

# Corrections Foundation Board of Director's Meeting

June 1, 2021  
Conference Call

Attendees:  
Mr. Tom Rush  
Mr. Dave Mecusker  
Mr. Brian Riedl  
Ms. Lisa Miller  
Mr. Brian Wynns  
Ms. Justine Patterson

Absent:  
Mr. Louie Wainwright  
Ms. Jenny Nimer  
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. 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 Mr. Mecusker and seconded by Ms. Patterson to approve all consent agenda items. Motion passed unanimously.

- Approval of Minutes – February 2021
- Profit and Loss Statement
- Budget To Date
- Financial Report 4/20/21
- Moved current SIMPLE IRA to Cypress Capital as Financial Advisor

## Continuation from Previous Board Meeting

### Retirement Options

After much research it is recommended that we switch SIMPLE IRA's from American Funds to Vanguard. Vanguard will provide access to over 130 mutual funds with low expense ratio and typically higher returns than what our current SIMPLE IRA offers. Cypress Capital will be our advisors and will coordinate the change in custodian of our IRA. Mr. Mecusker made a motion to

change to Vanguard from American Funds, motion seconded by Ms. Patterson and unanimously approved. The change will take place in January 2022.

## Sponsorship and Supporting Donors

Mr. Akins proposed the following website procedure so that we have universal standards on how we recognize donors and sponsors. Mr. Akins asked for a legal opinion from FDC regarding sponsorship and acceptance of donations. After not hearing back to several inquiries we present to the board the two previous legal opinions regarding this issue, both of which say it is allowed for the Direct Support Organization to solicit donations.

### Web Advertising Procedure for Sponsorships

To maintain consistency in the quality of user experience on the Corrections Foundation website. Sponsor logos and links to the sponsor's website may be placed on the bottom portion of the Corrections Foundation website for a period of one year from the date of sponsorship or donation for sponsorships/or donations over \$500.

The sponsors may be placed for the following categories to minimize too many categories:

1. Platinum Sponsors: \$10,000+
2. Gold Sponsors: \$5,000 - \$9,999
3. Sponsors: \$500 - \$4,999

Alternatively: list all sponsors in descending order of sponsorship without categories listed.

A maximum of one unobtrusive banner ad for a sponsor may be placed at the footer of emails to subscribers with the header "This email is sponsored by:" with a link to the appropriate website. This same banner may be randomly placed on various pages on the website using automation software.

Mr. Mecusker asked, What if a company wants to promote their product to FDC employees through our website? Mr. Akins said we would use this universal language to Golf Tournament sponsors and other donors. Mr. Wynns noted that we should add that we have right of refusal to reject a donation or not. The Board agreed that the Executive Committee would have the final say on whether we accept a donation or not.

Mr. Reidl asked about a legal opinion on golf tournament sponsorship. By advertising on our website we are saying we support this company, recommend their services. He has some reservations about this as we do not know everything about every company that support the Foundation.

Mr. Mecusker reminded the board that this discussion began because a coffee company wanted to sell coffee on our site and we haven't had any issues with previous sponsors of the golf tournament. It is important to recognize our annual donors and one of the things we offer is recognition on our website. He added that we are trying to circumvent a problem that

historically has not been an issue but agrees that having a well-defined policy is a good idea. He suggested that we keep the current levels of sponsorship and recognition that we always have with the golf tournament which are: Platinum \$10,000+, Gold \$5,000, Silver \$1,000 and Bronze \$500. All of these levels include recognition on our website.

Ms. Miller acknowledged that Mr. Reidl has reservations that we could end up promoting a vendor/sponsor that doesn't have a good reputation and it looks like we support them because they donate to us.

Mr. Reidl suggested that if there is a way to vet sponsors and make sure that anyone we promote or accept donations from is a quality, ethical company or organization. We should check them out to make sure we know what they stand for before accepting donations and promoting them. For example if we learn a sponsor is being investigated for wrong doing, we could choose not to accept their donation and sponsorship. Ms. Miller also suggested that if a sponsor is a licensed business that we check with the state agency that regulates the business to ensure there are no outstanding issues with the company. Ms. Logue noted that many of our sponsors are vendors of the State of Florida and information about them is available through the procurement database.

A motion was made by Mr. Wynns to initiate a vetting process, for the Board to have right of refusal and determine as a board that a sponsor or donor is an acceptable organization or business for our mission. Motion seconded by Ms. Miller and unanimously approved.

Ms. Logue asked Ms. Miller if she could provide us with a draft of a policy given her previous experience with this. She agreed and will send a draft to Mr. Akins.

## Proposal for a Louie L. Wainwright Scholarship

Board member and Finance Committee Chairman Jim Williams has proposed the expenditure of \$1,000 per year to a student attending an accredited college or university and majoring in Criminal Justice or other related majors as determined by the board. After consulting with Ms. Patterson and Mr. Williams Mr. Akins has created a draft for board consideration.

Should the board agree in concept, staff can ask for board feedback on the appropriate criteria. For example:

1. Student with a declared major in Criminal Justice or related major who has decided to work for FDC. An alternative could be to narrow the scholarship to specifically existing FDC employees (OPS included) who are majoring in the above referenced fields of interest. A current FDC employee would likely be more to Mr. Wainwright's preference.
2. Student must attend a public or private college or university in the State University System,

Florida College System and/or college or university accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools or the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools.

