majority of individuals who have lived in single family dwellings for their entire lifetime. Accordingly, they are most attracted to a housing style that continues that approach. Many are not willing to sell their homes in order to give the greatest proportion of that accumulated wealth to a condominium developer and then continue to pay condo management expenses that may escalate over time. The housing style is most often town house, walk-up or high rise and none of these are attractive over time as mobility decreases.

Other options include renting an apartment or single family home – but these options include the potential for rent increases that may become unaffordable. The option of choosing to remain in the family home becomes increasingly unattractive as utilities, taxes, insurance and maintenance also are uncontrollable expenses that likely will escalate over time.

The housing cooperative model places significant control over housing charge increases and management in the hands of the residents. The '*one member, one vote*' principle of the cooperative philosophy ensures that the elected management board is accountable to its members and that no decisions affecting the financial activities of the Co-Op are made without member approval.

3.1 COMMUNITY FACILITY DESIGN

Situated on 13.12 acres in central Spruce Grove, the Grove Seniors Village Housing Co-Operative Ltd. has easy access to all services in the community. This unsubdivided parcel is located adjacent to a public reserve maintained in its natural state with a portion of the Grove Heritage Trail system accessible directly from the Village property.

Every unit in the Grove Seniors Village Housing Co-Operative Ltd. is a bungalow or ground level duplex. This ensures that there are no stairs or entry steps to navigate. All doors are 36 inches to ensure access by wheelchairs. Each unit is built with a crawl space that provides only a cement pad for the furnace and hot water heater. Access is via an interior trap door that accesses stairs into the crawl space. Each unit has an included interior, heated, storage room and some have external heated storage accessible at ground level.

The entire development is served by an internal road system with paved roads, concrete curb and gutter, one side concrete sidewalks, street lighting and storm sewage facilities. A storm water pond deals with excessive spring and flood flows and provides an attractive water amenity to the Village. Over the years, donated benches have been located adjacent to the paved sidewalks to provide rest stops for members and guests. Each bench has a large flower pot adjacent to add color.

3.1.1 Office/Clubhouse (Community Hall) Facility

Located at the single access to the Village is the Clubhouse and office facility. The hall was originally far too small to accommodate the entire membership for the required general meetings, so it was expanded to accommodate 110 people and an outside

covered patio was added to support various community activities. Current plans call for a further hall expansion and addition of a community commercial kitchen. The Clubhouse hall also houses the Village library staffed by volunteers and has several thousand current paperbacks for use by residents.

The lobby houses individual mailboxes for each unit and a Canada Post parcel box with outgoing mail facility. This community hub also provides wall space for posted information of interest to members and for circulation of Village documents including Board minutes etc.

A small office area provides for the administrative needs of the co-op and is staffed by Village volunteers. The clubhouse/office complex is accessed via barrier free doors operated by either a code or by key and the main vestibule door is equipped with handicap access motorized doors.

3.1.2 Village Workshop

Adjacent to the office/clubhouse is a single-car heated garage that serves as the Village workshop. It has been, over the years, provisioned largely with donated equipment and tools that are utilized by Village volunteers to maintain all Village property.

3.1.3 Village Woodworking Shop

In spring 2018, a 24' x 26' heated community workshop was constructed by member volunteers and equipped with a wide range of donated powered and hand tools. It offers woodworking programs to resident members and the wider community in addition to expanding the Village capability to maintain the housing units and common buildings. This shop has become a community resource for members wishing to develop not only woodworking skills, but also stained-glass creations and other craft work. In the spring of 2020, volunteers designed and constructed a number of raised garden boxes that have become another community asset in our recently developed central park area (named 'Our Park').

3.1.4 Our Park

A number of members approached the Lou Simon Village Association in 2018 to develop an unused open space in the Village for active games, a 20' x 30' covered cement pad, a washroom/storage facility, shale paths and plantings. A New Horizons Grant of \$25,000 was sought and won; and our volunteer members supported by our local business community developed 'Our Park'. This passive/active recreation area is now a community focus for horseshoes, croquet, badminton and other games as well as being a beautiful, restful place to pass time. Early in 2020, volunteers placed and tend to a number of raised garden boxes that produce vegetables and herbs freely accessible to all members.

The Lou Simon Village Association is currently planning activities such as outdoor movie night, hot dog sales, barbeques and other events on the covered pad at a nominal cost for members.

