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Juvenile Welfare Board Meeting: 1970:02:05: Minutes

Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County.

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JUVENILE WELFARE BOARD

Meeting February 5, 1970

PRESENT: Dr. Robert E. Coleman, Jr., Chairman; Mrs. William C. M. Bissell, Secretary; Mrs. H. W. Holland; Mrs. Roy Speer; County Commissioner, A. L. Anderson; and Juvenile Court Judge Jack A. Page. Also present: Dr. George H. Finck, Director; Dr. Raymond L. Edwards, Assistant Director; Mr. Wesley Jenkins, Director, Family and Children's Service, Inc.

MOTION Approval of Minutes of December 4
Mrs. Holland moved, and Commissioner Anderson seconded a motion which carried, to approve the minutes of the meeting of December 4, 1969.

Mr. Jenkins discussed with the Board a proposal for the subsidized adoption of children "hard to place" for adoption and cared for through the funds appropriated to Family and Children's Service by the Juvenile Welfare Board. His proposal related to plans for helping low and moderate income families to adopt children, particularly those who might already be in their foster care. The plan would also set up a guarantee for medical payments if these should exist for a period of time. He said that he hoped that most cases could be handled within an additional one-to-three year period after the adoption had been legally consummated. It was Mr. Jenkins' opinion that in the long run this program would not only afford safe and permanent homes for children who might otherwise be continued in foster care, but that it would eventually furnish substantial savings for each child whose present cost in foster care amounts to about $1,000 a year. There was considerable discussion about this proposal, and concerns were expressed that this program might be represented as a way in which people were to be paid to adopt children. It was finally decided that adequate safeguards could be provided if the Juvenile Welfare Board approved each individual case on the presentation of a summary from Family and Children's Service.

MOTION Approval of subsidized adoption proposal
Mrs. Speer moved, and Mrs. Holland seconded a motion which carried, to accept the proposal made by Family and Children's Service, Inc. with the provision that the Board approve each case on an individual basis where the subsidy was to be given.

MOTION Confirmation of telephone approval of expenditures for Dec.
Commissioner Anderson moved, and Judge Page seconded a motion which carried, to confirm the approval given by telephone of the expenditures for December. Dr. Finck pointed out that these included a desk and chair for a total of $140.92 which were purchased through the Board of Public Instruction, and an expenditure of $35 for internal moving of file cabinets and other equipment in the office.

MOTION Approval of expenditures for January
Mrs. Speer moved, and Mrs. Holland seconded a motion which carried, to approve expenditures for January: checks #4517 through #4572 dated January 30; checks #4573 through #4601, #4101 through #4119 dated February 5; and checks #4120 and #4121 dated February 27.
MOTION
Approval of Salary Reclassification for Mrs. Ada Sommer

Mrs. Speer moved, and Mrs. Holland seconded a motion which carried, to approve the request of the Child Guidance Clinic for the reclassification of Mrs. Ada Sommer as Senior Psychiatric Social Worker with an annual salary of $11,500, effective as of January 1, 1970. The check was paid as a January expense rather than on the regular salary check list because the Board did not meet in January to approve this request.

MOTION
Confirmation of telephone approval for salaries

Commissioner Anderson moved, and Judge Page seconded a motion which carried, to confirm the telephone approval of the payment of salaries as budgeted in January 1970.

MOTION
Approval of salaries for February

Commissioner Anderson moved, and Judge Page seconded a motion which carried, to approve the salaries as budgeted for February on condition of completion of satisfactory service.

The financial statements for December 1969 and January 1970 were reviewed by the Board. Dr. Finck announced that taxes were coming in much more rapidly this year and, consequently, tax money could be invested as directed by the Board, as follows:

1. $100,000 @ 7.76% interest due 8/31/70.
2. 100,000 @ 7.60% interest due 3/26/70.
3. 50,000 @ 7.50% interest due 10/30/70.
4. 50,000 @ 7.86% interest due 7/30/70.
5. 50,000 @ 7.80% interest due 10/30/70.

Dr. Finck stated that the total amount of interest to be received from these investments would be approximately $16,000 or $18,000 and would be $6,000 or $7,000 in excess of the amount estimated to be received in the 1969-70 budget.

Dr. Finck explained the present status of Project Playpen; the decrease in funds from the Pinellas Opportunity Council; and the efforts made by the Project Playpen Board to secure funds from other sources. He stated that, in his opinion, it was vital to continue this program of subsidized day care, designed to insure the safety and protection of children away from their own homes and their own parents. He requested that the Board appropriate from the excess funds resulting from the additional interest paid.

MOTION
Approval of Project Playpen Allocation

Commissioner Anderson moved, and Mrs. Bissell seconded a motion which carried, that the Juvenile Welfare Board appropriate to Project Playpen, Inc. the sum of $650 a month for the remainder of the fiscal year, or a total of $5,200, for the care of children away from their own homes and parents in the licensed family day care homes of Project Playpen, Inc.

MOTION
Resolution for Honoring Miss Katherine J. Jones

Commissioner Anderson moved, and Mrs. Holland seconded a motion which carried, that the Board unanimously pass the resolution honoring Miss Katherine J. Jones who retired as Administrative Secretary, January 9, 1970.
The reports of children in foster care and in the two group homes for the months of November and December were reviewed by the Board. Dr. Finck pointed to the decrease in the number of children and the number of days of care paid for from Juvenile Welfare Board funds.

Dr. Finck announced that he had been appointed as County Coordinator for the White House Conference on Children and Youth which will be held December 13-18, 1970, at Washington, D.C. He stated that there would also be another conference to be held in June 1971 which would be concerned with youths from the ages of 13 through 21.

