

Corrections Foundation
Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, December 10, 2009
Gainesville Circuit Office

Attendees:

Mr. Louie L. Wainwright, President
Mr. Tom Rush, Vice President
Mr. Dave Mecusker, Treasurer
Mr. Jim Williams, Finance and Membership Committees Chair
Ms. Rosa McNaughton
Ms. Mary Ellen Dayan-Varnum
Ms. Gail Reddick
Col. Butch Redding
Mr. Robert Woody
Mr. Jason Clinger
Mr. Dick Pearce
Ms. Betty Bennett

Special Guests:

Mr. Mark Redd, Warden, Suwannee Correctional Institution

Staff:

Mr. Chris Akins
Ms. Sheri Logue
Mr. Nick Dawkins

President Louie Wainwright called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Mr. Jim Williams gave the invocation. Vice President, Tom Rush took attendance and a quorum was established. Mr. Wainwright introduced and welcomed our most recent board member, Ms. Gail Reddick, Circuit Administrator from the Tampa area.

Financial Report

Mr. Mecusker introduced the recent financial audit report which was previously provided to each board member for review. He commented that it is a complimentary report and added that we may wish to seek a more affordable auditing firm for the next year. A motion was made by Mr. Mecusker and seconded by Mr. Williams to accept the audit report. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Mr. Mecusker and seconded by Mr. Rush to seek a less expensive auditor. Mr. Wainwright commented that we need to assure that they are still a reputable firm because they represent our organization that is serving 19,000 DC members. A request for proposals will be sent out in early January to solicit bids. Motion passed with no objections.

Ms. Logue also recommended getting bids for our directors and officers policy because the cost of this policy also increases each year.

The Finance report was given by Mr. Mecusker. He reviewed the current bank balances and amounts available for different programs and earmarked funds. Year to date our expenses are less than our income and the budget is on track. This year's budget is in line with last year's income and expenses and overall we are in good financial shape. We continue to be a viable and solid organization.

Mr. Williams commented that the IRS looks at the surplus or retained earning that private businesses hold in accounts earning interest and he questioned whether or not a non-profit organization can be penalized for too much retained earnings. We have a large sum of funds in CD's which have accumulated over the last 10 years due to membership dues. These funds are earmarked for the Employee Assistance Program and we should confirm whether or not this is an issue for the IRS. If it is we may need to look at increasing the amount of assistance given to employees so that our reserves are lower.

Mr. Mecusker commented that the amount of funds we have in CD's is not a lot of money if a tragedy were to strike. In the scheme of things it is less than half of what we give out on an annual basis.

Ms. Logue mentioned that employee assistance requests have increased and we are responding to 10-15 requests a week. At this pace we will give out a record amount this year to employees in need.

Ms. Dayan-Varnum added that it was not taken well among staff when we had to decrease the amount given years ago from \$2500 to \$1500 due to requests exceeding income that it was not taken well by employees. There was a lot of fall out the last time we decreased and if we increase now but have to decrease again in the future it will do more harm than good.

Mr. Akins commented that when we had to decrease the amount given we did receive a few calls about why an employee received less than an employee in the same situation a year prior. We had to explain that we are a business and are unable to spend more than we take in. Once this was explained members seemed to understand.

Mr. Mecusker noted that the CD funds allow us a cushion to be prepared for an increased need and they also provide interest that adds to our operating revenue and that is was not recommended to do anything that would reduce operating income at this time.

It was suggested that Ms. Logue check with our accounting firm to see if retained earnings is an issue for us and this issue was deferred to the Finance Committee for further recommendation.

Specialty License Plate

Mr. Rush reported on the Specialty License Plate noting that it was disappointing that we recently lost this opportunity due to lack of interest and support among DC employees and Foundation members. Despite the positive marketing survey and interest from the Department of Corrections when we began this endeavor the feeling of the tag being a liability labeling officers as DC staff seemed to take over and resulted in very poor sales.

Mr. Wainwright noted that we worked hard to promote the tag and thought it was a great idea. The concern about vandalism was widespread among circuits and institutions and was not something we were able to overcome.

Ms. Dayan-Varnum mentioned that several wardens and regional directors bought the tag but staff just doesn't follow the leadership like they used to.

Mr. Rush commented that the tag was a good looking tag, sales just didn't take off.

