

Leg Council

APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON INSTITUTIONS

January 17, 1977 - Room 225

The meeting of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Institutions was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Chairman Harold Gerke. Other members present were:

Senator Elmer Flynn, Vice-Chairman
Senator Mark Etchart
Representative Harry Hansen
Representative Art Lund
Representative Howard Ellis

Tom Briggs, Legislative Fiscal Analyst, was also present. Representative Bardanoue was present for part of the meeting.

The chairman stated that the subject of today's meeting is MOUNTAIN VIEW SCHOOL FOR GIRLS IN HELENA, MONTANA. Don Robel, Superintendent of Mountain View, was present with another member of his staff to report on their financial needs.

Curt Chisholm, acting director of the Department of Institutions gave a short recap on their departmental reorganization and stated they have developed four categories: (1) care and custody services; (2) developmental services; (3) community relations services; and (4) administrative services. Mr. Chisholm will outline these four functions in a report for the committee.

Tom Briggs gave a recap of the fiscal analyst recommendations on Mountain View. He itemized the expenditures in detail and reported that this budget was based on the fiscal year 1976 expenditures.

The matter of the federal funds was discussed in detail. Mr. Robel stated that they are never sure of getting federal money and/or how much. It was pointed out that there is a surplus of federal funds which has been accumulated over the years. It was also pointed out that this federal money is earmarked for certain uses and must only be used in those areas designated. If unused, it eventually is returned to the various agencies where it came from. The chairman requested Mr. Briggs to investigate the federal money surplus and give the committee a report as to the different amounts available and for what purpose.

Don Robel and another member of his staff reported in detail their needs and revisions to the Mountain View biennium budget for 1977-1978. They stated that the budget that was submitted was adequate in most areas.

When getting into detail, it was stated that they felt Contracted Services will be a little short because of insurance rate increases which were itemized.

Another shortage mentioned was in Care and Custody personnel because of increased costs for the pay plan increases, holiday pay and overtime needed. Mr. Briggs stated that any additional funds needed for increased costs in the pay plan approved by this legislature would be added into the appropriation.

With regard to overtime pay, Mr. Flynn asked if an employee is absent, does Mountain View call in someone else who has to be paid overtime. Mr. Robel stated yes, that they have no surplus of employees and must have someone experienced. Mr. Bardanouve asked if they have tried to provide for a standby reserve person who could be called in such instances. Mr. Robel stated they did not have the money. Mr. Gerke said we should provide for this utility position.

Mr. Robel reported that they are using Cottonwood Cottage for minimum security. The old detention cottage is occasionally used when it is necessary. He reported out that two FTE's would be needed to staff this detention cottage adequately. When they are not needed for this purpose, they would be used as roving supervision at night which is also needed. Mr. Robel also requested an additional part-time nurse for weekends and evenings. Mr. Briggs requested documentation from Mountain View for this additional personnel.

Mr. Robel reported that an increase is needed in their medical program due to the high increases in hospital costs and physician services. This program includes hospital costs, dentists, medical doctors, glasses, etc. Mr. Briggs requested Mountain View to provide detailed report on the additional medical program increases.

Mr. Robel pointed out that whenever insurance policy coverage is available through the child's parents, it is utilized. Mr. Robel stated there has been a sudden increase in major sickness at the school recently. It was also pointed out that Mountain View is over-extended right now on medical costs.

Mr. Gerke mentioned the 45-day evaluation for new people sent to Mountain View. Mr. Robel reported that they use other facilities for these evaluations and he feels this is adequate. Mr. Gerke pointed out that in order to equip Mountain View to handle these evaluation would cost a great deal of money.

Mr. Bardanouve mentioned that several years ago there was a proposal to enter the girls at Mountain View into the public school system. Mr. Robel reported that this was tried, but it was not very successful. It is impossible to send all the girls because of runaways and emotional difficulties.

In answer to a question, Mr. Robel stated that Mountain View has to provide transportation back to the school for anyone who runs away. Also personnel is sent to get the girl. However, the county where the girl is from pays for the first trip to Mountain View and the return trip upon release.

In answer to a question, Mr. Robel reported that they have had out-of-state girls in Mountain View, but for the most part, the judges try to locate them near the parents. If the girl is from Montana, but the parents move while the child is in Mountain View, she is kept at Mountain View.

Mr. Flynn brought up the possibility of a fence around Mountain View. Mr. Robel stated that he felt that the children need to experiment with self-control to not run away and not have the suppressed feeling of being locked in. He briefly mentioned an alternative of a fence around the detention building only if necessary. There is a lot of brush nearby and a fence has been added there.

Mr. John Fitzpatrick from the Budget and Planning Office reported briefly on the executive budget with regard to Mountain View. He encouraged the committee to look into the personnel increases and medical costs increases requests in detail. He also gave out some correction sheets on the pilot budgeting project.

On the subject of equipment, Mr. Robel stated they will make due on equipment.

Mr. Gerke pointed out that all capital expenditures will be covered by the Long Range Committee and there might be some problems since they are not tied together more closely. Mr. Lund mentioned that he is a member of that committee also.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

Harold Gerke, Chairman