

# KOPPLIN KUEBLER & WALLACE

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## **GENERAL MANAGER PROFILE: WILLOWBEND COUNTRY CLUB MASHPEE, MA**

### **THE GENERAL MANAGER OPPORTUNITY AT WILLOWBEND COUNTRY CLUB**

One of Cape Cod's most desirable club communities, Willowbend Country Club is an exceptional opportunity for a proactive, decisive "coach-like" leader who has a history of creating high-performing teams, being on the forefront of trends and leading in a proactive, mentoring, and energized manner. Defaulting to a high level of member and staff engagement, being capable of creating and managing process and accountabilities, and developing a training center-like operation is important to this role. Willowbend is the 'flagship' of the current five clubs in the Southworth portfolio and Ownership is desirous of it being the standard to which the others are measured. Making it a 'model' of process and procedure, and for member and staff experience is anticipated.

Ideally, this role is for a slightly more seasoned leader who has honed his/her skills in overall leadership, mentoring, process and procedural development, team performance management and who possesses a strong entrepreneurial style and "hospitality gene!"

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

### **ABOUT WILLOWBEND COUNTRY CLUB AND COMMUNITY**

Willowbend has been one of Cape Cod's and New England's premier communities since 1994. The 440 acres, situated just over the Bourne Bridge alongside Shoestring Bay, contain over 300 single-family dwellings, lots for custom homes, and guest villas. The centerpieces of the private community -- with four of its five neighborhoods gated -- are the 27-hole championship golf course, the tennis stadium and eight Har-Tru courts with adjoining pickleball courts, the fitness facility, the Olympic-sized swimming pool and cabanas, and the spacious 46,000-square-foot clubhouse, which hosts functions for up to 300 people. The value and attractiveness of Willowbend have earned it a spot in Travel & Leisure's "Top 100 Communities in America."

Willowbend's rise to prominence started slowly in 1987 when Willowbend Country Club opened its 18 holes for business but soon went bankrupt. Paul Fireman, founder and CEO of Reebok International, bought the golf course at auction in 1991, and David Southworth, a hotelier turned real estate developer, became Fireman's partner and the club's first GM. Southworth's first act was to complete the clubhouse and then, in 1992, he and Fireman publicized the venue with the Willowbend Children's Charity Pro-Am, which for 14 years attracted PGA Tour pros like Nick Faldo, Greg Norman, Gary Player and Tom Watson and was one of New England's most popular events. In 2003, he oversaw the construction of The Bay golf course, a new nine holes, which complemented The Bog and The Bend.

The 27 holes are always immaculately groomed, and the bentgrass greens, are some of the best in New England. The nines, which have surprising elevation from tees and greens, wind their ways through the scenic Cape Cod countryside: towering hardwoods and pines, working cranberry bogs, innumerable water hazards, ubiquitous marshland and natural land slopes. The six sets of tees can appease every golfer's power supply, and several forced carries helps determine which set is best for each skill level. The course fits the phrase "sneaky hard but fair."

Willowbend is a family-friendly club that offers lots of events and activities for children and adults alike. Additionally, Willowbend fosters a casual, laid-back atmosphere -- "Cape Cod casual" because so many members and residents have crossed the bridge to unwind and relax with their families. The 46,000 sq ft clubhouse enjoys dramatic views of the course and cranberry bogs and has a great lawn for hosting member events and wedding ceremonies.

The Grill Room was recently renovated and provides upscale casual dining and is adjacent to a large covered outdoor patio, the most popular dining area all summer. The Grand Ballroom also overlooks the course and provides space, both indoor and outdoor, to accommodate over 300 guests and is a popular wedding and event venue. Willowbend, as a for profit operation, hosts several golf outings, corporate events, and other celebrations.