Ms. Bennett validated that probation and parole officers would definitely have safety issues. Many of the communities they work in are not good ones and calling attention to themselves as Corrections would not be advised.

When people who currently have a tag go to renew it they will be issued a state of Florida tag to replace the CF tag. The DMV has discontinued selling the CF tag.

Mr. Wainwright said the bottom line is DC didn't support it, we tried and we lost it and we have to move on from here.

Mr. Wainwright suggested that the Board of Directors adopt a resolution to recognize Woody Drake Advertising who displayed 3 billboards during the entire duration of tag sales, most of the billboard expense was an in kind donation.

Motion made by Mr. Wainwright and seconded by Mr. Mecusker to adopt a resolution recognizing Woody Drake Advertising for their strong support. Motion passed unanimously.

Membership Report

Mr. Williams presented the membership report noting it is a good representation of how successful our campaign was this past February and March. Membership has doubled in the last 3 years with 4,000 new members last year and we are planning this year's campaign for the same time period.

We held a conference call last February to kick off the campaign and it was very helpful.

We especially appreciate Secretary McNeil for reinstated casual Fridays for members which helped increase membership immensely. Secretary McNeil has been very supportive and we are thankful to him for all that he has done.

Region I and II have 77and 76% membership participation. Region III and IV participation rates are much lower.

Mr. Mecusker mentioned that some of the issue within Region III and IV is supervisors do not submit requests due to personality conflicts or employee disciplinary action. What can we do if a warden denies a request and it never makes it to us for review? Can a regional director/warden or supervisor deny a request based on a personality conflict or should the Foundation be the final determining factor?

Ms. Reddick agreed that this has been an issue on a few requests when there is a difference of opinion of whether an employee has abused their sick leave or not.

Our criteria currently states that employees must be in good standing with their warden or circuit administrator to receive assistance. Should we remove this statement or define “good standing” to take the pressure off of wardens and circuit administrators? The Foundation should determine if assistance is granted or denied based on the criteria provided. There was a concern that many requests are not submitted for review due to this statement in the criteria.

Currently Mr. Williams and Mr. Mecusker help review requests sent to them by Ms. Logue and that process is efficient.

Ms. McNaughton mentioned that the language in the current criteria makes supervisors not process all requests. She made a motion for us to define “good standing” in the current criteria and work to educate all supervisors on the criteria for employee assistance. Motion seconded by Mr. Rush and passed unanimously to make this change in the Employee Assistance Program criteria.

Mr. Williams recommended that we hold a spring board meeting in South Florida. Mr. Wainwright noted that we could ask Ms. Villacorta to coordinate a meeting of all Region IV wardens. Ms. Reddick asked that we also include Ms. Atchison and circuit administrators at same time to help educate both institutions and circuits on membership and what we are able to do for their employees.

Sporting Clays Tournament

Ms. Bennett reported that she had contacted Pat Welch at the Bradford Sportsmen’s Farm. Their facility has a world class sporting clay range as well as pistol and rifle ranges and is south of Starke in Graham, FL. She has inquired about the cost of an event. Skeet shooting ranges from \$75 - \$85 depending on if a meal is provided or not. We could sell vendor space and BBQ meals to raise funds. Mr. Williams offered his BBQ grill and a cook and can cook up to 800 pounds at a time.

Attendance at sporting clay tournaments is typically between 300-400 people so there is potential to have a successful event. Col. Redding noted that we could ask for donations of door prizes that are shooting related and solicit donors similar to our golf tournaments.

Ms. Dayan-Varnum said that she didn't want to put a damper on the idea but that shooting among DC employees is really not as popular as it once was. Golf is the largest sport among DC and shooting is the smallest at the Law Enforcement Olympics each year. She thinks we would need to solicit participants from outside of DC to have a successful turnout.

It was recommended that we ask around to see how much interest there would be before moving forward with the event. Mr. Woody, Mr. Rush and Mr. Pearce agreed to ask around and it was suggested that the FPOA would be a good resource. We could also hold a poll on our website to see how much interest there would be.

Mr. Williams noted that we need to make sure wardens support it or it may not be worth the effort.

Col. Redding asked if we would rather consider sponsoring an existing event and then benefiting from the vendor space and meal sales only. It would take the responsibility of advertising for participants off of us and could still be a good fundraiser. He added that he appreciated Ms. Bennett's preliminary planning and that if we move forward with this event it will likely take place in late March or early April.

