

GENERAL MANAGER/CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER PROFILE: THE COUNTRY CLUB PEPPER PIKE, OH

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

There is an exceptional opportunity available for a new General Manager/Chief Operating Officer (GM/COO) to lead one of the premier clubs in the Upper Midwest and certainly the top club in the greater Cleveland market. The role at The Country Club (referred to locally as "Country") is one of the most respected and significant in the country and the new GM/COO is expected to maintain the traditions established at the club in addition to helping propel the club into the future to benefit the membership as a whole. The club boasts tremendous stability, strong member support, quality amenities and incomparable staff making this is a special environment, and the new leader will be able to help Country continue to enhance its position as one of the finest family and golf centric country clubs in America.

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

THE COUNTRY CLUB OVERVIEW

An important part of Cleveland's history for more than a century, Country is a family centric, full service traditional country club with a wide range of sport and social offerings steeped in rich memories and a timeless tradition of excellence. Founded in 1889, the Club's storied history is unique and important to the development of the game of golf and to the early country club scene in America.

The Club has long been a staple of its member's lives and over the years, the facilities have been improved with additions such as a fitness facility, children's amenities, casual dining, a reimagined pool experience, outdoor terrace dining, skeet shooting and more. There is also a strong desire to preserve the unique history and character of the Club's course, with sensitive renovations such as the recent major golf course project to restore William Flynn's original design. The future of the Club is bright and can be best summed up by its Mission Statement:

"To be a family-oriented country club with first-class facilities and services offering exceptional golf, athletic and social activities consistent with our tradition of excellence."

In 1935, The Country Club's still youthful course was the scene of the National Amateur Tournament, where Lawson Little completed his "little slam," winning both the British and United States Amateur titles in two successive seasons. The course was designed by William Flynn in 1928, and is the same layout that contested the 2012 U.S. Women's Amateur, won by Lydia Ko.

Although Country has a proud history, outstanding facilities and a superb staff, its greatness stems primarily from its membership and the sense of camaraderie and community that is found in abundance at the Club.

A beautiful, meticulously manicured campus, Country features a sweeping drive to its stately granite-faced Philip Small designed clubhouse that is the centerpiece of its many amenities. Beautifully appointed, the clubhouse is home to a wide array of dining options, extraordinary locker rooms, a few overnight accommodation suites, fitness, sitting rooms and administration. The focus on an exceptionally high level of detail---from maintaining the physical plant to service aspects---are focused upon and obsessively covered to ensure high levels of member and staff engagement and satisfaction.

A recently expanded outdoor dining deck overlooks an updated and expansive and significantly upgraded pool complex (\$4.3M), and provides members with a new casual covered outdoor bar area; all of which has gone to generating new levels of engagement and usage, especially for families. Additionally, there are four paddle tennis courts that provide winter enjoyment for members.

Importantly, Country is highly regarded for its food and beverage operations, both culinary and service, and received a nearly unheard of 98% membership satisfaction rating in professionalism of its service staff in its recent survey.

The separate, but adjacent golf shop and cart storage accommodate members' needs as the golf program continues to grow and be enhanced. The large range and practice areas on the opposite side of the clubhouse provide members with many opportunities to work on their game with quality instruction. Plans for additional enhancements are being considered and may include a new paddle facility, updated and expanded fitness facility, golf performance center, bunker renovation, and golf shop renovation.

Clearly, the William Flynn designed golf course is the centerpiece of Country's many outstanding amenities. Its par 72 layout is nearly 7,000 yards from the tips, and provides an outstanding test of golf abilities. Unlike many of today's modern courses, only a few homes can be seen while playing, leaving one to fully enjoy and appreciate the beautiful scenery and background of one of America's finest layouts. The beautiful use of the natural land, a thoughtful routing, wide fairways, landform greens and strategic bunkers all combine to make Country one of Flynn's finest works!

Finally, Country is a nationally recognized Platinum Club of America in the recent 2019-2020 results.

