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GENERAL MANAGER: CRYSTAL DOWNS COUNTRY CLUB FRANKFORT, MI

GENERAL MANAGER OPPORTUNITY AT CRYSTAL DOWNS COUNTRY CLUB

Crystal Downs Country Club, a seasonal club—open May 1 to October 31-- established in 1927 and owned by its members, sits on the shores of Lake Michigan. The jewel of the club is the 18-hole links course designed by Alister MacKenzie, currently #14 on the 2023-2024 *Golf Digest* Top 100 Golf Course rankings.

The club has been run by its very active 12-member Board since its inception. A search is now underway for a General Manager (GM) driven by the growing complexity of Board roles and the increasing needs of the members. The club's founders envisioned a club that would manifest specific, important qualities, among which were: a "family" club, enhancing relationships within a family, among club members, and within the local community. The club believes in promoting its location's aesthetic qualities and environmental advantages and treats the land with respect. Crystal Downs maintains a membership policy that seeks a diversity of vocational, professional, cultural, and economic interests with ownership of a local residence; and welcomes the entertainment of guests but never at the expense of members.

The new, first-time-ever General Manager of Crystal Downs will play a critically important role in maintaining and enhancing the spirit and culture of the club. They will work closely with the Board and its committees to ensure member satisfaction with deference to club values and traditions, while at the same time leading an experienced team of professionals daily to deliver beyond exceptional member experiences. This leader will have a soft-handed approach and will exude positivity.

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

ABOUT CRYSTAL DOWNS COUNTRY CLUB

Perched atop the breathtaking bluffs of Benzie County, Michigan, Crystal Downs Country Club offers an unparalleled experience where tradition meets timeless beauty. Since 1927, this private, member-owned retreat has embraced families and friends, fostering a unique community spirit across generations. With its world-renowned Alister MacKenzie-designed 18-hole links course, players are invited to test their skills against nature's backdrop of rolling dunes, pristine fairways, and sweeping views of both Lake Michigan and Crystal Lake.

The English cottage-style clubhouse, designed by Alexander McColl, complements the club's natural surroundings, offering a perfect setting for social gatherings, relaxation, and panoramic lake views. The golf course and clubhouse are situated on a narrow strip of sandy, rolling land between the big lake and inland Crystal Lake, affording expansive views of both lakes, ever-differing sunrises and sunsets, and fairly constant, invigorating winds. Some commentators have expressed that the land itself exudes energy.

More than just a golf destination, Crystal Downs is a family-centric community that cherishes meaningful relationships and local involvement. Whether enjoying the invigorating winds across the course or a sunset over the lake, every moment here is filled with the serenity and charm of Northern Michigan. At Crystal Downs, tradition thrives, and memories are made.

CRYSTAL DOWNS COUNTRY CLUB BY THE NUMBERS:

- Approximately 14,000 Rounds of Golf Annually
- \$42,000 Initiation Fee
- \$5,900 Annual Dues (Full Member)
- Capital dues \$100 annually

- 449 Members (All categories)
- Approximately \$4.8M Gross Volume
- Approximately \$2.1M Annual Dues Revenue
- Approximately \$692,575 F&B Volume
- Approximately \$2.3M Gross Payroll
- Approximately 26 FTE 86 Seasonal Employees
- 12 Board Members, 3-year terms (eligible for 2 consecutive terms)
- 64 Average Age of Members
- Club operates as a 501c7
- Committees – Architecture & Environment, Building & Grounds, Finance, Golf, Green, House, Legal, Long Range Planning, Membership, Personnel, Nominating

CRYSTAL DOWNS COUNTRY CLUB WEBSITE: www.crystaldowns.org

GENERAL MANAGER – POSITION OVERVIEW

The GM will lead and manage all aspects of Club operations including its activities and the relationships between the Club and its Board of Directors, members, guests, employees, community, government, and industry. The GM acts according to the highest standards of personal and business ethics in coordinating and administering the Club's policies as defined by its Board of Directors, developing operating policies and procedures as needed, directing the work of all department managers, and securing and protecting all Club assets including facilities and equipment. The GM reports to the Board of Crystal Downs Country Club. While the club is seasonal, the GM role is for twelve months, given the various activities of closing the club, providing monthly administrative services, and planning and executing the activities related to opening each season.

The GM is expected to provide engaged, highly interactive, and visible leadership, ensuring that members enjoy the finest services, amenities, programming, and overall community ambiance and maintenance. This individual is expected to be a highly visible "face" of operations and display excellent communication skills with both members and staff. The GM is expected to devote his/her full time and attention to operations, planning, and staff management, as well as, working with the Board to strategically plan for the future.

This leader is a key influencer in shaping the employee culture. He/She sets the tone for the work environment, fostering a positive and collaborative atmosphere. Leadership qualities such as communication, inspiration, and mentorship are crucial in building a motivated and efficient team. The role involves overseeing major projects, from conception to execution. This includes capital improvements, asset management, and lease negotiations. Strong project management skills are necessary to ensure that these initiatives are well-planned, stay on schedule, and meet quality standards. Keeping the Board and staff focused on the financial performance within the budget, and holding the staff accountable will be trademarks of this individual.

Working with Committees is essential to the new GM's role. He/She will support the work of the committees, and, in turn, the committees will support the GM. The GM will recruit, train, and supervise all department heads and ensure member satisfaction across all club functions. He/she will work closely with the Board and appropriate committees in executing those duties.