Health and rejuvenation are an important part of the Willowbend lifestyle, and nowhere is this more evident than in the club's extensive fitness and wellness, facilities, where a professional team of trainers, instructors, massage therapists, and physical therapists work to help members meet their personal health and fitness goals. Additionally, racquet sports are not an afterthought — they're a popular and integral part of club life for many members. With a full calendar of events and numerous kinds of surfaces and courts (including the region's only tennis stadium), as well as pickleball courts, members of all ages can enjoy the racquet sport of their choice.

The Club also has a Villa program with ten guest suites available to members and guests, providing multiple configurations to accommodate individuals as well as families, and with full amenities and housekeeping services.

Willowbend members enjoy reciprocal privileges at all Southworth clubs, including The Abaco Club at Winding Bay in the Bahamas, Machrihanish Dunes in Scotland, Creighton Farms outside of Washington, DC and Renaissance Golf Club in Haverhill, MA.

#### **WILLOWBEND COUNTRY CLUB BY THE NUMBERS**

- At present, there are approximately: 450 Members in all membership types.
- Initiation Fee for 2022 - \$60,000
- Annual Dues for 2022 – \$16,000
- 27 holes of golf supports nearly 22,000 rounds
- Annual Gross Volume of all revenues – approximately \$13.1M
- Annual Dues Volume – approximately \$5.5M
- Food and beverage volume: approximately \$2.7M with approximately 55% from ala carte dining and 45% from banquets/catering
- There are approximately 130 FTE in-season with approximately 100 them seasonal
- There are no committees, but there is an Advisory Board of members
- This role reports to the VP of Operations and the Ownership of Southworth Development
- The Club is organized as a for-profit corporation
- The Club uses JONAS for POS and Accounting

**WILLOWBEND COUNTRY CLUB WEB SITE:** [www.willowbendcapecod.com](http://www.willowbendcapecod.com)

#### **GENERAL MANAGER POSITION OVERVIEW**

Ownership desires a GM who as a strong leader/coach, working very closely with the VP of Operations and senior executive team at Southworth. The GM will be looked upon as the “face” of Willowbend and is a primary visionary to ensure that Willowbend consistently executes at an exceptionally high-level culture of positive, personalized service. This “lead by example” GM will be coming into a role and Club that is not broken and following a long tenured manager but will continue to look to enhance and elevate the overall membership and staff experience, and to be an “employer of choice” within a highly competitive Cape Cod hospitality community.

The new GM will work closely with the Southworth executive team to identify and execute opportunities to enhance consistency of process and experience, and will set clear accountabilities for the leadership team, many of whom have been part of the Willowbend “family” for many years. Having a strong and verifiable history of performance management and accountability system, innovative technology installation and other processes to leverage high tech to improve ‘high touch’ with members is important. All of this being done in a highly respectful, fair, diplomatic, and nurturing manner.

Significant to the new GM's success is the ability to understand the unique nature, likely through current or previous first-hand experience, of residential community clubs and the significant usage and relationships that develop in club communities. Certainly, a key to his/her success is putting members first, and recognizing that the foundation of staff support, mentorship, clear direction and being present and approachable in his/her natural and engaging style. Possessing a strong decision-making style and representing a naturally strong hospitality or 'servant's heart' is critical to this strong relationship driven environment.

The ability to manage expectations at a high level of dynamic leadership and reasoning is critically important, but a fair amount of that is accomplished simply by being present, approachable, accessible, diplomatic, and by having the necessary "gravitas" to be viewed with confidence by all constituencies. High EQ is as important as any experience and more tangible competency in the successful in new GM.

Paying attention to the details of maintenance, SOPs, overall member experience, staff culture and other key areas of success is critical. Clearly, outstanding communication skills, especially the demonstrated ability to listen and respectfully respond is essential to success at Willowbend.

As with many club communities during COVID, Willowbend has experienced a large turnover of membership over the past few years and being able to help evolve the culture and vision of the Club as it further establishes and cements its role as "*the*" preeminent active lifestyle club and community on the Cape.