Starke Area Golf Tournament

He also advised that many locals would be interested in a golf tournament in Bradford. It is a small 9 hole range that would offer an opportunity for staff to support us with a lower registration fee than our other two tournaments. He advised that he and Ms. Bennett would follow up on prices and report back to the board. It was agreed by the board that this was a good idea to explore.

10th Annual Golf Tournament - Tallahassee

Mr. Akins reported on the October 2009 Golf Tournament that was held at SouthWood in Tallahassee. It was our most successful event yet and at one point we had a full field of 36 teams, we ended up with 32 full teams playing and raised \$17,569 with many returning and new sponsors. The tournament has grown significantly over the years and we received a lot of positive comments.

Mr. Williams noted that our Platinum sponsor, Dr. Mouradian, has sponsored us at a \$5000 level for many years now. He is an anesthesiologist and is scheduled to go on the next mission trip to Jamaica with Jim's church. He has been very supportive of the Corrections Foundation.

Mr. Rush commented that the staff did an excellent job at the golf tournament. All the participants were very happy and the food was fantastic. The added putting contest before the tournament was a good addition.

Mr. Williams noted that the week we typically have the golf tournament is the same week that his church holds a prison ministry and that the week of October 14th would work better for him in 2010.

4th Annual Central Florida Golf Tournament – Orlando area

Mr. Clinger reported that currently he and Mr. Pearce are looking for a venue for the May golf tournament. For the last 3 years we have held the tournament at Orange County National and it has been a great course, however this year the price to golf there is \$64, up from \$55 last year and we are exploring our options.

Mr. Pearce noted that so far they have received quotes from Falcon's Fire, Eagle Creek, Victoria Hills, and Sweetwater golf clubs. Victoria Hills is a very nice course in Deland and has offered golf and dinner for \$55.

Mr. Dawkins noted that Orange County National was centrally located for many institutions in central Florida and suggested that we make sure the next course is central too. Mr. Pearce agreed and said that Victoria Hills is still central but would probably pull from Tomoka CI and Putnam CI too. It is a great course and was listed in the Top 50 courses recently. Mr. Mecusker noted that that would be an easy course to sell if they were recently listed in a magazine.

Mr. Rush and Mr. Williams agreed to come and play Victoria Hills before making a final decision.

Mr. Pearce brought up the issue of DC volunteers for our events. He noted that for FCCD and United Way events DC staff take administrative leave to volunteer. He asked if staff would be granted authorized state leave to volunteer at our events due to us existing for the sole benefit of DC? Mr. Akins noted that the state does allow 4 hours administrative leave for volunteering but it must be approved by the employee's supervisor. The Foundation would provide a list of employees volunteering in advance of the event.

It was agreed that Ms. McNaughton would draft a letter from Mr. Wainwright to Secretary McNeil asking this question and clarifying board meeting time as volunteer time too.

Secretary McDonough had approved board of director's activities as work time because board members are appointed by the Secretary to work on behalf of the Department of Corrections. We will seek clarification on this matter from Secretary McNeil too.

Troop Project

Col. Redding reported on the current troop project noting that it has been very successful. There has been positive feedback from troops and their families appreciating the support during their active duty. Flags for Freedom pins have been sold since 2003 to fund this project and have allowed us to send phone cards, gift cards and care packages overseas. Earlier in the year he, Ms. Bennett and staff had the opportunity to call many of the families of our DC troops and speak to

them about our appreciation for their loved ones service. They are grateful for the calls and it was very rewarding to speak with their families. Troops often make less on active duty than they do at work so we were able to help them financially around the holidays and it also let them know that their employer cares. The care packages were well received.

Mr. Mecusker asked if we planned on asking DC to donate items for the care packages again. Ms. Logue noted that funds for this project are nearly exhausted and we do not have shipping funds. The care package project was a huge success but also was a huge undertaking. The supplies we received filled 3 offices to the ceiling and while the project was great if we decided to do it again we would do it on a smaller scale so that it would be manageable. Overseas addresses were hard to come by so even though we have 100 DC employees deployed we only have 30 overseas addresses. A lot of boxes went to the same soldiers month after month, but they shared with their fellow soldiers and the items were always appreciated, especially coming from their fellow employees at DC.

