

MINUTES

MEETING OF THE CIVIC UNITY COMMITTEE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

New Washington Hotel
February 6, 1953 - 4:00 p. m.

Present

Mrs. Carrie McDowell
Letcher Yarbrough
Mrs. Robert M. Jones
Mrs. Anne C. Luke
John L. King
Frank P. Helsell
Alfred J. Westberg
George H. Revelle, Jr.
Kenneth Morford
William Y. Mambu
Irving Clark, Jr.

Absent

Frank Ortega
Sol Esfeld
Charles M. Stokes
Dr. Erna Gunther
Mrs. Paul J. Pickard
Charles W. Hunlock
Arthur G. Barnett
Emlyn D. Jones
Morrison Campbell
Judge Frank D. James
Paul R. Green
Roy Leighton
George E. Clarke

Guests: Ralph Innes, Vice President, Sand Point Maintenance Commission
Carl Dakan, Executive Secretary, Sand Point Maintenance Commission

Presiding: John H. Heitzman, President

ACTION TAKEN

Sand Point Problem: The Board voted to request Sand Point Maintenance Commission to call a special meeting of its Trustees to meet with members of the Civic Unity Committee Board for the purpose of working out a revision of the by-laws governing eligibility for residence in the Sand Point Country Club area; the revised plan to be presented to the people of the Sand Point community for their consideration at a later date.

The Board accepted the invitation, extended by Mr. Innes, to attend such a meeting on Tuesday evening, February 17th, at 8:00 p. m. at the Sand Point Country Club, 8333 55th N. E. (NOTE: LATER CHANGED TO FEBRUARY 24th.)

Health and Welfare Council: The Board voted to instruct delegates to the Health and Welfare Council to vote in favor of the proposed Plan of Organization of the Community Chest--Health and Welfare Council.

H.B. 128: The Board voted to write to Representative Mort C. Frayn, Chairman of the House Rules Committee, of the Civic Unity Committee's interest in H.B. 128 strengthening the Public Accommodations Act and its concern that this bill be presented on the floor of the House as quickly as possible. Individual members were asked to write such letters as well.

REPORTS

H.B. 128: Mrs. Jones reported that the Public Accommodations Act, H.B. 128, had reached the House Rules Committee and that the next step was to get it out of that

Committee to the floor of the House. She said there would be a meeting of the State Committee on Wednesday, February 11th, to consider necessary action. She said the Sutherland bill, S.B. 18, apparently had no support so all effort might be directed to getting the Stokes bill through. The Board voted that letters go to the Chairman of the House Rules Committee from the Civic Unity Committee and from individuals.

Health and Welfare Council: Mr. Heitzman reported that the Health and Welfare Council member agencies would act upon the proposed Plan of Organization of the Community Chest and Council and the Health and Welfare Council at a meeting to be held February 19th. The plan has been approved by the Executive Committee of the Health and Welfare Council and the Board of Directors of the Community Chest and Council but will be presented for discussion and action by delegates of agencies at this meeting. Opposition to the plan was voiced by Mrs. Jones who said it differed very little from the plan voted against by the Civic Unity Committee last April. Although some members were not in accord with the plan, the Board voted to instruct its two delegates to vote in favor of accepting the new plan as the best to be expected at this time. There were three votes against this decision.

Television Program: It was reported that a Civic Unity Committee's program would be presented on KING T-V Workshop on February 13th at 2:00 p. m. and that preparations were under way. Irving Clark, Jr., will assume the role of Commentator giving continuity to a series of scenes depicting Civic Unity Committee work.

Research: A letter from the Health and Welfare Council was read. It clarified the procedure for clearing and financing research by Chest agencies in the Intergroup Relations field. This clarification had resulted from a request made by the Civic Unity Committee Board.

Letter from Mr. Devin: A letter from ex-Mayor William F. Devin was read. It responded to a letter from this Committee on his assuming co-chairmanship of the National Conference of Christians and Jews. Mr Devin indicated his continued interest in Civic Unity Committee and the hope that these two organizations can work closely together in some aspects of our work.

DISCUSSION

Sand Point Problem: For the benefit of the two Sand Point guests Mr. Heitzman described the concern Civic Unity Committee feels regarding the situation revealed in the problem which developed when Richard Ornstein tried to purchase a house in the Sand Point Country Club area. Mr. Innes and Mr. Dakan explained that the Sand Point Country Club has a Board of nine commissioners--the Sand Point Maintenance Commission--which is elected by the people of the community. The Board elects its own officers, each to serve two years. This Board is charged with the responsibility of enforcing the covenants included in the deeds of property in the area. They feel it is their duty to prevent violations. Individual home owners do not have to consult the Board in connection with the sale of their homes but--since the covenants are in their deeds--they are expected to be governed by them.

Civic Unity Committee Board members reminded the Sand Point guests that a 1949 Supreme Court Ruling made such covenants unenforceable. They pointed out that, quite aside from legal factors, such policies are not in accord with the accepted American democratic way of life. In particular, they said, the Civic Unity Committee takes the stand that it is not desirable to perpetuate this type of policy. They suggested that,

although there now exist in Sand Point legal factors that interfere with democratic action on the part of residents in the matter of selling their property, these factors could be removed by official action by the community.

The Sand Point guests said this idea would be put up to the people at their next general meeting. Civic Unity Committee Board said it would be willing to have representatives from the Board meet with the people of the Sand Point community to discuss the advisability of such a step or would meet with the Board of Commissioners.

It was finally agreed that Mr. Innes would have a meeting of the Board of the Sand Point Maintenance Commission called for February 17th,* and he invited the Civic Unity Committee Board to meet with them. This meeting would be for the purpose of working out a revision of the rules governing eligibility for residence in the Sand Point Country Club area -- and a plan for presenting the revised plan to the people of the community at a later date. The Civic Unity Committee accepted the invitation. Mr. Dakan said that he would put the "by-laws" in Irving Clark's hands the following Monday so that he could go over them and be prepared to recommend specific revisions.

The meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Louise P. Blackham
Executive Secretary

LPB:mg

*Later changed to February 24th.

Regarding residential discrimination at Sand Point.: This was not a committee, just a meeting of people invited to discuss situation.

Believe in broad educational program designed to widen opportunity in housing of people in minority group.

Feel that to publicize by pointing up discrimination by one small group would hurt rather than help change attitudes.



Attitudes do not change unless people choose to change them themselves. Sand Point area has resisted suggestion of change from outside group. Might still decide for themselves to change current policies of their Board regarding acceptance of new residents.

"Education" that carries a threat of personal (adverse public opinion) is more difficult to change attitudes. The underlying purpose of Mr. Schroeter and Mr. Watts to make Seattle aware of situation is appropriate and one that we share but good judgement in procedure should take into consideration long term objectives which could be hurt by hostile publicity.

Use this in 2nd part. The indirect action was effective.

An indirect approach is widely accepted as the most effective way of helping people analyze and clarify their own motives and change their point of view. We believe Sand Point people can change the attitude of self-appointed leaders by making known their own feelings and thus change policies. The leaders would probably go along with this since they purport to work for the benefit of Sand Point people. In response to Schroeter, we might indicate the above.