

# Audubon Society applauds island golf course for environmental achievements

By Dotti Farrington

The Audubon Society of Rhode Island has chosen the Jamestown Department of Public Works and the Jamestown Golf Course as the Business of the Year. The award is given annually to organizations whose efforts advance the society's mission of environmental advocacy, conservation and education.

The selection was announced Tuesday at the Town Council meeting. Council President David Long and other councilors said the award was prestigious, notable and unique. The society itself classifies its honor as prestigious.

The award will be presented at the society's 109th annual meeting Oct. 22 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Warwick. Scheduled to accept the award for the town are Steven Goslee, director of the town's public works department, and Joseph Mistowski, golf course lessee and manager.

Charlotte Sornborger, society president, praised the town and its representatives "for your support and assistance in advancing a clean and healthier environment and furthering the preservation and conservation of our national heritage for the citizens of Rhode Island."

Town Administrator Bruce Keiser told councilors of the distinctive process used by the society to choose its honorees each year. He said the society researches and investigates the practices of many potential candidates for the award to assure itself of the worthiness of projects and of recipients. Keiser suggested the award's going to a municipality was unusual if not actually unprecedented, and that

the society seeks out candidates rather than respond to applications for the award.

The society chose the town golf course based on the water conservation practice of using recycled wastewater for irrigation purposes at the golf course. The practice was described as both promising and innovative. The system that is about two years old is due for improvements for which funding was approved by councilors at the Tuesday meeting. The system also is due to be extended to provide watering the town's ball fields at the campus of the island's Melrose and Lawn Avenue schools.

### Costs

Town officials were working on an equitable plan to provide wastewater to irrigate the town golf course that it leases out to be run as a private enterprise.

The town had been providing the wastewater from the sewer treatment plant but determined earlier this year that it must install a special filter to continue the system in compliance with relevant regulations.

Councilors this week approved \$303,750 to be paid from the town's golf course fund of about \$600,000 that is derived from proceeds of the lease arrangements. About half the new filter cost will be recovered as part of the lease agreement with the course operator over coming years. The money will be used to install the filter as the town sewage treatment plant undergoes major renovation in the coming year. Costs of the renovation will be billed to residents who use the town sewer system, but the sewer bond does not include funds

for the special filter.

The town administrator said that the costs of irrigation should be paid directly by the golf course operator; and that the town and the operator should divide the costs of the special filter because the system is being extended for the ball field use.

Town Councilors several weeks ago directed its staff to conduct talks with the course operator about the costs and to make whatever accounting adjustments are necessary to remove the costs from the sewer department which is operated as an enterprise account.

Councilors this week reassured themselves that the wastewater use was safe in view of the fact that it not only is used for the public golf course but also will be extended for fields used by children in town ball leagues.

### Golf evolution

The town has been leasing the golfing premises to the New England Golf Course Management, doing business as the Jamestown Golf and Country Club, and also known as the Caddy Shack that is located within the clubhouse building. Principal in the corporation is Joseph Mistowski as president whose home is on property he owns adjacent to the golf course. The current lease, through March 2007 represents extension of an original 2002 lease that provided for a base rent of \$90,000 a year plus additional rent of 10 percent

of all green fees, including season passes and punch cards, plus golf cart rental fees. The lease terms also specify capital improvements for which the golf company is responsible.

Councilor William Kelly observed that Mistowski, in another environmentally distinctive action, recently planted nine acres of the course with native grasses and planted 45 trees in coordination with the town tree program operators. He commented that the actions "add value to the town property."

The present golf clubhouse was established in 1901 on the Littlefield-Clarke farm, on the south side of the course and moved about 1951 to its present location on Conanicus Avenue. The town purchased it in 1986. The course contains 74.36 acres, assessed at \$1.3 million, and the clubhouse consists of 9,136 square feet assessed at \$950,000.

The town originally leased out part of the clubhouse for private business use and in the past few years used it for some town recreation programs. The town just started using part of the clubhouse as its temporary Town Hall. A new town hall complex is to be built at its historic location on Narragansett Avenue, by renovating the original Town Hall and combining it with a new major, two story structure over the coming year.

## Groundbreaking ceremony to be held for Town Hall

By Dotti Farrington

The groundbreaking for the new town hall complex will be conducted the week of Oct. 23 on a day yet to be announced, Town Administrator Bruce Keiser advised the Town Council Tuesday. He said the tentative date of Oct. 16 for the construction ceremonies was being delayed.

Last month, the Town Council awarded a \$2,960,111 contract for the new town hall complex to Pezzuco Construction of Cranston, with construction to start this month and be completed in 10 months at the existing Town Hall site on Narragansett Avenue. Voters approved a maximum of \$3 million for the project.

Plans for the construction were prepared by Jamestown architect William Burgin.

The town received four bids in June, all over budget, for the town hall work. The bids ranged from \$3.4 million to \$4.3 million. Rules on bidding procedure enabled the town to negotiate costs with the three lowest bidders.

Pezzuco was established in 1987 as a general contractor. Richard Pezzuco is president and Ronald Pezzuco is vice president and treasurer of the corporation. The two Pezzucos are also officers of Pezzuco Brothers Development, started in 1995 for residential work.

Town employees moved their operations from Narragansett Avenue two weeks ago to temporary quarters at the Town-owned golf course's former country club building across from the police station. They were hailed for the speed and efficiency of the move.



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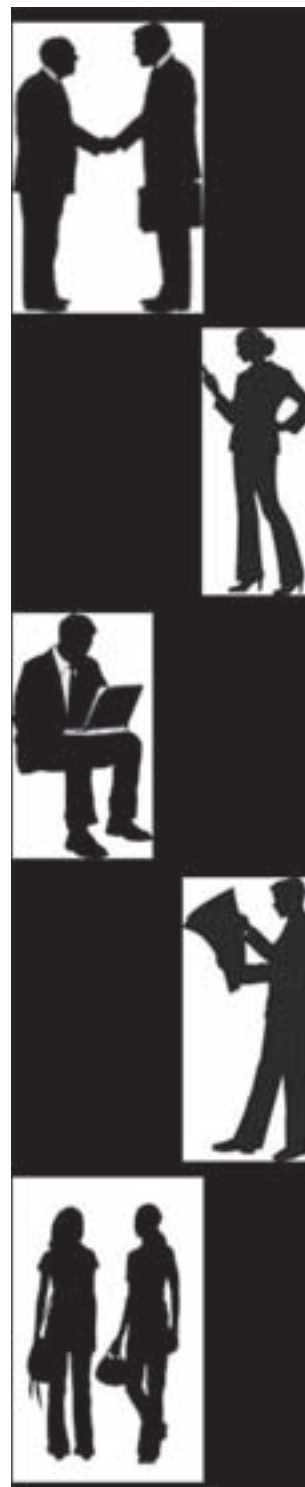
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