3.1.5 Housing Units

The overall site of approximately 13 acres supports 89 housing units arranged in a double loop roadway system. 71 units are 2 bedroom single detached bungalows and 18 are duplex one bedroom units. Each unit is served by a paved driveway and attached carport or garage. 2 – 2-bedroom units have 2 car garages. In every case, the garage improvement was paid for by the member resident and survives their tenancy as a Village asset. There is a monthly fifteen-dollar maintenance surcharge for garages as the Village will then maintain the garage improvement.

Each unit is provisioned with 5 appliances – washer, dryer, stove, refrigerator and dishwasher – all of which are maintained and replaced when necessary by the co-op. In the event that a member wishes to upgrade appliances, this is permitted with prior permission from the Village Board at the member's cost. Where an upgraded appliance is sought and the original village-provided unit has reached its functional lifetime; the village will compensate the member with the value of a replacement item that would normally be provided by the Village. All upgraded appliances become the property of the Village upon installation and any upgraded features that fail are the responsibility of the member to have repaired. Originally, each unit had wall-to-wall carpets but current standards provide for laminate flooring in the living/dining room and both bedrooms with sheet vinyl flooring in the entranceway, kitchen, hallway and bathroom. Upgraded flooring is installed at village expense upon move out by a member or when the lifetime of the current flooring has expired.

All units are built over an earthen crawl space with a cement pad upon which is located the furnace and hot water tank. This space is approximately 4.5 feet high over the cement pad and is accessed by an interior hinged trap door equipped with steep stairs to access the area. Many residents utilize this heated space to store rarely used items such as luggage and Christmas decorations.

With the limited floor space (750 sq. ft. for one bedroom and 925 – 974 sq. ft. 2 bedroom units), interior storage is provided in every unit and some are provided with a heated storage room accessed via an exterior door. Member improvements that provide additional unheated storage in the garage or carport are common but must be maintained and painted as necessary by the member at their own expense.

Every unit is provided with a 12' by 12' wooden deck and privacy wall maintained by the Village. Many members have extended the deck to encompass the entire rear of their unit and some have constructed unheated 3 season sunrooms or gazebos on their decks. In every case, prior permission for such improvements has been received from the Grove Seniors Village Housing Co-Operative Ltd. Board. Again, all repairs, maintenance and painting are the responsibility of the member at their own expense and the member must agree to the removal of these improvements at the time they surrender their unit.

Interior shelves, wall hangings, pictures, etc. are permitted; but damages to the walls resulting are the responsibility of the member to repair or to pay for upon surrender of the unit.

All units were originally provided with standard bath/shower tubs, single vanity and standard toilet. Upgrades by members, with permission, to replace vanities, tubs (with soaker tubs or replacement shower units) are at the member's sole cost upon approval by the Board and meeting all code and village standards.

Kitchen cupboards can be upgraded by the member at their sole cost subject to meeting village standards and with prior Board approval.

Although all grounds are common property, the Village encourages members to develop and maintain their own gardens and flower beds adjacent to their unit. This has resulted in a very presentable streetscape and provides many opportunities for members to enjoy the village. An ongoing tree maintenance program is in place, and diseased and over-sized trees removed by village volunteers and replaced with village provided trees and shrubs.

Where trees or shrubs are requested to be removed by a member, that member must agree to pay the cost of replacement plantings and volunteer resources are utilized to assist in the planting and ongoing maintenance of these.

4 LIFE IN THE VILLAGE

4.1 LOU SIMON VILLAGE ASSOCIATION

The Lou Simon Village Association was incorporated as a society in 1993 to provide the Grove Seniors Village residents a vehicle to become involved and to offer fellow residents recreation, social and other support services. As well, the Lou Simon Village Association raises funds for the improvement of the Village and in support of the many social activities that it sponsors.

Since a housing cooperative is ineligible for many government and other grants, the Lou Simon Village Association provides the mechanism for access to this funding. For instance, the Village sought and received permission under our CMHC master agreement to enter into a lease arrangement for the Village community hall with the Lou Simon Village Association. This then made it possible for the association to apply for and receive New Horizons Funding for improvements to the facility that included new barrier free doors. With that improvement, the Lou Simon Village Association could now rent the facility to non-members for small social events, community organization meetings and family gatherings.