It was suggested that we purchase Flags for Freedom pins with the remaining \$300 in the fund and then continue to build the fund before undertaking anymore projects. We can still support our troops through letters, honorary memberships and phone calls to the families. There is the impression that our military presence may decreasing in the next year.

Motion made by Mr. Williams and seconded by Mr. Woody to purchase 200-300 Flags for Freedom pins to make available to DC staff for purchase. Motion passed unanimously.

Program Report

Ms. Logue gave the program report which included activities through November 30th. The report is summarized below:

Employee Assistance Program

To date in FY 09-10 the Corrections Foundation has assisted 173 DC employees and disbursed \$200,000 in financial assistance. We are still experiencing a high number of requests for assistance similar to last year when we assisted 417 employees with \$445,000.

We currently assist employees who are also members with an amount of \$1,500 for critical illness, death preceded by illness, and accidents with injuries. We provide \$500 to members to travel out of state for a family emergency, or a house fire, flood, etc. For non-members assistance is available in the amount of \$250 for the above situations. Since the program inception in 1999, more than \$3.2 million dollars has been distributed to assist DC employees in need.

Inspector General's Office K-9 Unit

A donation of \$112,500 from the Animal Welfare Foundation in Winter Garden has allowed for the expansion 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. We have purchased aluminum dog boxes, first aid kits, ice vests and the newest addition to the K-9 Team, Razor, a dog specifically trained to sniff out cell phones in institutions. This donation also included \$10,000 to benefit the PAWS in Prison and UTOPIA dog training programs at Wakulla CI and Taylor CI.

PAWS and UTOPIA

Through the PAWS and UTOPIA programs at Wakulla and Taylor CI inmates train dogs from local animal shelters in basic obedience and graduate a class of dogs every 8-12 weeks. This program has been very successful in finding dogs forever homes and the Corrections Foundation has been the fiduciary of funding from the Build-A-Bear, Bear Hugs Foundation and the Animal Welfare Foundation to benefit these programs. Gainesville and Gulf CI operate similar programs benefiting dogs from local animal shelters.

Wakulla CI – REEF's Small Business Project

In conjunction with Horizon Kairos we have received donations to support the small business course at Wakulla CI. We have ordered paper from a wholesaler to support this project. This is a project that takes curriculum designed by an offender and teaches entrepreneurial principles to a class of about 30 offenders at Wakulla CI with the desire to lead them to become self employed upon release. Horizon Kairos is interested in extending this program to other institutions in the state.

DC Apparel Sales

Since Sept. 07 we have sold 190 DC men's polo shirts, 137 DC women's polo shirts, 140 CF Polos, 162 Flags for Freedom pins, 157 bags, 72 portfolios, 996 badge pulleys, 66 jackets and 6 Sgt. Polos and sales continue to be strong with \$20,000 processed through our online store since September 2007.

Mr. Mecusker asked if there was an opportunity to sell brown officer uniforms and polos. He noted that there is a store near UCI that provides apparel to officers. We could contact them about using them as our local vendor. Mr. Williams suggested finding a vendor in each area that our staff could order directly from and a portion of the proceeds would come to the Corrections Foundation. The vendor would ship direct so that it would take the work load off of the CF staff.

Ms. Logue commented that PRIDE could make the shirts and jackets for us but this project could become too large for the current CF staff to handle. If 22,000 officers needed new polo shirts the need would far surpass what we are capable of mailing out. Mr. Akins added that we must be careful not to become a "store" which could jeopardize our non profit status with the IRS. If we were spending most of our time filling orders that would fall outside the realm of our mission. Having a vendor serve as the shipper would be perfect.

Ms. Logue added that while PRIDE could supply us with items, their turn around time is 3 months which would not be acceptable to our customers and would in turn make us look bad. Mr. Williams suggested not working with PRIDE but finding our own reputable vendor who could provide authorized uniforms to DC staff.

Mr. Akins mentioned that earlier in the year DC's chief of staff, Bonnie Rogers asked the Corrections Foundation to purchase DC apparel from G Willies, a local uniform store, because PRIDE had cornered the market and G Willies was told by DC to stop selling DC apparel. At their request we purchased DC Sgt. Polos and Class A Uniform hats and have been selling these items to recoup our costs. Providing the brown apparel has resulted in increased calls about whether or not we provide jackets and CO polos so there is definitely a need among employees for these items.

