

# SCCC Local Family Council Teleconference Minutes

## Call Details

**Facility:** Stafford Creek Corrections Center

**Date and Time:** 10-14-20

## Attendees

- SCCC Staff – Associate Penrose, IT4 K. Bradley, ICP & AA3 Tatro
- Others- P. Perkinson - HQ, M. Gyde - OCO, Ruth Redding – SCCC’s LBA (Local Business Advisor), C. Melhuish – Family Services Division & B. Mansford, CPPC (Community Partnership Program Coordinator)
- LFC Officers: State Rep Susan Cooksey, Secretary Vanessa Lewis & Co-Chair Miriam Fry
- Family members – D. Sifres, J. Revay, J. Triggs, L. Taylor, V. Westman, B. Duschene,, S. Wade, J. Griggs, D. Webb-Cristelli, S. Wirkkala , D & K. Kaiser

## 2021 OFFICER ELECTIONS:

A process was created for members to nominate themselves or others for our three (3) LFC officers’ positions. Ballots with those names were sent out, returned and counted. There were no new members nominated, so voting was completed with the existing three (3) officers that are already in place. Please congratulate our 2021 LFC family officers:

**State Family Representative – Susan Cooksey**

**Family Co-Chair – Miriam Fry**

**Family Secretary – Vanessa Lewis**

Each officer was given the opportunity to speak after the election announcement. Family Secretary Vanessa Lewis thanked everyone for their votes and that she pledges to try to do even better for the 2021 calendar year. Family Co-Chair Miriam Fry thanked the family members for voting for her, having the opportunity to work with everyone on the council and stated she will continue to do her best for the betterment of DOC and our incarcerated. Family State Rep Susan Cooksey thanked the group for putting their confidence in her as our State Rep. She reminded everyone that this is her third (3<sup>rd</sup>) year as the State Rep and that she will need to be replaced for the 2022 calendar year per DOC Policy 530.155 Family Councils. In addition, Susan stated that any family member that has questions to forward for our weekly teleconferences or general questions about LFC or SFC, to please email her at [susandcooksey@frontier.com](mailto:susandcooksey@frontier.com).

I would like to thank all of the officers for the hard work that goes into these positions as much of it is behind the scenes and for having the privilege to work with them for the betterment of SCCC and our incarcerated population.

## Presentations:

### **Family Friendly Programs: Family Services & Community Partnership Program**

Caroline Melhuish from our Family Services Division presented information regarding the below topics and what she and the other three (3) Family Services folks across the State have been working on this calendar year.

**Parenting Inside Out** – The Strength in Families Program unfortunately lost their funding for the 2021 year and will be unable to continue providing services for the incarcerated.

**JPay** - Since the onset of COVID-19 in March, Family Services have been reviewing and screening JPay entries as a means of assisting the Department with this much needed task. COVID-19 has unfortunately created extra work for DOC staff to include an increase in JPay entries/correspondence.

**Lodging Assistance Program** - In addition, they continue to develop the Lodging Assistance Program for facilities around the State. SCCC has \$10,000 budgeted for the year and approved families will receive \$50.00 for lodging if they meet the mileage criteria of 150 miles from home to facility. This is being allotted on a once per month basis. Approximately 15 to 18 applications have been approved monthly. Details are continuing to be finalized prior to reinstating Visitation at the facilities.

Q: Why was \$10,000 budgeted for SCCC? Or did this amount go to all the major facilities and a lesser amount going to the smaller institutions and camps?

A: Yes, the major facilities were allotted \$10,000 with the camps receiving \$5,000 and WCC/WCCW both received \$8,000.

Q: Who has the ability to change the 150 mile criteria?

A: I am not certain but this has not been a significant concern in the past. Trainings will occur in the coming weeks.

**Video Greetings** – The Family Services Division has been working with the CPPC’s from each facility on expanding this program to include Read to Me. The Read to Me program enables the incarcerated individuals to create a DVD and books that are sent home to be shared with their children/loved ones. This program promotes connection between the incarcerated and their families.