Over the years, the Lou Simon Village Association has contributed significant funding and volunteer effort to the Village. It has organized itself to provide for a number of committees, each of which concentrates on a single focused deliverable. These committees are as noted and are often set up to work with a very simple organizational structure and procedures. The spokesperson for each committee provides reports to the Lou Simon Village Association board – often simply a verbal report of their recent activities.

An outline of each committee follows

4.1.1 Library

The Library 'club' consists of two or three members who assume responsibility for the organization of the donated paperbacks, puzzles, videotapes, DVD's and music CD's. The library is located in the clubhouse and occupies a growing collection of bookshelves that are open to all. Members and guests simply take the items they wish to use and then return them when finished. All returns go into a collection box so the librarians can sort and return them to the shelves.

4.1.2 Coffee Club

The Coffee Club is a dedicated group of members who organize themselves to attend at the clubhouse each weekday before 9:00 AM to make coffee for those members who wish to drop in. A group of regulars typically will seat themselves at separate tables for the men and women (usually 16-18 members). All coffee and supplies are provided by the Lou Simon Village Association at no cost to members or guests. As well, the coffee and supplies are always available to members who attend any function at the clubhouse, and they are responsible for cleaning up after themselves.

4.1.3 Games Night

A committee plans and delivers weeknight games open to all members in the Village Clubhouse. These include bridge, poker, cribbage tournaments, backgammon, dominos and other board and card games. Typically, attending members bring snacks to share and the clubhouse coffee machine is always available.

4.1.4 Fund Raising

The Lou Simon Village Association appoints a volunteer fund raising chair from its membership to research and apply for available government, private sector, service club and other grants. This individual is supported as necessary by other Village members, the Lou Simon Village Association Board and the Grove Seniors Village Housing Co-Operative Ltd. Board.

4.1.5 Hall Rental

Hall rentals are managed by an appointee of the Lou Simon Village Association board who works closely with other volunteers who have assumed responsibility for cleaning the hall and ensuring that all supplies and equipment are in order. The hall rental for members of the Village is \$50.00 per day with a \$100.00 damage deposit (which has never to date been retained). Non Village, wider community members are charged \$100.00 per day plus a \$200.00 deposit. The Grove Seniors Village Housing Co-Operative Ltd. and the Lou Simon Village Association maintain insurance coverage for all users of the facility.

Building maintenance, heating and lighting are borne by the Grove Seniors Village Housing Co-Operative Ltd. and the Lou Simon Village Association assumes responsibility for the management and routine cleaning and minor maintenance of the facility. The Grove Seniors Village Housing Co-Operative Ltd. retains the right to utilize the facility for Village activities (Board and General Meetings, Committee Meetings, Village celebrations, etc.) at no charge. Members of the Village community have rights to book the facility with priority over non-Village users.

The Clubhouse (community hall) facility was built to ensure that resident members of the Village would have a meeting space to attend the required cooperative housing general and special meetings and to enjoy recreational and social activities. The facility is open to members when not booked for a private event as a drop in facility at any time. All Village members have keys to the facility and its associated storage shed in order to access tables, chairs, games, and supplies as provided for the use of the general membership. Members may sign out tables and chairs for use in their home unit as required.

4.1.6 Gardening Club

The gardening club is another loosely organized group of volunteer members who have an interest in maintaining the flower pots and planted spaces within the village. They take particular pride in the entrance area and the area in front of the Clubhouse that welcomes all visitors to the Village.

Annually, the Lou Simon Village Association sponsors a contest for the most attractive landscaped unit in the Village and the Gardening Club judges that contest. In the past, these volunteers have participated in trips to local gardening centres and the Devonian Gardens, the Enjoy Centre and other local attractions that provide ideas for improvements in our own gardens.

4.1.7 Village Improvements

The Lou Simon Village Association, through its fund raising activities, raises money to spend on improvements to the Village. Examples of this include the purchase and placement of trees, shrubs and flowers throughout the Village. Benches have been placed adjacent to sidewalks in the village and flower pots placed beside them. The Lou Simon Village Association arranges with nearby Village residents to water and weed these flowers.

