

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING
FEBRUARY 26, 1975

162

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m.

Senator Floyd R. Lamb was in the Chair.

PRESENT: Senator Floyd R. Lamb, Chairman
Senator James I. Gibson, Vice-Chairman
Senator B. Mahlon Brown
Senator William J. Raggio
Senator Clifton Young
Senator Warren L. Monroe
Senator Lee E. Walker

OTHERS: Merv Flanders, Services to the Blind
Del Frost, Rehabilitation Division
Roger Trounday, Department of Human Resources
Paul Cohen, Alcoholism and Drug Rehab.
Jack Penman, Soc. Security Disability Adjudication
Dr. Charles Dickson, Mental Hygiene and
Mental Retardation
Howard Barrett, Budget Director
Cy Ryan, UPI
Ron Sparks, Fiscal Analyst

Mr. Merv Flanders explained the new programs in the Services to the Blind and said that the agency had requested eight new positions, but the Governor had only recommended two. Mr. Flanders said that with the reduction of funds between the agency request and the Governor's recommendation, only 213 cases would be served for each of the next two years in the Biennium instead of 421 and 470.

Senator Raggio said that it appeared that there was still a 50% general fund increase with the Governor's recommendation, so why would there be a reduction in cases. Mr. Flanders said that the increase in only about 15% if payroll increases are included. Mr. Flanders said that since this budget was formulated another \$60,000 has been expended. Mr. Howard Barrett said that he found this hard to believe since the last run for the Actual was in late November.

Mr. Flanders said that the \$576.00 per case cost is expected to rise in 1976 to \$633.00 or 10%, and another 10% increase in expected for 1977, so this reduces the cases being served to 213 for each year.

Senator Young asked what the services provided. Mr. Flanders said this includes eye examinations, training, transportation, physical restoration, and blind aids. Senator Young asked if any of the twenty-one employees provides services for the cases. Mr. Flanders said that all of them do but himself.

PAGE TWO

SERVICES TO THE BLIND (Cont.)

Senator Lamb asked Mr. Barrett why the budget was reduced. Mr. Barrett said that he felt that the agency could continue with last biennium's programs. Mr. Frost said that a letter would be prepared explaining the formula used to arrive at the case figures served, and given to each Senate Committee member.

Senator Lamb asked if you had to cut down, how would you do this. Mr. Frost said that the cases would be handled on a first come, first serve basis.

Senator Gibson asked about the rent increase. Mr. Barrett said that there is an increase in square footage for the entire Rehabilitation Division. Mr. Dowling said that the agency was told by Buildings and Grounds to try and project for the next five years on square footage needed.

Senator Walker asked about the Business Enterprise Vending Stand Program. Mr. Flanders said that the agency anticipates about two to six new stands. Senator Walker asked about the cost of the stands. Mr. Flanders said that the bid is \$18,300, unless in a facility such as is in the Legislative Building. Senator Lamb asked if this provides a living wage for the operators. Mr. Flanders said that the net profits go to the operators, and if the gross revenue was high enough, the Program could become self-sustaining.

Senator Raggio asked the agency for a breakdown of the \$50,000 allocated to the Bureau of Services to the Blind in 1973, in order to help justify the \$100,000 request for the Business Enterprise Program.

Senators Young and Brown asked if any return had been realized by the State on these stands. Mr. Flanders explained that certain percentages are taken from the monthly gross revenues and used to maintain equipment, or replace worn out machines. Mr. Flanders said that the first \$2,000 gross per month is exempt.

SOCIAL SERVICES FOR THE BLIND

Mr. Flanders said that the goal of this program is to return the client to self-care status. Mr. Flanders said that there is some concern about the Title 20 funding, and Mr. Barrett said that this funding might mean increased percentage matching for the State, (65% - 35%; and 50% - 50%).

Senator Young asked that a summary be given to the Senate Committee showing the locations and incomes of the Blind stands. Senator Lamb said that perhaps ideas could be formulated to show how the

PAGE THREE

program could be more equitable for all operators, and other blind clients that weren't operators.

ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG REHABILITATION

Mr. Paul Cohen discussed the agency handout that explained the source of funding for the State counties. Mr. Cohen said that the \$250,000 special appropriation request is for narcotics education in the schools.

Senator Lamb asked about the caseload. Mr. Cohen said that 95,067 people were contacted last year; 469 clients are under the Drug Abuse Grant, 276 alcoholics under the Bureau budget, and 179 addicts under the Bureau budget,

Senator Raggio asked if there was a De-Tox Center in Nevada. Mr. Cohen said that there isn't one, but the Bureau is trying to bring in a De-Tox facility which will operate from a hospital.

Senator Raggio asked if there was a counterpart in Washoe County for the Southern Nevada SNDAC program. Mr. Cohen said that Substance Abuse Council is somewhat of a counterpart.

Senator Walker asked if the program at the University of Nevada, Reno is to train teachers. Mr. Cohen said that it is, and the funding comes from a grant.

Senator Raggio asked about the Other Government Services figure. Mr. Barrett said that this is a charge back to the Rehabilitation Division Administration on the basis of authorized positions.

Senator Lamb asked about the Narcotic Rehabilitation monies. Mr. Cohen said that this grant is specifically for local communities.

COMMITTEE TO HIRE THE HANDICAPPED

Mr. Frost said that basically this Committee has been non-functional, but since the ESD has placed less than 1% of the respective clients, this area needs increased concentration. There was some discussion among the Senators if the money couldn't better be used elsewhere. Mr. Frost said that this Committee is needed to deal and coordinate all the programs.

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Mr. Frost said that this request is for a statewide plan that is primarily for the mentally disabled in local facilities.

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PAGE FOUR

SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY ADJUDICATION

Senator Young asked about the financial assistance. Mr. Jack Penman said that assistance is made through Social Security, and the Bureau only assesses the physical and mental condition of the client.

Senator Young asked about the SSI. Mr. Penman said that this is for the totally disabled.

In conclusion, Mr. Frost added that for the Developmental Disabilities budget the State has agreed to restore the travel funding with grant dollars. Mr. Barrett said that this will not be an increase in the budget.

DIVISION OF MENTAL HYGIENE-MENTAL RETARDATION

Dr. Charles Dickson explained that this Division is responsible for 3,800 clients in various State institutions and clinics.

Senator Lamb asked about the need for a Deputy Attorney General. Dr. Dickson said that the Division is often the victim of class action and accident suits. Mr. Trounaday said that this Division was demanding all the time of the Deputy hired for the Department of Human Resources.

Dr. Dickson showed the magazine, "People" that is published by the Division. Senator Brown wondered if the same material isn't duplicated in national publications. Dr. Dickson said that they try to be specific to Nevada needs.

Senator Lamb asked about the WICHE program. Dr. Dickson said that the dues paid to the WICHE program are used to provide workshops for Division staff members.

Mr. Barrett asked about the Insurance. Dr. Dickson said that this is Liability Insurance for the individual staff member. Mr. Barrett said that the State has a limit of \$25,000 on amount that the State can be sued, and if this amount is raised the State felt that immunity would be raised on sovereign immunity. Senator Young felt that there should be legislation changing the law so that there is a limit of \$25,000 liability for the individual as well. Senators Raggio and Young questioned if any insurance company would cover a doctor for \$25,000. Dr. Dickson said that one company has already quoted them such coverage for professionals and para-professionals, (370 people).

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:35 a.m.

APPROVED:


 FLOYD R. LAMB, CHAIRMAN

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:


 SHEBA L. WOOLLEY, SECRETARY