Branwyn Mansford, CPPC (Community Partnership Program Coordinator), presented information regarding Family Friendly Programs at SCCC summarizing projects and events, as well as upcoming ideas for the holidays, workshops, video greetings and replacement event criteria.

**Read to Me Program** – The Read to Me Program is designed to strengthen the connection between the incarcerated and their children. There are 4-6 incarcerated individuals that choose the book they wish to read to their children, make a DVD recording and the DVD and book are sent to that child. All funds for this program are through the IIBF (Incarcerated Individual Betterment Fund).

**Communication Corner** – This is a statewide kiosk help program with tips, conversation starters and tutorials on communication that enhances connectivity between the incarcerated and their families. This program will be starting soon.

**Fall Project** – The Fall movie night is being replaced with a child focused project. This will consist of an origami tutorial along with a getting to know you questionnaire, letter home and DVD. The incarcerated individual will be recorded making the how to form with step by step instructions so that the child can make their own origami craft along with their father. This project is scheduled for the second week of November. Flyer and kiosk announcement have been sent out to the population.

**Back to School/back packs** – MCC had an overabundance of backpacks this year and reached out to other facilities to host a drive up back pack pick up for this year’s Back to School Event that had to be cancelled due to COVID-19. As they are more centrally located, they graciously offered to host the drive up for back packs this year so that folks didn’t have to drive a lot further to pick up their back packs.

**Children's Book Library** – This project is currently being developed with a hopeful start date within the next few months. Children's books will be provided in each housing unit to be used during video visits. The primary focus is to develop relationship goals and connectivity between the incarcerated and their child(ren).

Q: What are your plans for upcoming events between the incarcerated and their loved ones?

A: During our twice monthly CPPC meetings, events are continually discussed and planned out dependent upon DOC guidelines/restrictions with ongoing COVID-19 restrictions. It was decided for each CPPC to plan 2021 events to include a standard event like we have in the past via the Family Friendly calendar with a replacement event if needed as a back-up measure.

Q: Can a regularly scheduled movie night be planned for our population?

A: Our Family Friendly Events are funded through the IIBF and are required to have a direct impact on the relationship between our incarcerated and their families. COVID-19 limits what we can do with these events due to social distancing measures.

Q: Do the funds allocated for each event have to be spent for that particular event or can those funds be distributed for another event/workshop?

A: DOC and the IIBF have an agreement that the funds have to be used for what they are allocated for and cannot be transferred for another event/workshop.

Q: What parameters have to be followed for the Read to Me program in terms of grandfathers' participation?

A: Any incarcerated individual who has a child on their approved visit list is approved for the program, unless there are Judgment and Sentence restrictions or sanctions.

Q: Can the remaining funds from 2020's allotment be rolled over into 2021 allocated funds?

A: The CPPC can ask to reallocate those funds to bolster other events.

Q: Issues have been encountered with regard to the DVD's burned for the books and the formatting only working on certain systems. Can instructions be included when the DVD's are sent out?

A: Yes, I will provide instructions for all future DVD's being sent out.

Q: Can the flyers & sign up directions for the Family Friendly Events be sent to the family members through the Local Family Council?

A: I send out all event flyers & sign ups to the population only via kiosk to population and unit postings. The purpose behind this is for the incarcerated individual to play an active role in helping their children by giving them the initiative to teach their children.

Q: Can the family members receive the information sent to the population related to family funded programs?

A: Under normal circumstances, we have a calendar that is posted to the website containing this type of information. However, since the COVID-19 epidemic began, this has changed what the facility had originally planned in terms of Family Friendly Events/Workshops. We will pledge to do a better job of notifying our family members of this information in the future. Please encourage your incarcerated loved one to be involved with their children so that when they release, that bond will be established and will make for a smoother transition upon release. \*\*Please note that SCCC's Family Friendly Calendar is posted in the Visit Room and on I-DOC prior to COVID-19 pandemic\*\*

Q: Can the Family Friendly calendar be posted onto the kiosk for the population?

