

## GENERAL MANAGER/CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER (GM/COO)

SPRING ISLAND

Okatie, South Carolina

**Spring Island is a 3,000-acre residential community and nature preserve in the heart of South Carolina's fabled Lowcountry. As a community woven carefully into a landscape of breathtaking natural beauty, it is more than the sum of its parts. There is a mystical charm to Spring Island that transcends everything you've ever heard about "planned communities." It is a community of down-to-earth people who revel in the company of family and friends and seek the fulfillment of lifelong learning.**

In February 1990, the island was purchased from the Walker Trust by a group consisting of Jim and Betsy Chaffin, Jim and Dianne Light and Peter and Beryl LaMotte. Jim Chaffin wrote, "Our vision for Spring Island was to blend all the recreational, intellectual, and cultural amenities of a great private club community with the environment of a seahorse wilderness park." That vision is the Spring Island experience the Members have today, 25 years after the community's founding. The non-profit Spring Island Trust was chartered by the developers in that same year with a three-fold mission: protection and management of the island's natural environment, ongoing documentation of its history and promotion of its availability as an inspiration for the arts.

Immediately after the purchase of the land, the new owners embarked on the risky course of a low-density development plan, which would leave the Island unspoiled. To accomplish this, they reduced the existing county permit, which was for 5,000 dwelling units, to a new permit for a maximum of 500 homes on the Island's 3,000 acres. They also created a 1,000-acre Nature Preserve to be managed by the Spring Island Trust and protected in perpetuity.

Working with the late Robert Marvin, the world-renowned Lowcountry land planner and landscape architect who created the plans for Callaway Gardens near Atlanta and the par-3 course at Augusta National, a plan was created to preserve irreplaceable natural treasures such as the Live Oak Forest and the Great Salt Pond. This plan permitted only 500 homes on the 3,000-acre island, one of the lowest densities of any community on the South Carolina coast. Subsequently, in 1998, following discussions with the developer and the property owners, a decision was reached to reduce the density to 410 home sites. Of these, 275 homes have been built and another 23 are in various stages of development.

The final Master Plan allowed for moderate density in the areas of Walker Landing and Bonny Shore, as well as Old Tabby Links Neighborhood. The remainder of the property was planned to permit larger homes on very large and private land parcels. Marvin's creation of a 'Nature Curtain' shielded many of these large homes from view, even from the Island's roads. The result was a series of very low-impact neighborhoods with total privacy and the protection of indigenous trees. The framework was in place for an environmentally friendly community of unsurpassed beauty and distinction.

Located in the pristine Lowcountry, Spring Island is unrivaled in its lifestyle, bio-diversity, comfort, and real-life experiences that combine local flavor with global sophistication. Although secluded from urban sprawl, Spring Island is conveniently connected to the nearby town of Beaufort, South Carolina and Hilton Head Island. The Savannah airport is just 45 minutes away as well.

Though it is home to a golf course that is among the finest in America, it is not a "golf community."

Spring Island has been described as "a great maritime forest." Live oaks cast their shadows across the landscape and these imposing ancient trees along with 90 other species thrive - more than three times the number found on neighboring barrier islands. Six hundred types of flora, 700 fauna types, and 19 varieties of soil have also been identified on the island. Surrounded by saltwater estuaries, the island is an ideal setting for both woods and wetlands. There are several saltwater ponds along our shore and dozens of freshwater ponds throughout us forest. Saltwater ponds offer shrimp, crab, oyster, redfish, sea trout or flounder; and fresh water, largemouth bass and bream.

A phenomenon of nature, Spring Island has not been spoiled by civilization. For three centuries the island has been privately owned. Its stewards have helped to preserve, mold and enhance the land which is evident today: in the live oak forests, the saltwater and freshwater ponds and in the historic tabby ruins of the magnificent Edwards mansion. The mission of Spring Island residents is to preserve the natural surroundings that they have inherited so that they might take pleasure in the peaceful enjoyment of its marshes, forests and fields. Everything that is natural and beautiful about the island will be maintained, and human presence will always be subtle and unassuming.

