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Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County.

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Meeting at the Town House Residence for Girls, Lake Chautauqua

November 4, 1971

PRESENT: Dr. Robert E. Coleman, Jr., Chairman; Mrs. William C. M. Bissell, Secretary; Mrs. R. Clark Robinson; Mrs. Roy M. Speer; County Commissioner George R. Brumfield; and Juvenile Court Judges Jack A. Page and William L. Walker. Also present: Dr. George H. Finch, Director; Dr. Raymond L. Edwards, Assistant Director; Mr. Gerald Rehm, Director, and members of the staff of the Eckerd Foundation Camps and Girls' Residence; Mrs. Elouise L. Irwin, Administrator, Region 6, and members of the staff of State Division of Family Services.

Mr. Rehm and members of the staffs of Camps E-How-Kee and E-Mini-Hassee and the Girls' Residence discussed their programs and described incidents of the ways in which children were being helped. They stated that there were three girls from the Residence in Clearwater Junior High and three in Dunedin Comprehensive High School. All of the girls were making very good progress in school and had received improved marks at the end of the six-week marking period.

Mrs. Irwin explained that the State was in the process of taking over major responsibility for the Protective Services on a state-wide basis. The Division of Family Services was not yet ready to present an interagency agreement for the fiscal year 1971-72. She said that they were studying the possibility of a homemaker's service unit; subsidized day care in children's centers; a special worker for the 26 children in the Eckerd Camps; and the use of Juvenile Welfare Board staff to supplement the State staff for long-term Protective Service cases.

MOTION

Judge Page moved, and Mrs. Speer seconded a motion which carried, to continue the present agreement with the Division of Family Services for another month and to approve the October and November expenditures in accordance with the 1971-72 budget.

A motion was made by Commissioner Brumfield to accept the minutes of the October 21, 1971 meeting, but there was no second. Mrs. Bissell stated that she had been unhappy for some time with the performance of Dr. Finck, Director, based on several reasons: 1) That copies of the lease with the Eckerd Foundation had not been sent to board members as requested at the October 21st meeting until Dr. Finck had been pressed by several members to do so. 2) That upon receiving the lease, she found that there were two stipulations not in conformity with the action of the Board. One stipulation pertaining to capital improvements and one pertaining to the control of the balance of land. Mrs. Bissell stated that this put the Board in the position of having to assume all capital improvements for the duration of the ten year lease and that none of the other land could be sold or used without the written consent of the Eckerd Foundation. 3) That the surprise announcement at the October 21st meeting by Dr. Finck that he had hired Mrs. Irwin without consulting the Board or even doing them the courtesy of asking for formal approval constituted high handed methods on his part. Mrs. Bissell stated that under the circumstances she felt she had no other alternative than to take action and she then moved that the Board ask Dr. Finck for his resignation. This motion was seconded by Mrs. Speer. A discussion followed in relation to the lease, and board members, Robinson, Bissell, Page, Walker and Speer, concurred that these provisions as written in the lease did not conform to their motion regarding the same at the May 6th meeting of the Juvenile Welfare Board. Mrs. Robinson then read the motion made and carried by board members at the May 6th meeting which outlined the terms of the lease agreement between the Juvenile Welfare Board and the Eckerd Foundation. Further, that Dr. Finck knowing this, still presented the lease to Dr. Coleman for his signature without contacting the other board members. Mrs. Bissell stated that this smacked of a conspiracy to keep the board members from knowing what was going on.
Judges Page and Walker stated that it was their understanding, acting as the Board's attorneys in this matter, that they were to see and approve the lease before it was signed by Dr. Coleman, but it was never presented to them again for their approval. There was also a discussion on the hiring of Mrs. Irwin and Mrs. Speer stated that, while there was no reflection on Mrs. Irwin or on her ability, her employment should have been presented for Board approval, rather than as an announcement by the Director. Mr. Brumfield asked Dr. Finck for an explanation. Dr. Finck stated that he knew those provisions were in the lease and called them to the attention of Dr. Coleman, expressing some hesitancy pertaining to their inclusion. He then stated that he and Dr. Coleman felt it was more important to sign the lease because the girls had been living in the house since September 1st. Dr. Finck stated that, regarding the appointment of Mrs. Irwin, the matter had been handled in this way because of Mrs. Irwin's fear that an announcement would reach her staff prior to the action of the Board and that, after discussion with Dr. Coleman, he had presented her appointment to the Board on this basis because Mrs. Irwin was known personally to all the members of the Board. Dr. Coleman requested that the discussion on this motion to request the Director's resignation be deferred until the next meeting on December 2 because he had to leave the meeting at this time. Commissioner Brumfield took the chair.

