

# Corrections Foundation Board of Director's Meeting

November 19, 2020  
Conference Call

Attendees:  
Mr. Tom Rush  
Mr. Dave Mecusker  
Ms. Jenny Nimer  
Mr. Brian Riedl  
Ms. Lisa Miller  
Mr. Brian Wynns

Absent:  
Mr. Louie Wainwright  
Ms. Justine Patterson  
Mr. Mark Redd  
Mr. Jim Williams

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

## Call to Order

Mr. Rush called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. and established a quorum. Mr. Mecusker gave the invocation. Ms. Patterson gave her proxy vote to Ms. Nimer and Mr. Williams gave his proxy to Mr. Riedl. A quorum was established.

## Consent Agenda

The following housekeeping items were presented before the meeting for review. They were presented in the meeting for discussion or approval under the Consent Agenda below. Motion made by Ms. Miller and seconded by Mr. Riedl to approve all consent agenda items. Motion passed unanimously.

- Approval of Minutes – April 23, 2019
- Approval of Minutes – January 17, 2020
- Transferring \$140,000 in funds from Operating to Disaster Relief
- Open new accounts with EAP funds – to insure FDIC coverage
- Update check signing approval and signature – remove Louie L. Wainwright from check signing
- 2020 Golf Tournament Cancellation Due to COVID 19 – Return October 2021
- Casual Days – December 28<sup>th</sup> through 31<sup>st</sup> - \$5 contribution to Corrections Foundation

Banking Decisions FDIC/NCUA Insurance is \$250,000 per account. We currently have multiple accounts over this threshold but the largest is our Operating Account with \$1,160,734.73. It is recommended that we transfer funds and open new certificate of deposits to lower our risk of uninsured funds. The following is presented for approval: Transfer \$140,000 from Operating to the Disaster Relief Account at Synovus that will bring that account to \$250,000

Open two \$250,000 CD's, total of \$500,000.00 in Employee Assistance Funds. Capital City Bank has a 1.15% rate on a 2 year CD and we'll find another similar rate for the 2nd CD.

Bank Signatures We need to update the bank signature cards and make a change to the January 2020 list of signers. Mr. Wainwright's family is now signing official documents for him so in order to not appear improper by having him sign checks and banking documents we will remove him from the signature card. Signers will be Thomas A. Rush, David C. Mecusker, Lisa L. Miller, Jenny V. Nimer and Sheri G. Logue.

Accounts for signature card changes include:

Operating Account – First Commerce Credit Union

Savings Account – First Commerce Credit Union Disaster Relief Account - Synovus Bank

Money Market Account – Synovus Bank

Checking – Regions Bank

Certificate of Deposit – Regions Bank

Certificate of Deposit – State Farm Bank

New Certificates of Deposit

## Budget Review

Mr. Mecusker gave an overview of the 2020-21 budget. We've been very fortunate that we haven't experienced catastrophic storms this year. We are able to fortify reserves against future calamity. We are in a good financial position. He spoke with the auditor during our audit and discussed procedures, operations. Overall he was very pleased with the audit report.

Mr. Mecusker asked Ms. Logue to comment on the finance report. She mentioned that we have had a good year and received a recent donation from the Animal Welfare Foundation of \$30,000 to support K-9 Tracking, Interdiction and Dog Training Programs. We also have received donations from our golf tournament sponsors in response to a direct mail letter. Our budget is on track and similar to last year. She mentioned the importance of limiting risk by making sure our accounts are not over FDIC insurance coverage. Transferring funds and opening new CD's will limit our exposure.

The Profit and Loss statement shows our fiscal year income and expenses and we are in very good shape.

Mr. Mecusker made a motion to accept the finance report, and audit report and approve the budget. Seconded by Ms. Lisa Miller and unanimously approved.

## Proposed changes to EAP Criteria

Employee Assistance Increase for Officer, Employee or Contractors Fallen in the Line of Duty

Mr. Akins presented a proposal on behalf of Mr. Jim Williams. Currently we provide a maximum of \$1,500 for members and \$100 for nonmembers following a tragedy. Mr. Williams proposed

that we provide \$5,000 for members and \$1,000 to non-members when there is a line of duty death.

Several questions arose such as, How do we define a death in the line of duty? Is COVID 19 considered a death in the line of duty?

Ms. Nimer mentioned that there is a committee that meets on an as needed basis to determine which officers and employees will be added to the Memorial Wall at Wakulla Correctional Institution. She recommended that we make sure that we follow and use the same interpretation that the Department of Corrections does. Mr. Riedl noted that there is a process to determine line of duty deaths.

Mr. Mecusker cautioned to not make a decision on this today but to find out the Department's procedure on determining an in the line of duty death. There could be high ramifications for this if the benefit is above and beyond the \$1,500 we currently provide. We need to know how many staff per year this would apply to, or how many deaths we have had in past years.

Mr. Mecusker – are names added to the wall at Wakulla each year there is a line of duty death? Ms. Nimer confirmed that yes, names are added each year and the ceremony recognizing them is in May.

Mr. Akins noted there have been 4 confirmed cases of death due to COVID 19 and wondered if these will be considered "in the line of duty deaths". Mr. Riedl mentioned these employees were on workers compensation when they had symptoms. He also noted that in the line of duty deaths apply to a small number of staff each year and that it is important that we be in line with Department of Corrections policy in determining what constitutes a "line of duty death."