Clearly, Spring Island is a unique residential community that offers a wide array of activities and programs, all centered on a celebration and appreciation of its natural beauty and environment. It is a wonderful respite from the urban centers that dominate many of today's resort, second home community developments.

### **Spring Island Trust**

At the very outset of purchasing Spring Island, developers Jim Chaffin, Jim Light and Peter LaMotte created the Spring Island Trust, a non-profit organization, to insure the preservation and protection of the Island's environmental and cultural history. Articles of Incorporation were filed with the state of South Carolina in January of 1990. Property owners contribute to the Trust through a mandatory assessment fee whereby 1.5% of all home sites and 1% of all improved property sales are funded to the Spring Island Trust. Member donations are also a source of funds for the Trust. The Trust owns two nature preserves, totaling 1,000 acres, on Spring Island, which are protected by deed restrictions, the Mobley Nature Center, and the Art Barn, its classroom facility.

During the development phase of Spring Island (1990 to 1999), the Spring Island Trust worked closely with the developers to ensure sound development plans and land management practices, thereby safeguarding the original environmental integrity and cultural heritage of the Island.

The Trust continues to have three major functions:

1. To manage the Nature Preserves and other open spaces,
2. To help members and their guests understand how to be effective environmental stewards through its educational programs, and
3. To work with SIPOA and Club committees that are involved with land use and another habitat-related issues.

The Trust also promotes effective stewardship by inviting scientists, historians, and artists to the Island for consultation, study and inspiration. Many provide classes and give Trust talks to the members.

By bringing the ideals of the environment a-list, the developer and the homeowners together in a successful working relationship, the Trust is a model of land stewardship for others to use and works

to keep the environmental integrity of the Island intact for future generations.

In 2000, the developers turned governance of Spring Island over to the Spring Island Property Owners' Association (SIPOA) and the Spring Island Club (the Club). The Spring Island Trust Board and the SICPOA Board work in partnership to accomplish Spring Island's mission as a residential community committed to preserving its unique natural setting.

The Island's recreational programs, amenities, and members services are the responsibility of the Spring Island Club.

### **Clubhouse/Dining**

Spring Island's many amenities and facilities are spread throughout the community in a campus-like arrangement. For dining options, the newly renovated River House, which also serves as the main social complex and post office, features dinner four nights of the week, along with a wide array of daytime and evening programs and activities. Two additional nights of supper are served from the Golf House, which is also open for breakfast and lunch seven days. All are subject to slight seasonal adjustments to the schedule.

In addition, the Gazebo near Bonny Shore is available for private parties, as is the newly renovated Summer House, located opposite the River House and adjacent to the Sports Complex and children's playground.

### **Equestrian**

The Spring Island Equestrian Center is a full-service facility, bringing an exciting, supportive equine atmosphere to the Lowcountry. All riders are able to experience the joy of equine activities, whether it is trail riding, fox hunting, showing, or driving.

Members enjoy a wide range of special equine events, such as clinics, group rides with neighboring plantations and beach rides. The Equestrian Center has a 26-stall barn, grass turnout paddocks, indoor and outdoor wash stalls, 6 grooming stations, automatic watering system inside and outside, an automatic fly system, state of the art compost system, 24-hour supervision and security, many miles of trails, large outdoor jump/dressage ring, and a small grass ring for beginners.

### **Racquet Sports**

As part of the Sports Complex, Spring Island has (6) Har Tru tennis courts, (2) pickleball courts (installed in 2018), a Tennis Center, and year-round tennis and pickleball professionals who oversee an active event, clinic and private lesson operation.

### **Special Interests**

A number of special interest activities are available to Spring Island members including beekeeping, book club, bridge, clay work, Mah Jongg, painters group, photography, stampers, stitchers, and the Native Plant Project (a Trust project whose mission is to propagate, distribute and educate members on the use of native plants), wherein members grow and restore native plant habitats on the island.

