



Board of Directors Meeting
October 27, 2011
SouthWood Golf Club
Tallahassee, FL

Attendees:

Mr. Louie Wainwright
Mr. Tom Rush
Mr. Dave Mecusker
Ms. Gail Reddick
Mr. Jim Williams
Mr. Dick Pearce

Absent:

Ms. Mary Ellen Dayan-Varnum
Ms. Betty Bennett
Mr. Jason Clinger

Special Guest:

Dr. Latoya Lane

Staff:

Mr. Chris Akins
Ms. Sheri Logue
Ms. Sheila Logue

Meeting was called to order by Mr. Wainwright at 3:00 p.m.

Mr. Williams gave the invocation. Mr. Rush established a quorum.

Mr. Wainwright thanked the board for coming together to meet and for traveling from different parts of the state to be with us today. He advised that Secretary Tucker had hoped to join us but he is in Tampa on Department business.

Dr. Latoya Lane, Director of Re-Entry was introduced to speak about the current trend toward re-entry and the importance of Corrections changing in order to stop the revolving door of offenders returning to prison. Re-entry starts on day one of their incarceration. There are different modules the offenders go through from Getting Ready,

Going Home and Staying Home. Services offered include GED education, substance abuse treatment, job training. 15 additional GED programs have been started since July. Two locations have recently been converted to faith and character based facilities, Hernando and Wakulla Annex. Volunteers make these programs successful with more than 46,000 volunteers in DC's database. Dr. Lane presented in detail the Re-entry Initiative. There is even a focus on helping veterans through an American Legion post inside each institution.

One obstacle they face includes the need for substance abuse treatment. Last year 84% of those released needed substance abuse treatment and did not receive it. Currently 64% of those incarcerated are in need of substance abuse treatment and 140 new beds have been added recently.

There are four re-entry facilities. Each facility is linked to a portal that works along with Community Corrections and the local Sheriff's Department to provide services necessary for successful re-entry. Drivers licenses, birth certificates, social security information. Offenders are transported at release to the portal and met by family members there, re-entry services and job placement are offered before they leave. This immediate connection to their probation officer and community corrections has been invaluable.

Many benefits have been added without adding to the Dept. budget. For example, discount cards for health care have been used by many upon release cutting prescription and medical costs. These cards are free and available to anyone and 2,000 have been used since the program's inception.

Mr. Wainwright asked if it was true and if it was working? Dr. Lane said yes, "We are doing more with less and the focus is re-entry and helping them stay out of prison." Ms. Reddick added that in Hillsborough County she is near the re-entry portal and has experienced firsthand how the immediate services impact offenders upon release. She recently had an inmate who wanted to be homeless upon release and after going through the portal he changed his mind and accepted services that in the long run will help him avoid coming back to prison. Mr. Pearce added that Community Corrections has been doing re-entry for years, it's what they do. But to have that process start earlier in the incarceration is definitely a benefit. Offenders who really want to change begin that process early which allows them a better chance upon release.

Mr. Williams commented that he was on the Ex-offender Task Force commissioned by Governor Bush and that many of the things being put in place were recommended through that task force in 2006. Good to see that the suggestions are being implemented.

Mr. Wainwright asked Dr. Lane if she knew when the Re-entry Center in Quincy was set

to open and who would be running it. It is set for October 2012 completion and is on the grounds of Tallahassee Community College but she would have to check into who will actually be running the facility.

The Financial Report was given by Mr. Dave Mecusker. Financially we are in good standing. From the budget year to date report you'll notice we are on schedule however expenses outweigh income for the first 3 months of the year. Ms. Logue commented that expenses for the Employee Assistance program account for this imbalance and while we have plenty in reserve in our money market and certificates of deposit the need is certainly outweighing the income coming in from membership. The need through this program is higher than it has ever been. We will keep a close eye on funding in the coming months and advise the board if the need continues to outweigh income. We may need to reduce that amount given for circumstances.

The audit which was previously emailed was distributed and discussed. The comment from the auditors for the board and staff to be more involved in writing the financial statements is a standard finding for organizations our size. Basically their recommendation is that we have an accountant on staff to write the financial statements, however due to staff size and budget restraints this is just not feasible. Our response letter that is included in the audit points out this limitation.

Our net assets increased in FY 2010-11 and our fund balance is fine. Mr. Mecusker asked if there were any questions about the financial report. There was a motion by Mr. Williams, seconded by Mr. Rush to approve the budget. Unanimously passed.

Membership Report

Mr. Williams reported that it was our best year yet for membership recruitment. Our travel and meeting to Pahokee, FL in February proved to be beneficial and we are noticing an increase in membership as well as requests for Employee Assistance from Region IV or the Southern Region. We have lost membership due to the turnover in employees however we remain near 80% membership.

Privatization is something we need to keep a close eye on as it could affect 5,600 of our current employees and losing this number of members would threaten the level of assistance we are able to provide to employees in need. The Bill for privatization will be raised again, either in a special session or in the legislature in March and April. If it passes it will be implemented July 1st.