The Lou Simon Village Association has purchased the tables and other furnishings for the Clubhouse and maintains a stock of tablecloths and utensils to be used by Village members and guests. Continuing plans for the development of a community garden, and orchard are underway. The Lou Simon Village Association also works closely with the Village Board concerning improvements to the Village. The new workshop and a new recreation space with washroom facilities, horseshoe pits, gazebo pad, benches, badminton nets, etc. was completed in 2020.

4.1.8 Member Volunteer Services

As a senior's village, there are always those in need of medical care or other physical and emotional supports. The Lou Simon Village Association volunteers provide a wide range of emotional support services as well as transportation to shopping and medical appointments. They are there to visit the sick in hospital and to comfort the bereaved upon the loss of a spouse. They organize themselves to ensure that all members are checked up on when there is a concern that their ability to live independently is compromised. Arrangements for financial counselling, transition to assisted living and support for those in need of subsidy are provided jointly with the activities of the Village Board.

The Lou Simon Village Association is always open to member's ideas concerning excursions to local attractions and recreational or cultural activities. They arrange the transportation and other logistics to ensure that all members can access these activities.

Monthly casino nights are held in cooperation with the River Cree Casino who provides transportation and small gifts for all attendees as well as a very reasonably priced dinner at the casino.

4.2 GROVE SENIORS HOUSING COOPERATIVE BOARD ACTIVITIES

The day-to-day activities of the Village are managed by an elected board of member residents. This seven-member elected board consists of an executive committee comprised of the President, Secretary and Treasurer. Members directly elect the Directors of Maintenance and Member Services as well as two Directors at Large. Each position serves a two-year term and one half of the board is elected annually in order to maintain continuity.

The roles of each member of the board are defined in the Bylaws of the Grove Seniors Village Housing Co-Operative Ltd. and are compliant with the Cooperatives Act of Alberta. Currently the Grove Seniors Village Housing Co-Operative Ltd. is a corporation with an annual budget of over one million dollars.

All Board members serve as volunteers without compensation. External auditors are retained and monitor the financial transactions of the Board on a month to month basis. Further auditing and oversight is maintained by CMHC under the Master Agreement that was negotiated at the inception of the Village. CMHC utilizes the Agency for Cooperative Housing to provide continuing oversight to the Board and to provide valuable advice on management issues as they arise.

The Act and our CMHC Master Agreement require that the Village maintain a Capital Replacement Reserve against replacement costs of durable village assets. Currently, the Grove Seniors Village Housing Co-Operative Ltd. maintains a balance exceeding \$200,000.00.

Key to the success of the Grove Seniors Village Housing Co-Operative Ltd. is the commitment of the Board and the membership to volunteerism in support of the ongoing maintenance of village assets and to the protection and growth of our cooperative living model. Accordingly, in addition to effective financial management, the Board also must focus on the enforcement of Village bylaws to ensure that members continue to live in harmony with one another while jointly protecting all common assets.

4.2.1 General Meetings

General Meetings are held quarterly and all members of the cooperative are required to attend or provide written notice that they are unable to do so. Each General Meeting provides all members the opportunity to receive reports from the Board and the standing committees on the operations of the Village and to provide member feedback to the Board on member concerns. General meetings are compulsory for all members, and failure to provide written reasons for non-attendance or not attending three consecutive

meetings can result in the termination of membership in the cooperative and expulsion from the Village.

Election of Board members is conducted annually at the Annual General Meeting as is the approval of the operating and capital budgets. Any member may place items for discussion and decision on the agenda of any general meeting and all members have the fundamental right to address the meeting and to participate in all decision making.

4.2.2 Board Meetings

Board Meetings are held monthly and routine business of the cooperative is conducted from decisions made at these meetings. The Board has authority to expend Village funds only as provided for in the annual budget and, unless there is an emergent need that requires funding; all expenditures outside of those budgeted must be brought before the membership at a general or special general meeting.

Member issues including interpersonal conflicts, unit maintenance concerns, Village management, etc. are dealt with by the Board in compliance with the bylaws, policies and procedures of the Village. All of these are effective only when confirmed by resolution of the membership at a duly constituted general meeting.

4.2.3 Committees of the Board

4.2.3.1 *Member Services Committee*

The member services committee's main task is to investigate and evaluate applicants for membership and resulting tenancy in the Village. The committee utilizes a strict and detailed process to interview, investigate and check references on all applicants considered for membership. They conduct prospective member seminars to provide applicants with the opportunity to meet Village members and receive answers to their questions on Village life.

