3-24-1948

Juvenile Welfare Board Meeting: 1948: 03: 24: Minutes

Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County.

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Minutes of Board Meeting

The meeting was held March 24, 1948 at 3:00 P.M., at the County Courthouse in Clearwater. Members present included: Mr. G. V. Fuguit, Miss Ora Phillips, Mrs. George Bartlett, Mr. Henry Belcher, Mrs. H. W. Holland, and Judge Alfred P. Marshall.

Invited guests included: Dr. H. D. Williams, Director; Dr. Parr and Mrs. Ripper of District #4 Welfare Board; Miss Frances Davis of the State Welfare Board; and Mr. Beaton, President of the Children's Service Bureau.

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. H. W. Holland, Chairman.

The Board began its meeting with a discussion of the establishment of a proposed Child Welfare Unit. The Director of the Juvenile Welfare Board brought up a number of questions which have been raised since the last meeting with representatives of the State Welfare relative to the proposed Child Welfare Unit. These had to do with availability for children who need emergency shelter care, the speed with which such facilities could be provided, the extent to which these would supplant the need for the Juvenile Home, and the extent to which foster homes could be secured to provide adequately for the needs of children for whom long-time foster home care is needed.

This led to a discussion of the relationship which should exist between the Children's Service Bureau and the Child Welfare Unit, and it was agreed that the Child Welfare Unit would relieve the Children's Service Bureau of cases requiring long-time care beginning at the point of intake and ultimately reaching those already being cared for by the Children's Service Bureau on a long-time basis. It was agreed that there should be no overlapping between the two agencies, but that through referrals and conferences the best interests of the child would be used as a guide to determine treatment needs, and which agency could best meet those needs. It was agreed that mass transfer would not be in the best interest of the children now being cared for by the Children’s Service Bureau, but that such transfer should be on a case-by-case basis, based on the careful evaluation of the child's needs and of the total family situation.

It was pointed out that responsibility for the payment for care by parents who had been ordered to do so by the court remained with the court, and that the responsibility for keeping the court informed rested upon the Children's Service Bureau in those cases where the Children's Service Bureau is giving the service and the court has ordered the parents to pay.

The responsibility of the agency and the court in respect to custody, with the agency furnishing the court with complete information which would enable the court to arrive at a decision as to the need for the change of custody or change in method and amount of payment, was clarified through discussion.
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It was stated that the Children's Service Bureau was set up mainly to give special care and service to children in need of such services, and to provide these services for parents who were able to pay for them. It was not set up as an agency for long-time care and for giving relief in the form of maintenance and support of children in foster homes. The proposed Child Welfare Unit, on the other hand, would have that as one of its major responsibilities, together with the establishment of short-time shelter care for the purposes of studying and determining the needs of children.

The president of the Children's Service Bureau indicated that there has been an increasing number of children in need of foster home care over a long period of time, but there has been a decrease in the amount of payments by parents for such care and an increase in the proportion of the total budget of the Children's Service Bureau which had to be allocated to relief.

Miss Davis declared that the Child Welfare Unit would be responsible for accepting dependent and neglected children for shelter care and for determining, in each individual case, whether the child needed foster home care, whether it could be placed with relatives, or whether it needed institutional care; and would be responsible for taking steps to see that the child received the type of care it needed up to the extent that funds were provided for such services. She reiterated the fact that state and federal funds would take care of shelter care, not to exceed ninety days, with no cost to the county.

Mr. Beaton indicated that the Children's Service Bureau might be able to cooperate in providing some temporary care pending the securing of additional funds if the amount available for board and care was temporarily exceeded, and pending the securing of funds from the county.

If the Child Welfare Unit had an increase in demand for service which required additional staff, this need would be met out of state and federal funds.

With reference to the eligibility for service, Miss Davis pointed out that so far as children were concerned, there was no question of eligibility except that of need. Eligibility for adults and aid to dependent children is determined on the basis of residence, but not for a child in need of child welfare service such as would be provided by the Child Welfare Unit.

The questions raised by the Director were answered by Miss Davis who said that the District Board could not promise to find all the foster homes that would be needed within a month or two months, but that they would work as quickly as possible, that they would proceed immediately to work on finding shelter homes, and that in her opinion these could be provided at less expense than the Juvenile
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Home required. She declared that they would try to develop a program, as far as possible, according to the highest standards of child placement and child care, and with the best staff which they could secure.

It was brought out in the discussion that foster homes were more easily secured through having a county-wide unit and utilizing the resources available in the less populous districts where it was easier to find more stable, better adjusted foster homes for children.

Representatives of the State Welfare Department declared that the need for emergency care would have to be met by the Child Welfare Unit at any time that need arose.

The program of the Child Welfare Unit would call for the establishing of a number of shelter care homes so that children could be cared for in terms of age groups, personality, sex differences, etc.

Motion: Child Welfare Unit Agreement
Following the discussion of these points, Judge Marshall moved and Mr. Belcher seconded that the chairman, or a member of the Board, and the Director meet with the chairman of the District Welfare Board #4 and the Director of District Welfare Board #4, to work out an agreement for the establishing of a Child Welfare Unit to be submitted to both Boards for their approval. The motion was passed unanimously.

Motion: Transportation for small girl
The case of a small girl for whom plans have been made for placement in an institution in Savannah, Georgia, was discussed. The need for transportation from Jacksonville to Savannah was pointed out, and Judge Marshall moved and Mr. Belcher seconded the motion that the Juvenile Welfare Board pay for the cost of this transportation from Jacksonville to Savannah. The motion was passed unanimously.

Motion: Child Guidance Clinic
A request from the Child Guidance Clinic for $500.00 for payment on the amount allocated to the Child Guidance Clinic was presented. It was moved by Mr. Belcher and seconded by Miss Phillips that a check be drawn to the treasurer of the Child Guidance Clinic, and that a request be made to the Clinic for reports regarding its operation. This motion was carried.
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The secretary of the Board presented the following bills for payment:

Peninsular Telephone Co.
St. Pete Office
Board of Juvenile Welfare
Juvenile Home $45.80

Peninsular Telephone Co.
Clearwater Office $21.50

Dr. Williams
Trip to Tarpon Springs and meeting in St. Pete $14.75
Trip to Clearwater for meeting
Garage Rent for March

Albert L. Rogero
Delivering Ronald Glover to Marianna and attending conference at Gainesville $54.21
Traveling Expenses

Mrs. H. W. Holland
Long distance phone calls July thru Feb. $41.59

Mr. Ed Patrick - Trip to Gainesville - Ronald Glover $10.50

Motion: It was moved by Judge Marshall, and seconded by Miss Phillips that these bills be paid. This motion was carried.

Motion: Mr. Belcher moved and Miss Phillips seconded that the Board employ Miller Johnson of St. Petersburg as case worker, at $200.00 per month, plus $75.00 per month travel expenses, the Board of County Commissioners to be asked to appoint him as negro probation officer without salary.

It was agreed by the Board to hold an informal reception honoring Dr. and Mrs. Williams, April 7, 1948, at the home of Mrs. Holland, invitations to be extended to social agencies and dignitaries of the County. It was also arranged for the negro social workers to meet Dr. Williams the same week.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 P. M., till the next regular meeting date, April 8, 1948, in Clearwater.

V.R.