Ms. McNaughton said she is surprised that DC would tell a vendor that they can not sell an item and added that PRIDE can't tell other vendors that they can not sell shirts.

Mr. Mecusker added that there are many vendors statewide that provide Corrections apparel.

Mr. Woody made a motion to explore the possibilities of selling DC apparel to staff. Mr. Mecusker seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Special Guest

Mr. Wainwright introduced Mr. Redd, Warden at Suwannee Correctional Institution. Mr. Redd has been a strong supporter of the Corrections Foundation and we are pleased to have him join us today.

Mr. Redd thanked the Board for the opportunity to attend our meeting. He commented that the Corrections Foundation is a wonderful organization, like no other in the state. He is here today to commend our good works and not to criticize and he thanked the board and staff for all that they do. Corrections and law enforcement in general can be a thankless job but hard work goes into the Foundation and you are meeting your mission of supporting the Dept. of Corrections programs and staff. The staffs of the Department truly appreciate having a Foundation that serves them.

He commented that he knows we recently lost the specialty license plate and may feel a bit discouraged but he wanted to encourage the board to move forward and not dwell on this. He wasn't sure why it did not gain more support than it did but he advised us to look forward and not look back. Our overall mission has been a success and just because the tag did not succeed we should look at the larger picture and the impact the Corrections Foundation is having on the lives of so many. We help people in need, and that is the bottom line.

The Department of Corrections and its employees have a big heart; it is a very caring agency. We can thank Mr. Wainwright for the foundation he laid so many years ago. How you start something is how you finish and the Department was started very well and that sets the tone for the future.

The Corrections Foundation board has the vision and energy to be successful. He appreciates us as a group of dedicated professionals who come together to help others.

He closed thanking the board again for the privilege to attend.

Mr. Wainwright asked if any members had questions for Mr. Redd. Ms. Logue commented that if he has any suggestions throughout the year or knows how we can better serve employees to please let us know.

Mr. Redd mentioned that one great thing the Corrections Foundation has done that has increased morale among staff is the Flags for Freedom Troop Project. He added that employees throughout the state got behind our most recent effort and it's just another way for them to serve their fellow employee through the Corrections Foundation. The Flags for Freedom pins touched a lot of hearts, it's a great reminder of our freedom and how appreciative we should be to those who sacrifice so much so that we can be free.

Mr. Wainwright added that we appreciate Mr. Redd and his full support of the Corrections Foundation. Whenever we have needed him he is there.

The meeting adjourned for lunch.

Other Business

Goals and Objectives were distributed to each member. They were asked to take a look at the goals that the staff has set for the next year and to make suggestions and get back in touch with Mr. Akins to finalize the direction for the Foundation for the next year.

Mr. Wainwright asked if there is anything in particular the board should consider when reviewing the goals and objectives. Ms. Logue mentioned taking a look at past projects and programs and making a suggestion of whether or not to pursue reinstating any of them including Computers for Florida's Kids. Mr. Redd noted that Baker CI would be the place to revive Computers for Kids if it were to be allowed by OIT and Security.

Mr. Akins noted that reentry and inmate transition is the Department's focus now. We have a good working relationship with Ms. Fran Barber of Programs however very little is happening when compared to the programs that once operated through the Corrections Foundation.

Staff Agreements

Staff duties and responsibilities were renewed for the 2010 year. Mr. Williams made a motion to retain current employees, seconded by Mr. Rush and unanimously approved.

Founding Board Member Presentation

Mr. Wainwright presented Mr. Williams with a plaque recognizing him as a founding board member. Mr. Williams has been with the Corrections Foundation since its inception and has done a great deal to further our mission through out the years.

Mr. Mecusker thanked the board for their prayers, phone calls and letters during his recent surgery and recovery. The board sent a flower basket to him and his family and he was touched by the love he received from everyone.

Ms. Reddick thanked the board and Mr. Wainwright for the nomination to become a board member. She is looking forward to being more involved.

With there being no further business, Ms. Dayan-Varnum made a motion, seconded by Col. Redding to adjourn at 1:35.

Respectfully submitted by Sheri Logue, December 18, 2009.