Upon completion of their process and when a unit is becoming vacant, the Member Services Committee makes recommends a single individual (or couple for a 2-bedroom unit) to the Board for approval.

Upon a unit becoming vacant, the Member Services Committee works closely with the Maintenance Services Committee to clean and restore the vacated unit to like new condition. They work with the newly approved member to select the colors and finishes of the paint and flooring and make arrangements for volunteers and contractors to complete the work.

When a new member or couple are ready to move in, The Director of Member Services arranges to have documents notarized, the payment made for a member share (\$1,000 refundable) and a brief orientation on the unit being occupied.

Member Services also becomes involved in the enforcement and investigation of bylaw or policy infringements or member disputes and makes recommendations to the Board on actions to be taken.

4.2.3.2 Maintenance Services Committee

4.2.3.2.1 Annual Unit Inspections

Every housing unit is inspected annually by village volunteers who complete a very detailed checklist that identifies any deficiencies that need to be addressed. Some of these are the responsibility of the member to correct and others are the responsibility of the Grove Seniors Village Housing Co-Operative Ltd.

During the inspection process, the cleanliness and overall tidiness of the unit is evaluated and this provides some insight into the capabilities of the residing member to continue to live independently. Where issues are noted, the Board is advised and may choose to convene a family conference to discuss what supports are indicated to allow that member resident to continue living in the village community.

4.2.3.2.2 Maintenance Management System

In 2019, the Village participated in the *CMHC Preservation Funding Program* which included a full external evaluation of all physical assets. In preparation for that program, the Grove Seniors Village Housing Cooperative Ltd. retained Broadport Canada Inc. to develop a custom software application resident on the Village website to inventory and manage all Village maintenance assets. This system captures all maintenance activity and the remaining lifetime of each item in inventory. It is updated by volunteers when each of the Village assets is repaired or replaced. This then facilitates the annual inspection process and budget preparation – and provides our maintenance director full control of the maintenance workflow. Since the system resides on the Village website, maintenance information is accessible through password protected access via cell phone or tablet to all maintenance volunteers from any location on or off site.

4.2.3.2.3 Tendering & Contracting

Of major importance to the financial health of the cooperative is the tendering and contracting process. The Maintenance Services Committee establishes member volunteers to review and retender any major contracts or purchases on a regular basis to ensure the best available goods and services at the best price. Their recommendation to the Board is required prior to the Board entering into any contractual agreement.

4.2.3.2.4 Appliance Maintenance

Included in the management of improvements by a member is the member's right to upgrade their appliances. With prior permission, a member may upgrade their appliances when the supplied units have reached the end of their lifetime or when a member simply wishes to install an upgraded unit. These upgrades or replacements requested by a member are at their sole cost and the cost of maintaining any upgraded features becomes the sole responsibility of the member. If a Village supplied unit is being replaced due to its failure, the Village will compensate the member for the amount that would have been expended by the Village for a replacement unit. In all cases the upgraded equipment becomes the property of the Village as soon as it is installed. The member may dispose of the replaced equipment as they see fit.

4.2.3.2.5 Unit Maintenance

Any member may request permission for improvements to their unit. The Maintenance Committee reviews these requests with the following areas studied in detail:

- Is the improvement one that can be accomplished without affecting the structure of the unit?
- Does the improvement require any permits from other authorities?
- Is the improvement in keeping with the overall Village design?
- Will the improvement create a need for ongoing maintenance?
- Will the improvement result in any issues when the unit is vacated?
- Can the improvement easily be removed when the member moves out of the unit?
- Does the improvement affect neighbours in any way?
- Does the improvement require adherence to building codes?
- Does the improvement create any sight line or safety issues?
- Does the improvement impinge on common lands in the Village?

Upon recommendation from the Maintenance Committee, the Board may choose to allow the improvement at the member's sole cost and with the member's commitment to maintain the improvement at their sole cost. Where appropriate, a written understanding by the member to bear the cost of removal when they surrender the unit must be entered into. Key to this process is the need to protect the overall equality between the units to ensure that all members are treated in the same manner when the Village at large bears the responsibility for ongoing maintenance of all housing units. As well, it is important that the esthetics of the overall community be maintained to a common standard.