**MOTION**

Payment of travel expense for Dr. Finck

Mrs. Holland moved, and Mrs. Speer seconded a motion which carried, to approve the payment of necessary expenses for Dr. Finck to attend the meeting of the American Association of Marriage Counselors, March 21 and 22, and the meeting of the American Orthopsychiatric Association, March 23 through March 26, both at San Francisco, California.

Dr. Finck reported on his discussion with the Legislative Delegation on January 15 concerning the bill to expand the Juvenile Welfare Board. Judge Page stated that he attended the meeting of the Delegation on January 28 and presented this bill along with other legislation concerning the Juvenile Court.

The Activities Reports for the months of December and January were reviewed by the Board.

Since there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting of the Juvenile Welfare Board will be held at the Juvenile Court Center on Thursday, March 5, 1970.
FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICE, INC.,
928 Lakeview Avenue South
St. Petersburg, Florida 33705

PROPOSAL FOR SUBSIDIZED ADOPTION

There are a number of children who are relegated to long term foster care because a continuing medical, emotional or environmental condition makes adoption placement difficult. These conditions would include but not necessarily be limited to children with congenital handicaps such as cleft palates, Negro or racially mixed children, family groups of several children, children requiring long term treatment for medical or emotional problems, etc. For a number of years the Juvenile Welfare Board and Family and Children's Service have had a cooperative agreement in which the Juvenile Welfare Board has paid the boarding and allied costs of children accepted as "hard to place". Family and Children's Service has borne the administrative costs of giving service to the children both before and after adoption placement. Since the program's inception in June 1962 to the present time, a total of 71 children have been placed for adoption under this arrangement.

In a very limited number of instances adoptions for hard to place children have been effected when certain specific expenses were subsidized with Juvenile Welfare Board funds or where a financial grant was made on a monthly basis over a specified period of time. Without such payments, these adoptions would not have been possible because of limited financial circumstances of the respective families involved.

It is believed that a substantial number of additional adoption placements could be made if the possibility existed for subsidies to families who are unable to fully support a child with a continuing problem. It is believed that many families might consider these children with continuing difficulties if the possibility of some sort of subsidy was generally known.

ADVANTAGES OF ADOPTION

There are obvious advantages to a child who is adopted over one who remains in long term foster care. In addition to the positive elements for the child there are other advantages which subsidized adoption might bring about.

1. Foster families with children who have been in their care for a long period of time could be encouraged to adopt.
2. Adoption subsidy even over protracted periods of time would undoubtedly be substantially less than the cost of long term foster care for the same children.
3. Children not only have the stability of the adoptive family but this stability is enhanced because the adoptive family would be eligible for social security survivor or disability benefits if such became necessary.
4. Adopted children can be added to the hospitalization and other medical benefits plan which families may have.
5. Most children placed through subsidized adoption would ultimately be removed from public tax rolls.
6. Children would have the same name as the family with whom they lived thus adding to their feeling of stability and facilitating their adjustment in schools, churches, etc.
7. Children would be eligible for all benefits such as Veteran's Educational benefits, benefits from father's employer, etc., which are often available to natural children.

**TYPES OF SUBSIDY**

The basic purpose of a subsidy would be to enable the agency to consider a child with a continuing problem for a specific family who could offer an appropriate home to such child. Thus the subsidy would be individually determined for every situation.

The simplest form of subsidy would be the waiver of fee for adoption service. This would obviate a problem which arises when a staff member is attempting to recruit a family for a child with a continuing problem making placement difficult. Not only does the staff member have to help the family accept the child with a continuing difficulty but then must discuss a fee for service. Further, waiver of fee would be a real help to the many families in the self supporting group who find the payment of any adoption fee something of a burden. It is not uncommon to find families with a great deal of parental ability whose incomes are substantially below those which are usual for a family applying to adopt. When a fee is discussed with these families they frequently find the fee plus the $100 minimum attorney fee for completing the adoption just too much of a barrier and never continue. Some seek a child from other sources with all of the risks inherent to the family and the child in such a proceeding. Many never apply to adopt knowing a fee would be involved. These families do not wish to become foster parents because they desire a permanent relationship. Thus the qualities they have to offer children are never utilized.

Beyond waiver of fees, subsidies could range from small amounts paid for medical care or a special problem (for example, a specified amount toward necessary surgery which would need to be performed after adoption) to cases in which subsidy would be continued in substantial amounts for long periods of time. (For example, a family group of children whose foster parents might wish to adopt them as an alternative to continuing long term foster care.)

Subsidy when necessary to effect an adoption would be viewed as the minimum amount needed to enable a family to adopt a specific child who otherwise would be unable to do so. It would be recognized that neither FACS or the Juvenile Welfare Board could guarantee subsidy into ensuing years but that a subsidy once agreed upon would be contingent upon the availability of funds through the Juvenile Welfare Board or Family and Children's Service.
RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Miss Katherine J. Jones has served the Juvenile Welfare Board as Administrative Secretary for more than a decade and has performed the duties and responsibilities of this office with consideration for others and concern for their welfare; and

WHEREAS, she has patiently and diligently explained the work of the Board to community and client alike and has taken charge of the Board's office operations with imagination and inventiveness;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Juvenile Welfare Board hereby expresses its appreciation for her services, far beyond the call of mere duty, and orders this resolution to be entered in the minutes of the meeting of February 5, 1970, a copy to be sent Miss Katherine J. Jones as a token of their esteem and best wishes.

BOARD OF JUVENILE WELFARE PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA

Dr. Robert E. Coleman, Jr., Chairman
Mrs. William C. M. Bissell, Secretary
A. L. Anderson

Mrs. H. W. Holland
Judge Jack A. Page
Dr. Thomas B. Southard

Mrs. Roy M. Speer