THE COUNTRY CLUB BY THE NUMBERS:

- At present, there are approximately 627 members in all categories
- Initiation Fee - \$45,000 –Full Member
- Annual Dues - \$9,960 – Full Member with no minimum but a \$105 monthly Capital charge
- Annual dues volume: Approximately \$4,400,000
- 18 Holes of William Flynn designed golf supporting approximately 15,000 golf rounds annually
- Tennis: 8 outdoor courts (6 Har-Tru, 2 hard) plus pickleball and paddle tennis
- Aquatics and Fitness: One outdoor swimming pool complex and fitness center
- Annual gross dollar volume: Approximately \$11,500,000.00
- Annual food, beverage, and banquet sales: Approximately \$3,000,000.00
- A la carte 55% vs catering 45%
- Gross annual payroll: Approximately \$5,250,000.00
- The Club uses the JONAS system for POS and accounting systems
- Board of Governors is comprised of 9 members; each serving 3-year terms; Presidents serving two-year terms
- Two overnight guest rooms and one long term rental apartment
- Peak staffing levels: 230 associates in summer
- The Club is organized as a 501(c)(7) and is a not for profit corporation
- Average age of members – 59 years and trending younger

THE COUNTRY CLUB WEB SITE: www.thecountryclub.com

GENERAL MANAGER/CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER POSITION OVERVIEW

As Chief Operating Officer of the Club, the General Manager is responsible for the proper management of all aspects of the Club's activities and supervises, coordinates, and administers the policies of the Club as defined by the Board of Governors, essentially functioning as the "Governor of the brand" of Country. Appropriately, he/she is also responsible for promotion of the Club and the culture of hospitality, friendliness and good will among all members and guests. Being a true "thought partner" with the Board and Committees is critical, as is the desire to be a strong "visionary" to help define and guide discussions and support toward programs, amenities, and other strategies that will allow Country continued excellence in all it does and provides for its members and staff.

To be successful in this role, succeeding a 17+ year tenured, highly regarded retiring General Manager, one must have appropriate and necessary diplomacy skills, but also a thoughtful opinion and recommendations to the Board, who view this role as a partnership to Country's continued long-term success.

Over the years, the Club has developed an especially strong team of both Executive and support staff, with many of the senior team serving in their roles for 10+ years. Consequently, the Board, Committees, and membership in general appreciate and expect a very engaged, approachable, sincere, respectful, and responsible leader who has exceptional "executive presence" and is fully committed to the Club and community. The Club, while having most of the typical committees, has not had an overly active reliance on them, preferring to allow the experts hired and leading departments to "do their jobs" while looking for feedback and keeping them well informed. That historical methodology is expected to continue, as is a bi-monthly board meeting schedule. Clearly, for this to continue, appropriate and necessary trust, responsiveness, and overall "keeping the Board informed with strong communications" must occur and be a natural part of the new GM's style.

The General Manager is a catalyst to focus on protecting the unique "culture" of the Club that upholds strong friendship and the camaraderie of its members. Additionally, clear direction and attention must be given to membership maintenance and growth, which has increased in the past five years, and providing clearly defined goals and objectives to the Team, mentoring, and supporting them, but also holding them accountable to the agreed upon objectives. Leading one of *THE* top clubs in the country, the General Manager of The Country Club is expected to be an executive capable of effectively dealing with a wide variety of constituencies.

EMPHASIZED KEY CHARACTERISTICS

As noted, a key requirement is to be able to work proactively with the Board and Club Committees, as appropriate, help them to keep focused on key goals and objectives that benefit the long-term well-being of Country.

Outstanding communication skills are necessary for this role and to be successful at Country. As the primary communicator of much of the information at the Club, proven outstanding verbal and written skills are absolutely critical, as is a keen ability to "listen," "engage," "build trust" and "be highly approachable."

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

- Must be a visionary and mission oriented; anticipating how the Club continues to evolve is important, as is being actively 'networked' in the industry to the point of being on the forefront of trends in clubs. Being strategic in focus and able to gain support and execute approved plans and directions, sometimes imploring the Board to make actionable decisions, with a natural ability to analyze and communicate the reasons behind those.
- Recognizing the need for the continuation of an "employer of choice" approach to attracting, retaining, and developing staff at every level within the greater Country organization.
- Having exceptional financial acumen and ability to continue the very positive operational results – having enjoyed surpluses in the past five years.
- Recognizing and valuing the Club's traditions and having the ability to implement change while maintaining the Club's most valued traditions and culture.