A: We will have our IT Department look review this for viability.

## **Banking/IIBF (Incarcerated Individual Betterment Fund)**

Ruth Redding our LBA (Local Business Advisor) summarized the IIBF quarterly review, as well as fielded questions regarding banking processes and procedures.

**2021 IIBF summary** – SCCC has allotted \$31,000 for **Family Friendly events**. This includes the following: Back to School, Day with Dad, Family crafts, Family Fun Night, Hotel/Motel Voucher Program, Spring Family Event, Winter Family Event, Video Greetings Program, Significant Other Event and Pop up Funds. Pop Up Funds is dependent upon Headquarters discretion for spending. **TV systems** have been allocated \$141,768; Budgeted Expenditures (Non-Restricted) has been allocated \$19,440, which includes Barber Shop, Cultural, Dog Program, EFV Recoveries, Hobby Recoveries, Recreation Recoveries and TV Recoveries. SCCC’s total budgeted expenditures is \$192,208. Please see attached spreadsheet for complete details.

**\*\*If SCCC is not able to use Family Friendly funds for the event they are allocated for, those funds can be moved to other areas with Superintendent approval. However, with regard to program funds allocated to a specific event/workshop, if the total funds allocated are not spent, those funds will go back into the IIBF for redistribution the following year\*\***

## Roundtable Questions

Q: There have been mailroom issues the past few weeks to include newspaper subscriptions, which has added more steps that have to be taken in order to receive them. It is confusing and hard to follow policy rules. Can more communication go out to the family members and incarcerated population of these changes?

A: This is not a new process. SCCC has nearly 2,000 incarcerated individuals that receive mail every day and it is impossible to look up each and every cell assignment to keep up with the demand due to staffing levels. We do the best we can to get the mail out to all of our population. If an incarcerated individual changes cell assignments, the incarcerated individual needs to send in a change of address to the publication so that it is not sent to the old address. The Mailroom will deliver the mail, but it is appreciated for the incarcerated individual to update the new cell assignment with the publication, as well as personal mail, to help with the mail flow.

Q: Is the Mailroom being shut down at SCCC due to furloughs?

A: The Mailroom positions are union represented and are referred to as “temporary lay-offs.” Per Governor Inslee’s mandatory ruling, all represented state employees will be temporarily laid off for four (4) days the month of October and three (3) days the month of November. We are not permitted to put another employee into that staff member’s position.

Q: What is the process for incarcerated individuals to get their mail if they are transferred to another facility?

A: The new unit and cell assignment is sent to the new facility for that incarcerated individual.

Q: What dates are the Mailroom staff being temporarily laid off?

A: October 20<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> and November 11<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>.

Q: Why are these dates consecutive rather than being spaced out?

A: This is Statewide, not just at SCCC and is set out by job classification.

Q: Will banking be affected as well?

A: Yes, the deposits will be late as Banking’s lay off days are following the Mailroom’s.

Q: Will JPay be affected?

A: Yes, we anticipate it will interrupt deliveries for October and November.

Q: What about the Christmas packages?

A: This may cause delays with the packages being delivered.

Q: The phone issues at SCCC are still unresolved. When will this be fixed?

A: GTL and Comcast are working together to resolve the issues and the vendor continues to come into the facility for this purpose. Updates will be provided regularly.

Q: What percentage of the cable fees are related to staff and what percentage are related to the I/I’s?

A: This information will be provided at our next meeting.

**Comments/Closing** – Congratulations to our 2021 LFC Officers and for the good work that has been done in the past to better our incarcerated population. A lot of their work is done behind the scenes and many hours of their personal time is used to communicate with and assist our family members with questions and issues they are experiencing. Thank you again for your patience and understanding regarding the temporary lay-offs and looking forward to next week's teleconference. Please be safe.