4.2.3.2.6 Grounds Maintenance

The Director of Maintenance Services ensures that the turf and snow removal contractor's performance meets village standards. As well, in consultation with the gardening volunteers, he determines which trees and shrubs will be removed and replaced with new nursery stock on an annual basis. He/she also ensures that the village gardening club maintains the common flower beds and other plantings to a common standard.

4.2.3.2.7 Turf and Snow Removal

A contractor is retained for the overall maintenance of the Village turf and for snow removal services. Grass cutting and trimming, deicer for sidewalks and driveways and spring and fall turf maintenance are paid for by the Village at large. When required, street sanding and sweeping is contracted separately and paid for by the Village.

4.2.4 Member Information & Website

The Village website and member information documents are managed by a village volunteer trained to perform these activities. That volunteer may be supported by other volunteers who manage the Village calendar of events and photography used on the

website or in print publications. As well, all Lou Simon Village Association information is also presented via the website and updated by its Board and committee members.

5 ADMINISTRATION

5.1 BUDGET PROCESS

The annual budget process is managed by the Board executive and a draft budget is prepared following the completion of the annual audit. This draft is then reviewed by the full Board and is recommended by resolution to the membership for approval at the Annual General Meeting.

5.2 BY LAW ENFORCEMENT

This function is managed by the Board as a whole. Where complaints are received that any of the Village bylaws are being violated by a member, the Board may investigate the issues or may assign that task to any of the Village committees that have expertise regarding the issue(s) raised. Upon completion of the investigation of fact, a recommendation is made to the Board for resolution of the issue. Typically, a letter is sent to the offending member with a copy retained on file. Where ongoing or repeated violations of Village policies or bylaws is indicated, the Board may initiate a grievance committee to hear the facts of the case and then report to the Board their findings. If the violation is unresolved after this process, the recommendation of the Board to terminate membership is placed before the members at a General or Special meeting. A simple majority vote by the members to terminate membership or initiate other actions is final and not open to further appeal.

5.3 UTILITIES

The Grove Seniors Village Housing Co-Operative Ltd. is responsible for the maintenance of all village sanitary, storm and water distribution systems located on village property.

5.3.1 Water

Each unit is provided with a water meter which is read by the municipality and billed according to usage. All water bills are received and paid by the village office and are tabulated monthly. Included in the monthly housing charge is an allowance for the first \$40.00 (forty dollars) of water. Quarterly, these billings are reviewed and any overages over that period are billed to the individual member unit and collected by the Village. In the summer months from May to August, this allowance is increased to fifty dollars (\$50.00) per month to encourage members to keep their lawns and plantings properly watered.

5.3.2 Natural Gas

Natural gas is contracted by the Village and billed to each unit individually through individual meters. The entire amount is paid by the village office and individual bills are

made available to each member. The monthly bill is directly debited from the member's bank account.

5.3.3 Electricity

In a similar fashion to natural gas, electricity is metered and billed to each unit separately, but the bills are received by the office and paid in bulk. Each member's bank account is debited monthly and each member receives a copy of their bill.

5.3.4 Cable TV

Cable television (full HD program package) is included in the monthly housing charge. Additional channel offerings or services are paid directly by the member to Shaw Communications (the village supplier)

5.3.5 Internet

Through a bulk arrangement with Shaw Communications, every member may choose to subscribe to the bulk agreement entered into by the Village. High speed wireless internet is available to all members at twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) per month. No alternative providers are permitted, but members may choose not to have internet service and they therefore will not be billed. Monthly payment is taken by direct debit from the member's bank account.

As well, Shaw Communications provides free WiFi to the Village Clubhouse.

5.3.6 Telephone

The Village entered into a bulk agreement with Shaw Communications for full telephone service (all functions enabled) for a monthly amount of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00). No alternative providers are permitted, but members may choose not to have a landline phone. Any additional long distance or other charges are billed directly to the member. Monthly payment is taken by direct debit from the member's bank account.

5.3.7 Solid Waste Disposal

Included in the monthly housing charge, solid waste disposal is contracted by the Village and two 7 cubic yard receptacles are located within the village to receive member's waste.

5.3.8 Recycling

Village volunteers manage a recycling facility for beverage containers, glass, metal cans and lids, newsprint, corrugated cardboard and milk cartons. This facility is located at the Village clubhouse and revenues and mileage expense for the volunteer coordinator are managed by the Lou Simon Village Association.