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GENERAL MANAGER/CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER (GM/COO) PROFILE: COUNTRY CLUB OF BUFFALO BUFFALO, NY

THE GENERAL MANAGER/CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER OPPORTUNITY AT COUNTRY CLUB OF BUFFALO

Country Club of Buffalo (CCB) is a traditional member-owned, private country club in Buffalo, NY, a city that has enjoyed a significant resurgence in the past several years and is a vibrant metropolitan area with significant year-round activities, and an increasingly robust economic environment. The new General Manager/Chief Operating Officer (GM/COO) will be joining a high performing club operation with a significant history and consistently viewed as “the club” in the Western New York market. He/She will be succeeding a highly regarded, seventeen-year tenured GM/COO who is leaving on a very high note for a new opportunity.

The General Manager/Chief Operating Officer position at CCB is a tremendous opportunity for an individual who is passionate about professional leadership, team development, continuing to enhance the outstanding CCB ‘brand,’ and building strong and engaged relationships with members and staff, while working to continue the positive, collaborative governance model the Club has enjoyed for many years. The GM/COO is the “keeper of the brand” as it relates to ensuring that long standing culture of the Club is maintained and slowly evolves, while also being an “important voice in key decisions and direction” of CCB as it continues to stay relevant to its membership.

The opportunity at The Country Club of Buffalo is an opportunity to be part of a very stable, historical club with a strong financial base, a wide array of quality amenities located in an economically vibrant, family-centric community with outstanding schools and exceptional off-work areas of interest and enjoyment. This is the perfect opportunity for an individual with exceptional and natural gravitas, and comfortable in a more traditional club environment where appropriate and desired etiquette (this is a “Mr. and Mrs.” vs. first name use) club environment.

[Click here to view a brief video about this opportunity.](#)

COUNTRY CLUB OF BUFFALO OVERVIEW

The Country Club of Buffalo has been an important part of the history of Buffalo, and its members have provided civic and business leadership throughout the community. The present location of the Country Club of Buffalo is actually its third. The Club was incorporated on February 11, 1889, and its first clubhouse, designed by E. B. Green, was opened in August of that year. Three of the founders of the Country Club were among the founders of the Buffalo Polo Club in 1878. Polo continued to be played on the Club grounds until 1935.

In 1894, Club members placed an empty tomato can in the ground, and thus was born the first golf hole in Western New York. The Club acquired land on the city line at Main and Bailey in 1900 and had the new course ready for play in 1902. During 1910 and 1911, Walter J. Travis revamped the course in anticipation of attracting a major tournament, which turned out to be the 1912 U.S. Open.

Acquisition of property in Williamsville began in 1922, and the Donald Ross designed course opened in 1926 and the clubhouse opened in 1927. The United States Women’s Amateur Championship was played on the new course in 1931, and the Curtis Cup was contested in 1950, with the American women defeating the British. The Carling Cup Matches between pro-amateur teams from the U.S. and Canada were held in 1960, and in 1962, the National Junior Girls Championship was played at the Country Club of Buffalo. A comprehensive restoration of the golf course was developed and implemented by Jim Nagle of Forse Design in 2013.

Over the past few years, CCB has been thoughtful in its reinvestment in the physical plant with successful locker room renovations, new bar and dining room improvements, a new Stonehouse halfway house, an updated turf maintenance center, the shooting center and other key amenities. Further plans are under consideration, including a potential pool reimagination, golf shop relocation or improvement and other updates and enhancements. The Board is approaching further strategic plans in a thoughtful 'blue sky' approach as the large size of the campus (230+ acres) provides interesting potential options.

COUNTRY CLUB OF BUFFALO FACTS

- At present, there are approximately 500 members in all categories
- \$40,000 Initiation fee for Regular Golf membership
- \$9,900 Annual dues plus \$1,224 Capital Charges
- Approximately \$9.0M gross revenues in operations
- Approximately \$2.4M F&B volume (37.9% FC) with 62% of it in catering/events
- Approximately 15,500 rounds of golf played annually
- Club accounting and POS system is Jonas
- There are approximately 88 year-round employees (61 FTE/27 PTE), supplemented with approximately 100 more seasonally
- Guestrooms in the clubhouse 2 suites/4 bedrooms
- CCB is a 501(c)(7) corporation
- There are 12 Board Members with three-year terms for their respective roles
- Average age of members is 58 years of age

COUNTRY CLUB OF BUFFALO WEBSITE: www.ccofbuffalo.org

GENERAL MANAGER/CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER POSITION OVERVIEW

The Country Club of Buffalo has a strong history of tenure amongst many of its senior staff and desires to attract a verifiably high-performing, achievement-oriented, collaborative new leader who views CCB as a “destination club” for many years to come.

The GM/COO position has responsibility for all day-to-day Club operations and will work with the Board of Governors to maintain its long-standing commitment to a strong and consistent governance organizational leadership model. He/she directs and administers all aspects of the operations--the amenities, project development, staff, and all programs and activities, including each operating entity of golf, racquet sports, pool, food/beverage operations, activities, and programs, to ensure consistently outstanding service delivery to the membership and their guests. The Board does not want to operate the Club; they have been and want to continue in a higher level of oversight, policy making, governing, and strategic focus. Key to the new GM/COO's success is the intuitive sense to be “present” and to sincerely engage with every generation of members and their guests, as well as all members of the family unit.