The concern we have is 14-18 institutions would be privatized leaving us with the question of how to maintain membership and benefits for these employees who will still

be doing Dept. of Corrections work but through a contracted company. Depending on which company wins the bid process, some like CCA, already have an employee benefit organization similar to the Corrections Foundation and will likely not want to extend our membership to their employees. It will depend a lot on who gets the bid and what their employee perks are. Mr. Williams recommended that we monitor the situation and readdress it in the spring.

Mr. Mecusker noted that the challenge will be holding on to membership in South Florida given the uncertainty of job security. We will be promoting membership again in February and March and we know change is coming and we don't want to be caught unprepared.

Ms. McNaughton recommended that we weigh the pros and cons of extending membership to contract employees. Consider the obstacles and benefits. We would have to amend the bylaws to incorporate benefits to those working for the benefit of Corrections to include contractors but our statute is open to interpretation and would accommodate a change to our Bylaws.

Mr. Akins noted that one stipulation would be that the private company allows payroll deduction for Corrections Foundation membership so that this change would not become an administrative burden. He added that currently more funds flow back to Regions III and IV than come in through membership but we are facing the loss of 5,600 members or roughly \$155,000 a year in membership dues should privatization go through and these members not be given the option to remain members of the Corrections Foundation.

Mr. Mecusker asked Dr. Lane how they foresee privatization impacting re-entry efforts. She noted that re-entry programs will remain whether the institutions are run by DC or a private company and that DC personnel will monitor those re-entry programs. There will be DC oversight over programs at the private prisons for consistency. Mr. Mecusker recommended that we develop a plan now.

A recommendation to postpone any board action on expanding membership to contract employees was made. We will wait until more is known and watch this situation closely.

Ms. Reddick asked for clarification on an employee crisis in her circuit. An employees' two- year old drowned and staff were wondering if assistance could be received from the Corrections Foundation. Mr. Mecusker noted that as cold as it sounds we are not an insurance program and the EAP program is not available for funeral or death related expenses. However if the family experienced life flight, emergency transport or other medical expenses we could consider the request based on that information.

Regional Reports

Ms. Reddick noted that staff in Circuit 13 is very supportive and they continue to push membership. When the 3% contribution to retirement was implemented a lot of staff wanted to pull their membership. It was important to make it clear that this legislative change had nothing to do with the Corrections Foundation and that our services have remained steady in the face of all of the change.

Mr. Pearce commented that the Northern Region of Community Corrections currently has an 85% participation rate. The DVD of the Corrections Foundation is presented at orientation and this seems to help educate new recruits and keep membership levels steady.

Program Report

Ms. Sheri Logue reported on the **Employee Assistance Program** noting that currently our expenses outweigh our income in this area. We are serving more DC employees than ever before through the EAP program. To date we have assisted 199 employees with \$242,500 and are receiving nearly 30 requests a week which is almost double compared to last year. We will watch this trend closely and review by December to decide if a change needs to be made so that we can balance the need vs. the availability of funds.

Chaplaincy

The Corrections Foundation serves as the fiduciary for private donations which allow for the purchase of literature, equipment, supplies, and curriculum for several institutional chaplaincy programs in the state including Dade CI, SFRC, Cross City CI, Okaloosa CI and Hernando CI. As the non-profit organization to the Florida Department of Corrections we are in a position to accept donations that the Department could not accept as a standalone state agency. We have coordinated the building and repair of chapels, baptistry's, purchased band equipment, literature and fulfilled other needs as set forth by donors to the Chaplaincy programs. One important goal of our fiduciary role is to assist in providing programming that promotes the safety of officers by lessening idle time of offenders.

Inspector General's Office K-9 Unit

A recent donation of \$20,000 from the Animal Welfare Foundation in Winter Garden has allowed for continued support of the Inspector General's Office K-9 unit. The Foundation is serving as the fiduciary of the donation and has purchased items to enhance the care and training of the dogs in DC's care. This donation included \$4500 for the IG K-9, \$4500 for the K-9 Tracking dogs and \$9000 for the dog training programs at

8 institutions.

UTOPIA, HART, Prison Pups and Pals, Paws on Parole, and DAWGS

Through the dog training programs at Wakulla CI, Taylor CI, Gulf CI, Gainesville CI Work Camp, Sago Palm Work Release, New River CI, Lowell CI and Tomoka CI inmates train dogs from local animal shelters in basic obedience, train service dogs for disabled veterans, and rehabilitate dogs who are heartworm positive. Depending on the program, there is a graduating class of dogs every 8-12 weeks. These programs have been very successful in finding dogs forever homes. We are hosting the 2nd Annual DC Doggie Dash 5K/1 Mile Fun Run in March 2012 to benefit these programs and DC's K-9 Tracking Units.

Ms. Sheila Logue reported on the **Flags for Freedom Troop Project** which began in 2003 with \$71,200 being collected from the sale of Flags for Freedom pins. Throughout the years these funds have been used to support the families of our DC employees serving overseas. The Corrections Foundation has sent phone cards, Visa cards and Wal-Mart gift cards each Thanksgiving and Christmas for the last 6 years.