3. Student must have a GPA of 2.5 or higher.
4. Student must submit an essay, minimum 1,000 words, stating “Why I am Interested in a Career in Criminal Justice, future plans with the Florida Department of Corrections.
5. A deadline set of June 30th of each year with a determination made by September 30th of each year. We may need to move this up based on when registration and payment is due.
6. Other criteria as determined by the board.
7. The board reviews and approves the recipient.
8. Scholarship will be sent directly to the college or university for the student as opposed to given directly to the student.

After discussion a motion was made by Ms. Miller and seconded by Ms. Patterson to approve a scholarship honoring Mr. Wainwright. Motion passed unanimously. The scholarship will be for a FDC employee, including OPS and or contractor, who is pursuing a post-secondary education in criminal justice. The board will review applications and essays to make a determination.

Mr. Wynns asked if the State of Florida already pays for post-secondary education for state employees. They do offer tuition free vouchers but only a certain number of hours a semester and it would take a long time to graduate by only using the vouchers provided by the state. Our scholarship would allow a FDC employee to take more classes and graduate sooner.

Mr. Mecusker asked if we want to limit it to only in person study or allow online study as well. Mr. Wynns said most online colleges are challenging and have quality programs so we should not limit to in person only. He suggested that there are other organizations that offer scholarships and we could model our scholarship after theirs. Mr. Akins noted that the proposal is pulled mostly from a law firm scholarship that a friend offers and we can review others as well.

Mr. Wynns asked about how much the scholarship would be each year depending on the amount of donations received. Mr. Akins explained that the minimum scholarship would be \$1,000 from the Corrections Foundation plus any donations raised. The first year Mr. Williams will match donations up to \$1,000 so conceivably the first year scholarship could be \$3,000, unless the board wishes to cap the donation at a certain amount. Amount could vary year to year based on amount donated but will not be less than \$1,000.

Mr. Rush optimistically sees us receiving more in donations than expected and as an example we may want to cap the scholarship at \$2,500 and expand it to more than one recipient.

Mr. Mecusker noted that another organization that gives scholarships tends to give to those they know, and we would want to make sure that our scholarship is competitive and equitable and not given to an employee out of preferential treatment. Mr. Akins noted that identifying information could be redacted so that board members are reviewing each application and essay on merit only, grades, volunteer and community service, future plans within FDC, letter of recommendation, etc. Mr. Rush added the scholarship should not be used to gain favor with the Foundation or Department, the board doesn't need to know names.

Mr. Mecusker asked if the scholarship is only for members of the Corrections Foundation. Mr. Akins responded that he didn't recommend that it be tied to membership but available for anyone who is eligible to be a Corrections Foundation Member, this would include FDC state employees and contractors serving FDC. The board agreed that it not be only for members but follow the same criteria for membership eligibility.

Mr. Mecusker asked if we wanted to only offer for public colleges since private colleges are very expensive and our donation wouldn't go as far at a private college? Ms. Patterson noted that private school participants shouldn't be excluded because of where they choose to attend college but that it should be an accredited college.

Mr. Akins asked if the Board wishes to grant the scholarship award to the student or to the school. The Board agreed to issue to the school. Mr. Wynns asked how we will verify enrollment? Ms. Patterson commented that we will need to know the student ID #, school attending, proof of registration and will call to verify enrollment. The check will be sent to the school with information that it is for a specific student's tuition.

Mr. Akins summed up the discussion. The Louie L. Wainwright Scholarship will be offered to a current FDC employee or contractor/anyone who is eligible to be a member of the Corrections Foundation and will be a minimum award of \$1,000 plus funds raised that year with a maximum of \$2,500 being awarded and the possibility of having more than one scholarship recipient. The award will be issued to the school not the student.

We will limit the number of times an employee can receive the scholarship to once so that we make it available to as many people as possible. Mr. Wynns noted that scholarships go unclaimed every year so we will need to widely promote this to FDC staff and contractors so that applicants apply. Mr. Akins has some ideas of how to advertise via our email list, enews, website and would like for it to be an online submission with no phone calls to the Foundation. Mr. Rush said it could be promoted during the membership campaign in March and April as well, part of all the reasons you should join the Corrections Foundation.

Mr. Akins will pull together a final draft for the board to review.

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## Membership Campaign

Ms. Logue gave the membership campaign report noting that the statistics of before and after the campaign do not accurately capture how hard the field worked to recruit new members due to such a high turnover rate. In the last column of the statistics is a hand count of membership forms received so that board members can see the true effort among the field. A total of 1,229 new members joined the Foundation during March and April 2021 and our current membership stands at 76% of Department employees, an increase of 7% during the membership campaign.

Mr. Akins asked Mr. Reidl about turnover being an issue and he agreed that unfortunately there is a turnover rate of 30-40% due to increased competition for employment and the increase in minimum wage. Turnover and maintaining employees is something the Department continues to struggle with.

## Golf Tournament

The 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Golf Tournament is scheduled for October 28<sup>th</sup> at SouthWood Golf Club in Tallahassee. We will begin promoting the tournament and soliciting sponsors in August and September.

## Next Board Meeting

The next board meeting is set for September 23<sup>rd</sup> by conference call.

## Additional Business

Ms. Logue asked the board for approval of digital signatures when local board members are not available to sign checks. Ms. Lisa Miller has approved for her signature to be used digitally when needed. The board approved the use of digital signatures when needed.

Motion made to adjourn by Mr. Mecusker, seconded by Ms. Patterson and passed. Meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Minutes submitted on July 8, 2021 by Sheri Logue.

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