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620 W. Montrose Street

July 1, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter of reference from two perspectives. Firstly, as a Member of the City of Clermont's Planning Commission. And secondly, as the President & CEO of the South Lake Chamber of Commerce.

As a Member of the City of Clermont's Planning Commission, in early 2022 I had a firsthand view after Jimmy Stewart purchased a failing golf course facility in Clermont (now Clermont National), submit a vision and plans to revitalize and restore this Clermont golf course facility which the Planning Commission was so impressed with that we approved Jimmy's plans unanimously in a 7-0 vote! I then watched Jimmy, and his partner John Fitzgibbon (former Universal Studio's Sr Director of Attraction Development) follow through, construct and implement these plans, during a very trying time in the middle of Covid, into today's renowned Clermont National Golf Course. Besides renovating the golf course and upgrading the restaurant facilities, Jimmy added a state-of-the-art golf course driving range. The unique design and construction utilized ground mounted illumination, it allowed our Planning Commission to approve operations until 11 pm as light pollution and intrusion for any nearby homeowners or wildlife was eliminated. Jimmy and John followed through on plans promised, planned, and constructed while documenting the complete transformation process on-line with monthly updates and videos for the public to see over the year it took to transform this project from plans to reality. Again, this is something that we do not see very often on Planning Commission where Jimmy and John were meticulous in keeping the community updated throughout the project. This, we appreciated very much as it answered any questions the public had making our job on Planning Commission and the Planning Department's job that much easier (<https://www.clermontnational.com/updates>).

Secondly, as President & CEO of the South Lake County Chamber of Commerce, encompassing South Lake county, I now get to enjoy and utilize the golf course, as Jimmy's and John's vision, in the space of less than 2 years has become a reality while these additional revenue centers have transformed a failing Clermont golf course into today's successful Clermont National Golf Course, frequented by Clermont residents of all ages, becoming a destination gathering place for individuals, families, service clubs, events of all kinds, and recognized by our Chamber as the Business of the Year for 2024. This has become an amazing amenity for our community. (<https://www.clermontnational.com/>).

For any other City struggling with their golf operations, I would recommend without hesitation Jimmy Stewart, John Fitzgibbon, Rick Stewart, and their team. They are credible partners, completing their plans while still maintaining access and keeping rates reasonable for City Residents.

Please contact me at davidc@southlakechamber-fl.com or Tel: 518-965-1660, if I can answer any other questions you might have.

Sincerely,

President & CEO
South Lake Chamber of Commerce