3-2-1961

Juvenile Welfare Board Meeting : 1961 : 03 : 02 : Minutes

Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County.

Follow this and additional works at: https://digital.usfsp.edu/jwb_meetings

Recommended Citation

https://digital.usfsp.edu/jwb_meetings/395

This Other is brought to you for free and open access by the Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County at Digital USFSP. It has been accepted for inclusion in Junior Welfare Board Agendas/Minutes by an authorized administrator of Digital USFSP.
Meeting in Clearwater
March 2, 1961

PRESENT: Reverend Mr. Robert E. Coleman, Jr., Chairman; Mrs. Baya Harrison, Secretary; Mrs. H. W. Holland; Mrs. Gus Sakkis; County Commissioner A. L. Anderson; and Juvenile Court Judge Charles O. Parks, Jr. Also present: Dr. George H. Finck, Director; Mr. Lincoln Daniels, Chief, Community Services Branch, Division of Juvenile Delinquency Service, United States Children's Bureau.

The minutes of the February 2nd meeting were discussed. Since there was some confusion about who is responsible for the motions listed under the name of Judge Parks who presided, it was decided that the names of Mrs. Harrison and County Commissioner Anderson would be substituted for that of Judge Parks in the motions which were made in his name. The corrected minutes were then accepted.

There followed a discussion of the fact that, under the new County switchboard arrangements, the name of the Juvenile Welfare Board was no longer listed in the St. Petersburg telephone book.

MOTION
Telephone listing

Mrs. Holland moved, and Mrs. Sakkis seconded a motion which carried, that the telephone company be contacted and instructed to give a regular listing in the black and white pages of the telephone book for the Juvenile Welfare Board and for Marriage and Family Counseling. The Reverend Coleman stated that he would contact the County Clerk, Mr. Gilkerson, and it was agreed that this contact would be made before the matter was taken up with the telephone company.

MOTION
Expenditures

Judge Parks moved, and Commissioner Anderson seconded a motion which carried, to approve the checks as listed: check #7509 dated February 2nd; checks #7510 through #7541 dated February 15th; checks #7542 through #7564 dated February 28th, 1961; also, checks #82 and #83 from the Trust Fund.

The financial reports for the month of February were reviewed by the Board and explanations made by the Director. The report on children in foster care for the month of January was also reviewed.

Dr. Finck reported on the status of the amendment to the Juvenile Welfare Board Act. The amendment as drawn by Mr. Leonard Cooperman was included in the materials for this Board meeting. Also included was a letter from Mr. J. S. Rodriguez, County Attorney, stating that the Board of County Commissioners was of the opinion that the proposed amendment should be modified to provide that the annual assessment "may" be made, rather than "shall" be made. A copy of Mr. Rodriguez' letter had been sent to Mr. Leonard Cooperman who wrote the Director concerning his opinion on the lack of mandatory provision in the amendment. Mr. Anderson offered to take Mr. Cooperman's letter to the Board of County Commissioners and ask for a reconsideration of the statement that had been furnished by Mr. Rodriguez.

MOTION
Letter to Mr. Leonard Cooperman

Mrs. Holland moved, and Mrs. Harrison seconded a motion which carried, that the permanent minutes contain Mr. Cooperman's letter in regard to the function and purpose of the Juvenile Welfare Board and that a letter of appreciation go to Mr. Cooperman for his outstanding services to the Board in this and other past matters.
The need for temporary psychiatric consultation for the Marriage and Family Counseling Staff was discussed.

**MOTION**
Approval of fees for psychiatric consultation

Mrs. Harrison moved, and Mrs. Holland seconded a motion which carried, that the Director be authorized to engage the consultative services of Dr. Koenig for one or two consultations per month as needed. The fee for these consultations would be $35.00 per session and would be paid until such time as the Child Guidance Clinic acquires the services of a psychiatrist director.

**MOTION**
Approval of expenses for Dr. Finck to attend meetings in St. Louis and Minneapolis

Mr. Anderson moved, and Mrs. Sakkis seconded a motion which carried, that the Juvenile Welfare Board pay the expenses for Dr. Finck to attend the meeting of the National Association of Public Agencies for Juvenile Delinquency Prevention, St. Louis, May 10th to May 12th, and to the National Conference of Social Welfare, Minneapolis, May 14th to 17th.

Dr. Finck read a letter from the Community Welfare Council asking the Juvenile Welfare Board to make recommendations for the person in the Greater St. Petersburg Area who had made the outstanding contribution to youth during the calendar year, 1960. It was decided to discuss this further at the next meeting.