Key attributes, characteristics, experiences, and style of the successful new leader include:

- Being a naturally "positive, energized, aspirational" leader who understands the dynamics of a family-oriented club, and who can and has effectively led evolving, diverse age demographics to harmonious and supportive enjoyment of their club.
- Possess a deep knowledge in active club operations, with especially strong F & B skills as well as strong financial acumen, an appreciation of modern performance management systems and technology.
- Possessive of a strong record of selecting and developing talent, and helping departmental leaders continuously develop themselves and their respective staffs in a desire to create a culture of continuous evolution to excellence in execution and delivery. Active mentoring and developing the senior leadership team is important.
- Financially astute and able to effectively guide a busy, for profit, \$13.0+M operation, likely to increase in overall revenues over the next several years.
- Naturally outgoing, conversant, respectful, and diplomatic, but able to say no when appropriate without alienating members or staff while doing so. Being respectfully confident and connected to the membership and team is critical, as is working closely with Southworth executives to consistently evaluate operations and outcomes.
- Having experience and skills in creating innovative events and driving top line growth, as well as 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, communities, and economic cycles.

#### **INITIAL PRIORITIES OF THE NEW GENERAL MANAGER**

- Meet and sincerely interact with and engage as many members as possible, "*be present!*" Build trust whenever and wherever possible, schedule interactive times and follow up on details. Be involved, engaged and approachable to both members and staff, and truly get to know Southworth executive team members and the overall vision for Willowbend as the 'flagship' property in the portfolio.
- Work closely with the VP of Operations to develop and refine "process and procedures" along with establishing targeted goals for the ensuing year, communication protocols and to truly learn and understand the Southworth culture and expectations. "Tightening up" necessary areas of operations, which are functionally well at present, is important, and is expected to be done through a thoughtful review of protocols and memorializing standards.
- Spend time with the team, especially senior staff in all areas of operations and at the multiple venues, getting to know them, evaluating their abilities, and aspirations, ensuring that they and their respective teams have clear expectations and accountabilities in place.

- Work closely with the F & B team to ensure that an appropriate foundation of success is in, both in the culinary and service execution sides of the operation. F & B operations are of utmost importance to the membership and meeting a majority of members' expectations in this area is a critical success factor.
- Work closely with the Chief People Officer to further develop and refine the HR recruitment strategy for Willowbend, as well as the HR role that will soon be in place at the Club.
- After learning the Club, current practices, and expectations, develop a strong 'sales' priority to complete full golf memberships, and to have in place a dynamic process for events, celebrations, outings and corporate retreat opportunities for top line growth.

### **CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS**

Ideally, 7 - 10 years of progressive leadership/management experience, preferably in a GM, COO or Executive Director role in a lifestyle centric, private member-owned country club with multi-dimensional operations, or leading hospitality operations outside of the club industry in a similar quality. True 'rising stars' from the club industry who have been verifiably well-mentored, will also be considered, especially those coming for 'for profit' environments.

### **EDUCATIONAL AND CERTIFICATION QUALIFICATIONS**

A Bachelor's Degree from a four-year university or college is desirable, preferably in Hospitality Management. In lieu of the degree, substantial hospitality experience will be considered. Credentials from the hospitality industry, recognizing on-going involvement and commitment to lifelong personal and professional development are desired.

### **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.

### **CLUB COVID REQUIREMENTS**

This club does not require staff to be fully vaccinated as a provision of employment and does follow all federal and state mandates.

### **SALARY AND BENEFITS**

Salary is open and commensurate with qualifications and experience. The Club, 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. 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 Willowbend Search Committee** and clearly articulate why you want to be considered for this position at this stage of your career and why Willowbend and the Cape area of Massachusetts 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 October 10, 2022. Candidate selections will occur in later that month with first Interviews expected in November and second interviews a short time later. The new candidate should assume his/her role in late 2022 or early 2023.***

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

"Last Name, First Name Resume"

"Last Name, First Name Cover Letter - Willowbend"

(These documents should be in Word or PDF format)

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

If you have any questions, please email Patty Sprinkle at [patty@kkandw.com](mailto:patty@kkandw.com)

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