KEY ATTRIBUTES AND PRIORITIES OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

- A proactive, mature forward-facing member-focused leadership style that promotes staff and membership engagement.
- From inception look at change as an organic process that will not be seen externally as much as experienced internally
- Practice patience, and get to know the members, culture, and staff of Crystal Downs by listening, asking questions, and respecting the culture and heritage of Crystal Downs Country Club and its membership.
- A must – excellent communication skills, exuding energy, and creativity.
- Disciplined follow-up to complete team goals and objectives promptly.
- Passion for developing and maintaining both casual and fine dining and other food and beverage experiences for the club members and guests.

- Demonstrated financial management experience with effective oversight of the annual operating budget.
- A natural way of being front-facing and enjoying meaningful engagement with the members and staff.
- Strong leadership and a strategic approach to management in all areas of the club.
- Ability to effectively lead, mentor, and develop department heads and staff with a continued professional development plan.
- The ability to apply best industry practices in hiring, training, communication, and developing a strong team.
- Ability to build a strong board and committee relationship, working to create a strong bond and communication exchange of diplomatic openness.
- In conjunction with the Board, annually update the long-term strategic plan to fit the desires of today's membership.

INITIAL PRIORITIES OF THE NEW GENERAL MANAGER/CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

- The GM must first inspire all team members to continue the existing culture of excellence in everything they do and motivate the team to constantly improve. This role will have functional ownership of all aspects of the Club, including golf, greens, events, finance, food and beverage, racquet sports, HR, and member services.
- Listen and observe, a lot, while "learning and assessing" the operation.
- Quickly build relations and bond with the current Club staff.
- Get to know members as quickly as possible, engaging them sincerely and enthusiastically.
- Work closely with the Board, Committees, and senior management staff to ensure a complete understanding of Crystal Downs Country Club, its history, culture, and traditions before making any significant changes.
- Act as a steward for the Club's physical assets, ensuring the property and facilities continue to be worthy of national recognition for years to come.
- Implements general policies established by the Board of Directors; directs their administration and execution.
- Understand the financial model, its history for implementation, and the need for adherence by all departments/managers, and clearly understand how Crystal Downs makes its financial projections.
- Focus on the two key elements to long-term success – maintain the culture and earn the respect of the membership and staff
- Create training and further development programs for staff and departments as needed, along with SOP's in areas that lack them.
- Live by a mantra of "Inspire, Train and Retain" with the focus on having long-tenured team members that the membership will continue to grow, know, and have confidence in, mentoring the team, and motivating the department heads to become great coaches and mentors themselves.
- Lead in a way that breeds an environment of true team spirit among the staff that is transparent and inclusive.
- Ensures that a positive and healthy working environment exists throughout the club, one that is free of safety risks and all forms of employee harassment.

CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS

- Should have a minimum of 5 to 7 years of progressive leadership/management experience in an active family-oriented, private member-owned club or similar hospitality environment is desired.
- A natural leader who brings out the best in those around him/her by setting clear goals and expectations, providing timely and appropriate feedback, and who will provide leadership and guidance to the department heads and employees.
- Dignity, confidence, soundness of judgment, and the ability to achieve and maintain credibility and trust with the Board, committees, and members in general.
- Should possess team building skills with experience recruiting, training, guiding, developing, and maintaining staff.
- A verifiable career track that demonstrates a record of tenure and commitment to previous employers, and that career moves were for enhancement of skills and experiences as opposed to 'unplanned' career changes. The Board desires someone that sees this as a dream job to be in for years to come

- Should possess strong general management skills with verifiable strengths in financial performance, quality food and beverage programming, team development, exceptional member/guest service programming, strategic planning, project management, community-related issues and, most importantly, the ability to define and achieve goals and objectives consistently are all critically important in this role.
- Demonstrated success in managing the finances of the overall operations, including capital project management, to remain within budget, while also ensuring overall high levels of satisfaction in terms of service.

EDUCATIONAL AND CERTIFICATION QUALIFICATIONS

- A bachelor's degree with a focus on Hospitality Management or Golf Course Management is highly desirable.
- In lieu of the degree, substantial private club or hospitality experience will be considered.
- Industry certifications such as CCM, CCE, or PGA are encouraged, but not required.

EMPLOYMENT ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION

In compliance with federal law, all persons hired will be required to verify identity and eligibility to work in the United States and to complete the required employment eligibility verification form upon hire.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

Salary is open and commensurate with qualifications and experience. The Club offers an excellent bonus and benefit package including Professional Dues and Education expenses for CMAA and PGA members.

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. Please be sure your image is not present on your resume or cover letter; that should be used on your LinkedIn Profile.

Prepare a thoughtful cover letter addressed to the Crystal Downs search committee/Mike Huget, President and Search Chairman, and clearly articulate your alignment with this role why you want to be considered for this position at this stage of your career, and why Crystal Downs and the Frankfort, MI area will be beneficial to you, your family, your career, and the Club if selected.

You must apply for this role as soon as possible but no later than Friday, December 6th, 2024. Candidate selections will occur mid-December with the first Interviews expected in early January 2025, and the second interviews a short time later. The new candidate should assume his/her role in early/mid/late Month.

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

"Last Name, First Name Resume" &

"Last Name, First Name Cover Letter – Crystal Downs"

(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 Bethany Taylor: bethany@kkandw.com

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