Mr. Lincoln Daniels of the United States Children's Bureau then talked with the Board about services to children in Pinellas County. He stated that the United States Children's Bureau regarded the program of services to children in Pinellas County as an outstanding one in the Nation. He hoped to learn more about the origin, the development, and programs of the Board in order to tell other communities in the State and throughout the Nation about the work that is being done here. He emphasized that the Board should hold strongly to what it was doing at the present time and to strengthen programs as the Board saw fit. He felt that the Juvenile Welfare Board represented a most unique and ingenious way of affording services to children.

Mr. Daniels suggested that the Juvenile Welfare Board include law enforcement officers in the discussion of plans for services to children whenever possible. He felt that some important thinking and planning was needed in the community on the problem of youth employment. He believed that the community should give further consideration to a study of the problems of detention. He also mentioned the need for the County to study carefully the problem of school dropouts.

The activities reports for the month of February were reviewed by the Board.

Since there was no further business the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting of the Board will be Thursday, April 6th, at nine-thirty.

Virginia D. Harrison
Secretary
March 1, 1961

Dr. George H. Finck
Director, Juvenile Welfare Board
207 County Building
St. Petersburg, Florida

Dear Dr. Finck:

I have a copy of a letter to you from J. S. Rodriguez, County Attorney, dated last February 24th, concerning the proposed amendment to the Juvenile Welfare Board Act. Of course I am wholly opposed to making the modification the County Commissioners have suggested. The purposes of the Act and its history completely contradict the wisdom of the present proposal. I am sure that if the County Commissioners are advised of the history they will rescind this present action.

Accordingly I am detailing that history as follows:

The first act concerning the Juvenile Welfare Board was passed by the Florida Legislature in 1945, subject to a referendum by the people who approved it by a large majority in 1946. This first act contained a mandatory requirement for a tax levy at the millage provided in the act. The people approved this mandatory feature in the referendum election. Every amendment since that time has likewise provided for a mandatory levy of tax at the rate of millage set forth in such amendments. The proposed amendment follows this pattern and changes nothing except the millage rate and gives the County Commission authority to supplement the funds received from the mandatory levy if they so decide.

The Original Juvenile Welfare Board was set up to be a self-autonomous body to handle the needs and problems of children, mainly dependent children, in Pinellas County. It was thought best that the Board should not be subject to the whim and caprice of others in taking care of its dedicated duties to the children of this County. Accordingly a required tax levy which is not subject to alteration by anyone other than the State Legislature was built into the original act and this feature has been continued in every amendatory act. The idea behind it is that the Juvenile Welfare Board shall have without deviation a certain amount of money to spend for the needs of the children of this County, which amount is not to be tampered with by other Boards including the Board of County Commissioners. The millage set by the Legislature determines that amount.

It was thought and it is still thought that the persons on the Board and the expert personnel employed by the Board can best determine what to do about the problems of children in this County without being subject to the authority of any other body. The Board has worked very well for many years with this principle fixed into its procedures.

This very principle is one of the unique things about the Pinellas County program which has been lauded nationally and which many localities would like to emulate. People dedicated to help children can determine their needs in a particular county better than any other fiscal body.

The destruction of this principle by the present County Commission in its proposal cannot help the situation but conceivably could hurt the work of the Board.
in the future. An economy minded future County Commission might find enchantment in saving taxes at the expense of the children because of disagreement with the philosophy of those who are dedicated to the helping of children. I do not mean this latter statement to be bitter in any way. I am stating it as a possible result of the present proposal.

As you know, I conceived the original idea for the Juvenile Welfare Board and have prepared all legislation which has been passed concerning it. I believe I can truthfully say that I am the father of the idea of the Juvenile Welfare Board and its execution. I have been proud of my offspring thus far because of the effective work it has done for children within the framework of the original pattern. Nothing, in my opinion, justifies a departure from the pattern. The past success of the Board in meeting the needs of the dependent children of this County points an unerring path to continue in the future the same as we have in the past, except to supply the additional money necessitated by the vast growth of the County.

As you and other members of the Board know, the Juvenile Welfare Board has never paid an attorney's fee because I have been willing to do this work for no other compensation than to feel gratified at being a party to helping the dependent children in this County. I believe the Board is also unique in this respect. I have liked this arrangement for an additional reason in that it leaves me free to "speak my mind" without thought of jeopardizing a paying job.

You are at liberty to furnish the County Commission or anyone else with a copy of this letter. Meanwhile, I am sending a copy to the Honorable Charles R. Holley so that the legislative delegation will be advised.

Sincerely,

s/ Leonard W. Cooperman

LWC:cl

CC: Hon. Charles R. Holley