### **Outdoor Recreation**

Boating, fishing, sporting clays, croquet, bocce, kayaking, and swimming are among the many activities available to Spring Island members and their guests. Boat ramps, 5 community docks, dry dock storage, and numerous salt and fresh water ponds are available for boating and fishing

enthusiasts.

### **Golf**

Arnold Palmer and his Senior Design Associate Ed Seay were responsible for the renowned, highly acclaimed Old Tabby Links, which was completely renovated by The Palmer Group in 2014. The 7,070-yard, par-72 course now stands as testament to Palmer and Seay's sensitivity and light touch. From the great Live Oak "cathedrals" of the front nine, Old Tabby gives way to the more open feeling of pastures and green fields on the back - which is land cleared for quail hunting in earlier times. The final three holes parallel the spectacular marshes of the Chechessee River. Old Tabby has been highly rated by numerous golf publications and is generally viewed as one of Palmer's finest works.

### **Fitness**

A 13,000 square foot Sports Complex (built in 2009) features state of the art fitness equipment, classes, aerobics areas, massage and spa services, personal training, and a regular schedule of activities and classes, including Pilates, Barre, spinning, yoga, and innovative cardio techniques such as TRX. Additionally, there is both a lap pool and a traditional pool conveniently located in the complex.

### **Quail Hunting**

Spring Island members enjoy seasonal quail hunting at nearby Red Bluff plantation. Schedules are coordinated for walk-up and traditional wagon hunts.

### **Arts Program**

To experience the beauty of the island, find rejuvenation and gain inspiration for their art, members including painters, sculptors, photographers and ceramicists participate in a dynamic and varying arts program. Visiting artists offer a variety of workshops for the beginner and experienced member artists. Additionally, musicians are invited to perform events of the highest caliber to include classical, jazz, bluegrass and contemporary music.

In 2018, the membership voted to approve a new Art Barn to support the growing interest and activity of this amenity (a unique and critical differentiator for Spring Island). Construction has begun – with an estimated completion date in the fall of 2019 – for the 8,000+ sq.ft facility composed of 3 buildings (main building with gallery and classrooms; kiln shed, and admin offices).

### **Waterfall Farm**

Seasonal vegetables are grown and harvested, partly with the help of Spring Island volunteers, at a multi-acre farm on the east side of the island.

### **Spring Island GM/COO Organizational Structure**

The Spring Island POA and Club operate under the General Manager/Chief Operating Officer (GM/COO) organizational structure. The GM/COO reports to the SIPOA/Club Presidents. The Directors are the same persons and the Boards meet jointly.

The direct reports to the GM/COO position include the Senior Staff team:

- Director of Club Operations
- Director of Golf
- Director of Recreation & Wellness
- Director of Golf Grounds & Community Maintenance
- Director of Facilities Maintenance

- Member Relations Director (communications)

The Senior Staff manage the larger team of Department Heads including:

- Arts Programming Director
- Outdoor Pursuits Manager (fishing, boating, sporting clays)
- Community Maintenance Manager
- Equestrian Manager
- Executive Chef
- Food & Beverage Managers
- Tennis Professional (seasonal)
- Housekeeping Services
- Security Chief (security shared jointly with Callawassie Island)

The GM/COO also may act on an advisory level with the POA and Club Spring Island Board Committees that are listed below.

- Equestrian
- Finance
- Golf
- House
- Recreation
- Stewardship (SIPOA, Club & Trust)
- Tennis/Pickleball
- Habitat Review Board
- Communication and Marketing
- Legal
- Long Range Planning
- Membership
- Arts

The GM/COO coordinates closely and in liaison with:

- Phoenix Financial Services (CFO, AP, AR, HR)
- Spring Island Realty (owned by and reports to SIPOA)
- Spring Island Trust Executive Director
- Callawassie island (neighboring community with shared roads)

Annual Club and Property Owner Charges:

- Spring Island Membership (Club) Dues: \$16,640
- Spring Island POA Assessment: \$6,590

**SPRING ISLAND WEB SITE:** [www.springisland.com](http://www.springisland.com)

#### **THE GM/COO OPPORTUNITY at SPRING ISLAND POSITION OVERVIEW**

The GM/COO is hired by the Board of Directors, reports to the President of the SICPOA Board of Directors and is responsible for carrying out the Board's policies and directives. In accordance with Spring Island's Philosophy and Core Values, the GM/COO is ultimately responsible for executing all programs, services and activities, goals and objectives of the Club and ensures that strategic objectives are achieved.