The GM/COO is responsible for the creation, implementation and consistent execution of all service standards and processes while providing vibrant, innovative, relevant, and respectful leadership to key managers and staff. Being a natural mentor to the team also is critically important, as is being a strong advocate for the team's success. The GM/COO must be a proactive and assertive leader in the process of strategic planning, talent acquisition and retention, membership activities/services programming, ensuring that each of these areas of focus consider current and future membership input and demographics.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

A key requirement is to be able to work proactively with the Board and Club Committees who in turn will keep the GM/COO focused on key goals and objectives that benefit the long-term well-being of the Club and to ensure that future capital projects are successfully planned and executed, keeping all appropriate constituencies well-informed throughout.

The Board is looking for a partner-like mindset from its GM/COO to take a strong role in running the Club, to be out in front of issues, and to provide them with solutions, executing to successful outcomes where and when needed. As previously noted, this will be a very “blue sky” process, with several key options already under consideration, but the new GM/COO will also be able to contribute to the conversation and analysis.

Outstanding communication skills, both written and verbal, are essential! Additionally, as the primary communicator of most of the information at the Club, a keen ability to listen, engage, build trust, and be highly approachable is also of critical importance.

Other key attributes, characteristics and style of the successful new leader include the following:

- Visionary and mission-oriented on behalf of CCB; anticipate how the Club will evolve and be at the forefront of trends in clubs.
- A keen understanding of club etiquette and how it relates to being a key differentiator at CCB compared to most other clubs; how members and staff are treated and behave is a foundational value of the Club.
- Innately understanding, empathetic, reliable, and relatable to members and staff at all levels, but also able to embrace the long standing culture of CCB and to ensure that he/she is a keen “protector” of such, while also ensuring an evolutionary relevance to it (not being an agent of change!). CCB prides itself on its “family” values with both members and staff; it values the many long tenured team members the Club enjoys who positively contribute to a very consistent, engaging environment.
- Outgoing, conversant, respectful, and diplomatic, but able to say “no” when appropriate without alienating members or staff while doing so.
- Strong financial acumen, detail-orientation to “see” things needing attention, and operations, systems, and facilities expertise.
- Attract, retain, and develop staff at every level, while setting clear accountabilities and standards, and recognizing his/her role as the “tone at the top” representative of CCB and its culture.

INITIAL PRIORITIES OF THE GENERAL MANAGER/CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

The following priorities have been identified for likely initial primary focus:

- Observe, listen, ask questions, and learn about the culture and heritage of CCB. The Club is very open to changes and enhancements, but you must first understand the history, expectations, etc.
- Meet and sincerely interact with and engage as many members as possible. Build trust, schedule interactive times, and follow up on details. Being “present and front facing” and involved in all operations and especially in member high usage areas/times is important. The Club has a history of exceptional member experiences; consider how to ensure they continue at a high level and where they may be even further enhanced.
- Creating a series of focus group ‘by invitation’ sessions immediately upon commencing the role will be important to both introduce one’s self to the membership, but to also to learn how CCB functions and what members and staff value and would like to see enhanced.
- Working with the Board and appropriate committees to truly “map” the future of capital reinvestments, their likely impact and financial needs.
- Truly get to know the team and advocate for their success. Spend time with the team getting to know them, their abilities, and aspirations and to further their already strong mutual respect and collaborative approach to supporting one another and the Club’s overall mission.
- Develop the Board and Committee relationship, working to create a strong bond and communication exchange of diplomatic openness. The GM/COO must be “respectfully assertive” in making his/her opinion part of the discussion and help to ensure a big picture view is always considered in policy-making and directional changes. Being exceptionally well-versed in CCB bylaws, policies, and rules is critical.

CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS

A minimum of 5-10 years of progressive leadership/management experience, preferably in a GM/COO role in a golf and family-centric, private member-owned country club with multi-dimensional operations, or leading hospitality operations outside of the club industry in a similar hospitality operation.

True 'rising stars' from the club industry who have been verifiably well-mentored, or those hospitality industry managers who come from top quality environments and who possess outstanding relationship skills will also be considered.

EDUCATIONAL AND CERTIFICATION QUALIFICATIONS

A Bachelor's Degree from a four-year university or college is highly desirable, preferably in Hospitality Management. Credentials from the hospitality industry, recognizing on-going involvement and commitment to lifelong personal and professional development are desired.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

Salary is open and commensurate with qualifications and experience. CCB, along with the typical senior staff benefits, offers an excellent bonus and benefit package.

INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO APPLY

Please upload your resume and cover letter, in that order, using the link below. You should have your documents fully prepared to be attached when prompted for them during the online application process.

Preparing a thoughtful letter of interest and alignment with the above noted expectations and requirements is necessary. Your letter should be addressed to The Country Club of Buffalo Search Committee, and clearly articulate why you want to be considered for this position at this stage of your career and why CCB and the greater Buffalo area will be beneficial to you, your family, your career, and CCB if selected.

You must apply for this role as soon as possible but no later Friday, January 3, 2020. Interviews are currently scheduled for late January with second interviews occurring a short time later. The new GM/COO should assume his/her role in Spring 2020.

IMPORTANT: Save your resume and letter in the following manner:

"Last Name, First Name - Resume" &

"Last Name, First Name - Cover Letter - CCB"

(These documents should be in Word or PDF format)

Note: Once you complete the application process for this search, you are not able to go back in and add additional documents.

[Click here](#) to upload your resume and cover letter.

If you have any questions, please email Patty Sprankle: patty@kkandw.com

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