We are currently collecting coupons for the troops that they can use at their PX for up to 6 months after expiration. Several institutions send us coupons on a regular basis and we forward them to organizations serving the military. Flags for Freedom pins are on sale for \$5 each through each institutional canteen and on our website, www.correctionsfoundation.org.

We currently have less than 50 employees overseas and many others stateside on active duty. The board was asked if we wanted to send gift cards to the families of the soldiers deployed overseas again this year. This fund currently has a little more than \$7,000 available.

Mr. Mecusker made a motion to send \$100 gift cards to the families of the troops who are deployed and hold the remaining funds in the account for future troop use. Seconded by Mr. Williams and unanimously approved.

Computers for Florida's Kids was discussed. The Computers for Florida's Kids program was re-introduced in July 2011. We have requested computers from state agencies, corporations, DC staff, schools, and computer recyclers. The receipt of donations has been slow. We have a few requests from refurbished computers waiting for schools and community organizations serving children and hope to be able to fill the pending requests within the next two months. It was suggested that we ask all state agencies to donate. We can contact the property managers and ask about surplus property.

Mr. Akins noted that we had asked all state agencies through the Offices of Information Technology and that an issue had arose with the Dept. of Agriculture and they turned us

down due to our program giving computers to churches that have programs benefiting children. Ms. McNaughton noted that their interpretation of the Florida Constitution and law is incorrect and that there are actually federal requirements that protect faith based programs from discrimination. She advised that this should not be an issue with all state agencies.

Other recommendations of locations for computers include trade-ins to computer companies, Best Buy and other retailers. A letter will be prepared to send to the Association of IF, the Chamber of Commerce, and Retail Federation. Mr. Williams mentioned the importance of approaching companies now, before December 31st, so that they can take advantage of the tax deduction of donating used computers to us.

Mr. Rush mentioned that it would benefit us if we could partner with a big box retailer to provide a distribution point once the program is up and running again. This would be a great convenience for the schools picking up computers; otherwise they have to pick them up at the institution closest to them.

DC Apparel

Mr. Akins indicated that DC apparel is now offered through www.fdcstore.com and everything is handled by Seacoast Uniform Company. Very high quality shirts are available and the options for embroidery include badges, logos and personalization. It is nice that the store has been outsourced, reducing the load on our administrative staff, however sales have been very slow due much in part to the cost of the shirts, most are \$40 or more. Mr. Pearce commented that this price is cost prohibitive and asked if a less expensive option could be given for Community Corrections. Ms. Nimer could be consulted regarding the shirt selection and a \$20-25 option could be offered. We could market this at the next Regional Director's meeting and provide examples of the shirts.

Events

Mr. Pearce reported on the golf tournament scheduled for tomorrow. It is by far our most successful yet with 31 teams and numerous sponsors. Our sponsorship revenue is nearly \$43,000 thanks to generous support by GTL and the Animal Welfare Foundation, Dr. Robert Mouradian, M.D., Bridges of America, Corizon Health, GEO Group and many more top level donors.

The 2nd Annual DC Doggie Dash is planned for March and full board participation is needed. This event has been placed on the Gulf Winds Track Club Grand Prix calendar and participation could increase to 1,000 attendees this year. EarthFare grocery store and Tri Eagle Distributors have already committed to supporting the event and a committee

of volunteers meets next week to begin planning. Proceeds from this event will benefit the many dog obedience training programs, K-9 Tracking Units and the K-9 Drug Interdiction teams statewide.

Ms. Logue mentioned that the Florida Peace Officers Association is closing its doors after 84 years. They conducted pistol shoots and various other events for their members and the question was raised to whether or not the Corrections Foundation wanted to pick up a pistol shoot event in the coming year.

Mr. Wainwright noted that he and Mr. Williams had talked with many DC wardens to find out if the interest existed for a pistol shoot and that they unanimously advised us against getting involved. There just doesn't seem to be the interest there used to be and the cost and liability involved far outweighs the benefits.

New Business

Mr. Williams addressed the board and asked them to consider a project benefiting Florida State Prison and focusing on the safety of our officers there. Florida State Prison is a very dangerous institution and the harm to DC officers there has been increasing.

Mr. Williams proposed that the Corrections Foundation support a project to install steel, double locked boxes on each cell door of 96 cell blocks. The cost of this project will be covered by donations and is expected to be \$8,500. The boxes are fixed to the cell and allow officers to provide food, and other items to the inmate without having direct interaction. Some of these boxes have been made and are in use. They are manually operated and have two locks, one for the outside door and one for the door into the cell.

Ms. McNaughton asked if Central Office had approved the design and installation of the boxes. While Mr. Cannon has seen them and approved them it was advised that Central Office and Mr. Hosford give their okay prior to moving forward. Mr. Wainwright commented that he will make sure the project is approved by Central Office before moving forward.

Mr. Rush made a motion for the Corrections Foundation to serve as the fiduciary for this project. Mr. Mecusker seconded the motion. Motion approved.

With there being no further business a motion was made by Mr. Rush and seconded by Mr. Williams to adjourn, 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Sheri Logue, December 2, 2011.