The GM/COO is accountable for ensuring that amenities, staff, and all programs and activities ensure outstanding service and member/guest satisfaction.

The GM/COO is the Board's bridge to the staff and enables the Boards to avoid the intricacies and short-term focus that is the staff's responsibility. This will enable the Boards to work more exclusively on the strategic and long-term focus of Club governance.

The GM/COO will lead the management team. The ability to identify and evaluate talent with a track record of developing, coaching and instilling a cross-departmental service culture is a critical success factor for the GM/COO. He/she must also be an effective and capable communicator, both written and verbal, and someone who can provide strategic and innovative focus with the ability to consistently hold staff accountable at the highest level.

The GM/COO is responsible for managing all fiscal operations of Spring Island consistent with the direction and policies established by the Board of Directors as well as by the by-laws and Rules and Regulations of the Club and SIPOA.

Exceptional candidates must be strategic contributors and possess strong operational, financial and analytical skills and demonstrate a proactive management style that anticipates and identifies the Community's present and future needs. The GM/COO is expected to deliver balanced fiscal and operating results with both short- and long-term capital planning while delivering a premier member/resident experience.

The GM/COO must be a courageous thought partner for the Board, recognizing the importance of keeping the Club on the cutting edge of "amenity excellence" by having a keen understanding of current and future trends, demographics, legislative, economic, and social issues. The GM/COO should be decisive and set aggressive goals and objectives to ensure the Club's current and future success.

Key attributes of the future GM/COO are an authentic enjoyment of developing resident member relationships and being in a diverse and unique environmental and intellectual environment, as well as one where its members are active and social. The GM/COO must be visible and outgoing, genuine and personable by nature.

Candidates must also understand as well as embrace and perpetuate the unique qualities outlined above that form the foundation of the Spring Island philosophy and experience.

#### **INITIAL PRIORITIES**

- Learn the history and uniqueness of Spring Island, as well as its residents and staff before making significant changes.
- Evaluate the overall level of services, processes and procedures provided to Spring Island residents and members, recognizing the desire to provide a continual evolution to excellence in each operating area, and providing new and innovative services when and where appropriate.

#### **CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS**

Clearly, Spring Island is seeking a consummate professional with proven superior team leadership development, consensus-building and execution skills, along with strategic

"partnership" with the Board and appropriate committees. Preferred candidates are those with 7-10 years of verifiable significant strategic and operational management experience in a progressively upward career tracking in similar community/resort/hospitality environments, along with consistent, unblemished career tracking and tenures.

This is an outstanding opportunity for someone to make a dramatic and positive impact, working closely with the Board of Directors and Senior Staff to further the already special and very unique foundation of Spring Island.

### **EDUCATIONAL AND CERTIFICATION QUALIFICATIONS**

A college graduate with a bachelor's degree in Business Administration or Hospitality Management is a plus; a Certified Club Manager (CCM), designation is desirable, or similar professional development achievements showing a strong commitment to on-going professional development.

### **SALARY & BENEFITS**

Spring Island will offer a competitive compensation and incentive plan, along with senior executive benefits.

### **INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO APPLY**

Please note the importance of providing a thoughtful letter of interest and alignment for the position – why you, why Spring Island, why Okatie/Beaufort, etc. Send your resume and letter to Jessie Hershey: [jhershey@pfs-sc.com](mailto:jhershey@pfs-sc.com).