INITIAL PRIORITIES OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

Anticipating that the new GM will commence his/her duties just prior to the start of the summer season, plans for activities and events will be fully formed going into 'season', thereby letting the new GM focus on the following:

- Learn the culture of Country by listening (a lot), being approachable, meeting with the Board, Committees, Executive staff, members, and associates as often as possible.
- Focus on the overall strategic plan of Country, continuing to consider the overall "vision" of the Club, the demographics of membership and, working with the Board and Committees, work to update the plan, and communicate efforts and recommendations to the membership.
- Immerse into the budget, the Club's financial history and gaining full appreciation of how Country has functioned, evolved over the years, and administers to its defined needs and goals.
- Unlike most clubs, "there is nothing broken at present at Country," so the "need to fix something is not there, nor is the desire to make any wholesale changes."

- Examine current procedures and status of the facilities, ensuring that appropriate and necessary plans and anticipation is in place to maintain this 100+ year old building, both in on-going maintenance and housekeeping, and in longer term repairs and maintenance.

DESIRED CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS

- A minimum of 7 - 10 years of progressive leadership/management experience in a private member-owned country club with multi-dimensional operations. Consideration will be given to current Assistant General Managers, but only from larger, well-recognized clubs while working under a strong 'mentor' GM.
- Strong history of success and keen understanding of quality food & beverage operations, including revenue growth, training, innovation and creativity, and strong service culture development.
- Current or prior significant project management experience is very important as this role is intimately involved in the creation of, design, planning and execution of all such projects at Country.
- A verifiable history of having developed "stars" in his/her organization, leading to their taking on more significant roles within the club or moving to the next opportunity outside of it (Country members are strongly supportive of and enjoy seeing others develop, even if it means moving on to another club or role).
- Proven and verifiable leadership qualities with a demonstrated ability to direct, coordinate and control all aspects of a busy, full service, country club community with up to 230 staff members seasonally.
- Verifiable strength in strategic planning and working closely with boards, committees, local municipalities, and other key contributors to developing, executing, and updating strategies to success and relevancy.
- Keen understanding of quality in all aspects of the club (membership and related activities) and club operations (F & B, athletics, programming, etc.), as well as demonstrable success in leading clubs to continued relevancy and successfully managing evolving membership demographics.
- Technologically proficient and recognizing best practices use of technology to improve 'high touch' service delivery to members, as well as to more effectively manage and lead operations.
- A verifiable motivator and leader who can bring out the best in others by setting clear goals and expectations, holding them accountable for outcomes, by providing consistent feedback, support and through respectful interaction and professionalism.
- A true, confident, diplomatic, and competent club industry professional with exceptional "executive presence," who recognizes the importance of accountability, and who has a strong history of success in working with member boards and committees.

EDUCATIONAL AND CERTIFICATION QUALIFICATIONS

- A Bachelor's Degree from a four-year university or college is highly desirable, preferably in Hospitality Management.
- From the club industry, Certified Club Manager (CCM) designation is desired, but not required. If without such designation, a commitment to on-going and lifelong learning and strong networking capabilities is critical. If outside of the traditional CMAA background, having verifiable professional development that clearly provides confidence in one's ability to lead one of the top clubs in the country.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

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

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 Sam Knezevic, Search Chairman and The Country Club Search Committee, and clearly articulate why you want to be considered for this position at this stage of your career and why The Country Club and the Greater Cleveland area will be beneficial to both you and the Club if selected.

You must apply for this role as soon as possible but no later than Monday, January 13, 2020. Interviews are currently scheduled for early February with second interviews occurring a short time later. The new GM/COO should assume his/her role in late April or early May.

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

“Last Name, First Name - Resume” &

“Last Name, First Name - Cover Letter – COUNTRY”

(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

Lead Search Executive:

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