MOTION Tabling of Request for Director's Resignation
Mrs. Robinson moved, and Mrs. Speer seconded a motion which carried, to table the request for the Director's resignation until the December 2 meeting, with the stipulation that this meeting be limited to Press and Board only.

MOTION Approval of Minutes of October 21 Meeting
Mrs. Speer moved, and Judge Page seconded a motion which carried, to approve the minutes of the October 21 meeting.

MOTION Approval of expenditures for October
Mrs. Robinson moved, and Mrs. Speer seconded a motion which carried, to approve the expenditures for October: check #865 dated September 30, 1971; checks #866 through #903 dated November 4, 1971; and checks #904 and #905 dated November 30, 1971.

Commissioner Brumfield asked Mrs. Speer to read the letter from Nelson J. Simmons concerning the septic tank, filter bed, and other needed improvements to the system at the Town House. This letter outlined all details and prices and described a low bid totaling $3,135 from the Florida Septic Tank Company and a high bid of $4,088 from the Robinson Concrete Specialties.

After a recess of ten minutes, Mr. Rehm came in to discuss the furniture for the Girls' Residence. The furnishings for the building had been secured. Mr. Rehm presented itemized prices and expenses for these purchases which had been effected through the services of Mr. George E. Pesuth, who secured these items at wholesale from the various supply houses and who received a ten percent commission for his services.

MOTION Approval of payment for furniture
Mrs. Speer moved, and Mrs. Robinson seconded a motion which carried, to approve the payment of furniture totaling $5,684.14 to the Eckerd Foundation to reimburse them for purchases made as detailed. Dr. Finck stated that check #864 for $5,749.65 had already been made up from last year's funds before the corrected total reached the office.
and that the Eckerd Foundation would be requested to refund the difference of $65.51.

Mr. Rehm stated that equipment, including a bus, had been purchased at a wholesale cost of $6,215 by the Eckerd Foundation for use in the Girls' Residence. He estimated the retail cost of this furniture at $7,200. He stated that the Eckerd Foundation had already spent $1,430 for various maintenance and that they expected to spend another $1,000 within the next few days, making the total spent for maintenance about $3,000. Mr. Rehm discussed the expansion of the facility by an addition of a bedroom and conversion of the garage into a recreational room and that these improvements would not entail a great expense to the Board. The Board then questioned Mr. Rehm about who was responsible for capital improvements and stated that there was no disagreement on the Board's part with the work of the Foundation. The members of the Board declared that the Board's understanding does not conform with the wording of the lease. Mr. Rehm stated that he would confer with Mr. Eckerd and report back to us.

**MOTION**

Judge Page moved, and Mrs. Robinson seconded a motion which carried, to approve a motion to table the bids on the septic tank and other installations at the Eckerd Town House until the December 2 meeting.

**MOTION**

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

The financial statements for October 1971 and for the 1970-71 fiscal year were approved by the Board. Dr. Finck stated that the balance of $522,500.94, which included a budget carryover of $159,363.66, resulted from larger amounts received for taxes and for interest and from the balances remaining because of the state's assumption of foster care and the availability of federal funds for Project Playpen, as well as various smaller and miscellaneous balances.

**MOTION**

Mrs. Robinson moved, and Judge Page seconded a motion which carried, to defer approval on the interagency agreements with the Child Guidance Clinic, Family and Children's Service, Inc., Peter Pan School, Play Parc School, Juvenile Court, and Project Playpen until the December meeting and to continue payments under the existing budgetary limitations.

The reports of children in group care for September and from the Division of Family Services for October 1971 were presented to the Board.

**MOTION**

Mrs. Robinson moved, and Mrs. Speer seconded a motion which carried, to postpone elections for Chairman and Secretary until the December 2 meeting.

**MOTION**

Judge Page moved, and Mrs. Speer seconded a motion which carried, to approve the offer of the Juvenile Court to provide a secretary and a recorder for the Juvenile Welfare Board meetings. It was understood that these minutes would have to be presented to the Board's secretary for signature.

The Activities Reports for October 1971 were presented to the Board.

Since there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned. The next regular meeting of the Juvenile Welfare Board will be held on Thursday, December 2, 1971, at the Juvenile Court Center.

Mrs. William C. M. Bissell, Secretary