

Board Agrees to Extended Resource Officer Contract

By Anna Lillian Moser

The Yorktown Town Board has agreed to an extended contract providing for a school resource officer at four different schools within the Yorktown and Lakeland school districts, but the Town of Cortlandt has yet to sign a similar contract with the Yorktown Police Department.

The contract would run until June 30, 2011, the end of the 2010-2011 school year for both districts.

A new contract would cancel out the original pact, which was first signed in January 2008. The contract provides for one police officer at Mildred E. Strang Middle School, Yorktown High School, Lakeland High School and Copper Beech Middle School.

For three of the aforementioned schools, payment of the police officers' salaries are split, with the town paying for half of an officer's salary, and the

respective school district paying the other half. The school resource officer's salary at Copper Beech Middle School, however, is split three ways between the Lakeland School District, Yorktown and the Town of Cortlandt.

Police Chief Daniel McMahon said the projected cost for one school resource officer in 2011 is \$166,194, including salary and benefits. On the payment scale, the officers are considered Grade 5 employees, which means they are considered top paid police officers.

Currently, the Cortlandt Town Board has chosen not to sign the extended contract, which would require the municipality to pay \$38,000. An August 14, 2009, letter to McMahon from Cortlandt Town Attorney Thomas Wood stated "Please be advised that the town board choose not to extend the current contract with respect to the school resource officer. The Board feels that this

contract runs through 2010, and that they will evaluate it later in the year or next year."

McMahon said the municipality has still not signed the new contract.

"They don't say they don't want to continue, but at the same time they don't want to sign it," McMahon said during a March 23 town board work session.

Yorktown board members said they were concerned if Cortlandt opted out of the program.

"We can't afford it if they don't do it," Supervisor Susan Siegel said.

McMahon said if Cortlandt chose not

to participate, the town or school district would have to absorb the \$38,000 cost. In either case, McMahon said, it would cost taxpayer money.

"Then the residents are paying even more," he said.

Cortlandt Supervisor Linda Puglisi said she supports the position, but she and the town board have yet to discuss the matter because they believed they had time to make a decision prior to the contract expiring.

"There was no need to in my mind," Puglisi said. "We haven't rendered a decision yet because we still have time."

Golf Leagues: Catching On For Good Reason

By Al Morales

Golf leagues offer a host of benefits to golf lovers, leading to their growing popularity in recent years. Golfers in a workplace or community are frequently itching to get out and play more often, but lack an easy way to connect with players of similar ability. Leagues offer this opportunity.

The way a golf league works is simple. An administrator organizes the teams and manages all of the details, including scheduling, communication and posting results, which typically include individual and team standings. The league is split into divisions based on handicap, giving all golfers a chance at friendly competition. Often, games are played on a number of different and challenging courses, presenting the player an opportunity to try a variety of courses in their vicinity. Leagues generally end a season with championships and awards, while pre-season scrambles or special events, such as fundraisers or off-season golf trips, augment the experience.

Leagues can be organized for individuals, corporations, restaurants, professional associations, or small businesses such as accounting firms or law practices.

Research has shown that employers who sponsor teams have observed a variety of benefits. When built around a workplace, a golf league provides opportunities for teambuilding and meeting new co-workers. Where else can co-workers go to share three or four hours together, playing, talking, and walking? Golf requires commitment and focus, qualities any employer would like to see developed and carried into the work environment. And good sportsmanship builds trust and respect among all levels of employees. After establishing leagues, some employers

have reported improved morale, higher productivity and decreased absenteeism.

For individuals, a golf league can be beneficial as it can help overcome frequent barriers to play. Finding partners of similar ability, and a schedule that works for all, can be challenging. While friends, family members and colleagues may be golfers, they also may play primarily at their own private club or may have their own foursome. A golf league provides an ideal solution that delegates the task of matching player ability and scheduling time on the course.

The wellness benefits of a golf league should also not be underestimated. League play requires regular exercise, which can reduce stress and improve fitness levels. Research shows walking a typical 18-hole course is the equivalent of 10,000 to 11,000 steps -- about 5 miles. Golfers who drive carts burn around 200 to 400 calories per 18 holes, while walkers can burn 700 to 1000 calories.

Leagues are most successful when they emphasize camaraderie, inclusiveness and teamwork over the competitive aspect. Participants find that leagues create chances to forge new friendships, and get regular exercise and fresh air. They also enjoy taking their love of the game into a competitive arena. Golf is the ideal way to move people from a structured environment to a relaxed atmosphere with others who share their passion. Peaked your interest? Take some time early this season to explore options for golf leagues in your area.

Al Morales is president of the Yorkville Sports Association, and has organized sports leagues in the New York tri-state area for over 30 years. For information, visit www.ysaleagues.com.

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