10-8-1953

Juvenile Welfare Board Meeting: 1953: 10: 08: Minutes

Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County.
Meeting of October 8, 1953
Held in Clearwater

Present: Mrs. Strickland, Chairman; Mr. Parry, Secretary; Mrs. Harrison; Mr. Christian; and the Director, Dr. Herbert D. Williams.

There was a discussion of Judge Gardiner's letter to Commissioner R. Hosey Wick, Chairman of the County Board of Commissioners relative to transferring $12,000 from Juvenile Welfare Board funds to the Juvenile Court budget. It was the unanimous opinion of those present that the Juvenile Welfare Board abide by the law in disbursement of all funds including those going to the Juvenile Court.

The minutes of the September 24, 1953 meeting were approved as submitted to the members by mail.

Motion:
Expenditures

Expenditures to be covered by checks No. 3283 to and including 3291 from the General Fund and check No. 423 from the In-School Counseling Fund were approved on motion by Mr. Christian, seconded by Mrs. Harrison, and carried.

Motion:
Election of Officers

In the election of officers, Mrs. Baya Harrison was nominated as Chairman; Mr. Sidney Parry was nominated as Secretary. Mr. Christian moved that the nominees be elected to the offices for which they had been nominated. Mrs. Strickland seconded the motion, which carried.

The Director gave the number of children in the Child Welfare Unit and the number of children in the Children's Service Bureau being supported in whole or in part by the Juvenile Welfare Board.

The Director and the members of the Board reported on Homemaker's Service and the program for a meeting to be held for the purpose of giving recognition to foster parents in the county.

Dr. Williams reported that there was not enough funds under office expense to justify taking pictures and developing the kind of report which had been suggested. He stated that the Chairman of the Publicity Committee, Mr. Pat Flanagan, and Mr. Warren Pierce had both suggested that a short summary, hitting the high spots be sent out on a wide distribution and also included in the general report for distribution to agencies and individuals with more direct interest in the facts and figures of the report. The board approved going ahead with this plan.

There was a discussion regarding children being held in the city jail and the failure of the Juvenile Court to comply with the request of the Juvenile Welfare Board that the children be transferred to the county jail juvenile ward and that in cases where it was necessary to keep children in the city prison for some reason, the Director be contacted and his approval secured. This request was outlined in the April 23 Minutes.
The Director reported that the Board's counsel had advised the Board not to pay for the care of prisoners in the city prison, since there was no legal authorization for such payments, and since much of the confinement there did not seem to be justified as an emergency.

The Board requested that the Director write to Dr. Penningroth expressing the Board's appreciation for his long and valuable service to the children of Pinellas County and congratulating him on his new appointment.

Dr. Williams clarified the invitation of the Budget Board to appear with Judge Gardiner on October 21, 1953 at the Budget Board hearing.

The program as outlined for the October 21 meeting with the foster parents was given by the Director.

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Board would be held at 2:00 P.M. in the St. Petersburg offices of the Board in advance of the 3:00 P.M. meeting with the foster parents on the same date. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Letter to Dr. Paul Penningroth

Dr. Paul Penningroth
4565 Lakeview Avenue
St. Petersburg, Florida

Dear Dr. Penningroth:

The Juvenile Welfare Board at its meeting on October 8, asked the Director to express on behalf of the Board its great appreciation for your services to the children of Pinellas County over the past ten years.

The Board and its Director feel that you have been the motivating drive and the person responsible for developing child guidance and mental health services in Pinellas County to an extent not found in other counties in the state. Your unfailing insistence upon high standards of performance, well qualified staff, and the basic interest of children and parents has been observed by the Board of Juvenile Welfare and its Director. They wish to express to you their sincere appreciation for all you have done in the county and to congratulate you on your appointment to a wider field of endeavor which will, in our opinion, lead to improved child guidance and mental health facilities throughout the state.

Wishing you every success in your new and wider opportunity for service, we are

Sincerely yours

Juvenile Welfare Board

By

Herbert D. Williams
Director
One group of people to whom the County of Pinellas owes an everlasting debt of gratitude according to the Pinellas County Juvenile Welfare Board, is the group of foster parents who take children into their homes and give them affection, understanding, and acceptance when their own homes through death, abandonment, illness, or for other reasons can no longer provide homelife for these children. This labor of love is performed unselfishly, quietly, patiently, and without recognition or thought of material reward.

There are some ninety couples of foster parents who are providing this kind of service for the children of Pinellas County.

During the past ten years, and most of it during the past five years, 1622 children have been given the benefit of foster home care. These children have been cared for without financial return to the foster parents. They have been given a chance to experience homelife instead of less desirable institutional care.

This foster home service began on a limited basis with the Children's Service Bureau of St. Petersburg, a private, Chest supported agency in 1940. Up to September 30, 1953, 638 different children had found acceptance in these foster homes which would have been otherwise denied to them.

The Catholic Charities Bureau began to use foster homes in Pinellas County in 1945 and during the period between 1945 and the present time, 471 children were given foster home care under the auspices and supervision of the Catholic Charities Bureau.

In June 1948, the Child Welfare Unit of the State Department of Public Welfare was organized in Pinellas County as a cooperative effort between the Juvenile Welfare Board and the State Department of Public Welfare. The Unit, it was agreed, would provide foster home care for the dependent children whose parents were unable to provide for them or to pay for their care in foster homes. During the period between June 1948 and September 30, 1953, 410 such children have been cared for in the foster homes found and supervised by this unit.

The Children's Home Society of Florida established a branch office in Pinellas County for adoption service for the infants of St. Petersburg and nearby areas and began to find and supervise foster homes for infants who were placed there pending their placement in adoption homes, while studies were being made to determine the suitability of the adoptive parents and of the child for adoption. During the period March 1952 through September 30, 1953, 94 children were placed in foster homes.

The county officials, the Juvenile Welfare Board, and the boards of the various agencies have cooperated in planning a meeting at which some recognition can be given to these foster parents. This meeting will be held at 3:00 P.M. on October 21, in the County Health Building. At the meeting, presided over by Mrs. Baya Harrison, Chairman of the Juvenile Welfare Board,
the Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners, Mr. R. Hosey Wick, the Vice-Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners, Mr. Sidney Parry, who is also Secretary of the Juvenile Welfare Board, and representatives from the various social agency boards will express appreciation to these dedicated people for their services.

One of the foster parents will tell of the satisfactions of being a foster parent. It is planned to select from each agency the foster couple who has given the longest service as foster parents for an award of a Savings Bond. Other foster parents who have had at least one year of service as foster parents will receive certificates for their service as foster parents.