A question was asked regarding whether a request to assist a family of an employee who died in the line of duty would be the same process as our current Employee Assistance Program? Yes, it would come from their warden or circuit administrator.

Mr. Mecusker liked the idea of tying our assistance to the memorial wall presentation each year in May and that we be very clear in how we write the policy so that there is no room for misinterpretation. We currently do not offer a death benefit but assist based on previous medical bills that are left to a family following a death. We don't want this to appear as a life insurance policy for any FDC staff person who dies.

Mr. Wynns asked if there is already a \$10,000 payout for Fallen Officers through another organization. Yes, the Correctional Peace Officers Foundation provides a fallen officer benefit to the families of certified staff but not office staff.

Mr. Rush noted that the funds we provide are generally a quick reaction to assist family before life insurance and other benefits are provided. We are able to help immediately and he wouldn't want to delay help until the Memorial Wall names are released in May of each year

but continue to assist family immediately. Once Human Resources confirms an “in line of duty death” we could assist.

Ms. Nimer noted that the Department of Corrections policy is very clear and that the committee which includes Legal gets together as needed. There is a process and once every 2 months or so the committee meets to review cases, more often when needed.

Mr. Mecusker shared his concern of a lot of “What if’s” regarding this proposal. It would be much clearer if we follow the Department’s lead of names put on the Memorial Wall as Fallen in the Line of Duty. He likes the idea of waiting on the process for the wall and let FDC’s committee determine qualifications. We could still assist immediately with \$1500 for members and \$100 for nonmembers families and then follow FDC recommendations to provide the death benefit.

Mr. Rush suggested that we have staff research and propose a clear policy at the next board meeting. Mr. Mecusker noted that we should make it retroactive so that we do not leave anyone out.

Mr. Akins said it seemed like the Board was in agreement to the increased amount of assistance to families of an officer, employee or contractor who dies in the line of duty as long as we follow FDC committee recommendations. He asked if the following would capture the intent of the Board. “The survivors of an officer, employee or contractor who falls in the line of duty is eligible to receive financial assistance in the amount of \$5,000 for members or \$1,000 for non-members. The Corrections Foundation shall follow the determination of the Florida Department of Corrections in determining if a death is in the line of duty.”

Ms. Nimer reiterated that it will be a lot cleaner with less individual interpretation if we follow FDC’s lead. It was recommended to make sure the committee still exists and find out from Human Resources the process for deeming a death “in the line of duty.”

Mr. Riedl made a motion to draft proposed language in line with FDC’s policy with specifics and send out to the Board before the next board meeting for consideration.

Mr. Mecusker seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

#### [Increase in Dependent Age](#)

Ms. Logue presented a proposal to raise the age of dependent in our Employee Assistance criteria from 18 to 21 in our Employee Assistance Criteria. A few times a year we deny a request of an employee whose son or daughter has a serious illness, accident or death who is in the 19-21 age range and the burden falls to the FDC employee but we say no because the son or daughter is over the age of 18. Funds are available to expand assistance if the Board chooses.

Mr. Mecusker had concerns and suggested we stick to our definition of 18 or under being a dependent. FDC hires officers at age 18 and many children are out on their own by 18, so 18 is considered an adult.

Mr. Wynns commented that in theory 18 is considered an adult but in reality most families are still supporting 18-21 year olds and they are still dependent on their parents. A question was asked if we could review these cases and make an informed exception to the age of dependent based on the circumstances? Mr. Reidl and Mr. Reid objected saying they'd rather increase to 21 than to make exceptions and possibly have different interpretations and different decisions based on information provided to us. Ms. Nimer agreed and said we should be consistent and not review on a case to case basis.

Mr. Mecusker asked for clarification on boundaries or definition of dependent. Does the son or daughter have to live with the parent, be away at college, living on their own? Mr. Rush said we could require that they are a dependent on their parent's tax return as a qualification.

Mr. Mecusker presented the following scenario: If a son or daughter leaves home gets into trouble, drugs, alcohol, comes back home and has a catastrophic event, do we pick up the bill? Mr. Akins noted that we do not look at what led to the hardship for an employee we look at the hardship on the family and we only see what is presented to us. Most of the time we do not know life choices details and the requests are vetted through the Warden or Circuit Administrator office and it is not for us to judge. We assist or not based on our employee assistance criteria.

Another scenario would be an employee's child 18-21 who is married, not living at home. A married son or daughter is not considered a dependent and wouldn't be on a parent's tax return. Mr. Akins noted that we do our due diligence to make sure we aren't taken advantage of and a married son or daughter would not be a dependent.

Mr. Mecusker expressed concern and did not think we should pursue this change in defining dependent. Too many questions, variables that come into play.

Mr. Rush asked if there were any other objections of further discussion. No others were opposed.

Ms. Miller made a motion to increase the age of dependent to 21 and to be very consistent in how we apply the criteria to a request. Mr. Wynns seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

## Retirement Options

Mr. Akins asked the board for approval to research and pursue other retirement options for staff. Our current plan is a SIMPLE IRA and it limits donations and returns and seems to underperform other options that are available. We are currently locked into high fee, mediocre

returns. Mr. Mecusker made a motion to approve pursuing other retirement plans for staff. Mr. Riedl seconded and motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 11 a.m.

Minutes submitted on November 23, 2020 by Sheri Logue.