

MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING OF THE ADVISORY COUNCIL AND THE CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE
OF THE TULE LAKE CENTER

March 10, 1944

The joint meeting of the Advisory Council and the Co-ordinating Committee of the Tule Lake Center was held on March 10, 1944, at the Personnel Recreation Hall, from 10:30 a.m. Acting Project Director Harry L. Black presided.

Attendance was recorded as follows: Advisory Council: Harry L. Black, P. Robertson, A. Markley, L. Huycke, K. Silverthorne, and Dr. Opler. Co-ordinating Committee: G. Yamatani, K. Okamoto, J. Nakao, J. Naydo, and B. Akitsuki. Others present: Dr. R. Pedicord, Chief Medical Officer; Hoffman, Fire Protection Officer from Washington; Owens, Fire Protection Officer; Harkness, Superintendent of the Public Schools; Dr. Gunderson, Principal of High School; Miss Durkin, Principal of the Elementary School; and B. Mayeda.

With the view of rectifying possible re-occurrence of vandalism, which recently took place in the public school, Mr. Harkness, superintendent of the schools, was called upon. He went on to say that there were further break-ins in the elementary school, where thermometers were broken, match set under the ~~thermometers~~, obscene notes left on the teachers' desks, fountain pens stolen, gold fish stolen, art work done by children mutilated, etc. Judging from the size of the footprints and notes left, disturbance could be pointed out as an act of middle aged adolescents, aged 14 to 15, and children not coming to school, which besets more difficulties. A great amount of obscene languages and writing of profanity on blackboards have increased, which makes control of the children by the authorities an impossibility. Miss Durkin commented that obscene languages and writings are extremely widespread and expressed regrets of the amount of usage in the grade school children, which are spreading even to the girls. Since teachers are not going to yield to such sort of things, teachers will be lost and vacancies incurred will not be replaced. Only remedy for such is to carry on a project-wide campaign. The matter must be taken up with the parents and the community to solicit their cooperation to attack the problem in the homes. Upon question raised by Mr. Yamatani, Mr. Harkness mentioned that school activities by the students show marked lack of enthusiasm, not because the youngsters are not interested, but because of lack of time, which is caused by the children's overburdened public and language school curriculums. Mr. Harkness cited a case where a student wrote a composition stating that due to his attending two schools his studies in both schools have become confused and ~~have slackened~~. He further brought up the problem confronting the public school with regard to deliberate and inconstant time schedule observed by some 'outlaw' schools which have sprung up recently. It appears that these 'outlaw' schools are intentionally changing their schedule in order to confuse and conflict with the public school schedule. He expressed his gratefulness toward the recognized Japanese Board of Education for their hearty cooperation in every respect. As to the length of the language schools, Mr. Black mentioned that such may be operated not to conflict with the center school with regard to hours, and children are not permitted to be kept longer than one-half of a day. After prolonged discussion, it was decided that the matter be referred to the Board of Education (Japanese) requesting them to make recommendations. Mr. Harkness suggested that the Board should be officially recognized by the WRA.

Illustrating lack of interest on the part of the children, Dr. Gunderson pointed out that in spite of the student body election next week, comparatively few are running for offices. He went on to say that the students are very much concerned and conscious about the occurrence of the recent disturbance, which is caused by a few. In order to take remedial steps, hall patrols have been instituted. Last year, more lost money were turned in and a very small amount of pilfering was accounted.

He pointed out the fact that the home is where the clean-up is needed. Ones who need it the most are the hardest to reach. Upon question raised, Dr. Gunderson reported that approximately 1600 students are enrolled in the high school. Regarding smoking by adolescent children, Dr. Gunderson stated that inasmuch as he has no authority to give orders to the construction crew, their influence(since they smoke) is uncontrollable. Whereupon, Mr. Robertson promised to take necessary steps to curb such, since the division is under his direct jurisdiction.

The Chair then stated that the pending problem could be solved only through cooperative endeavor of all colonists and the only remedy is crystallization of public sentiment, which may be worked through collaboration with the block managers. The Chair asked for suggestions regarding this problem. Mr. B. Mayeda of the Civic Organization mentioned that he may be able to convene all ward chairmen, who could in turn convey the information to the parents. Mr. Black suggested that Dr. Gunderson should be present at this meeting if and when it is held so that he can give full dissemination of the existing condition. Another recommendation suggested by B. Akitsuki was that the Advisory Council should take the matter up with the Japanese Language school instructors. He further brought up the fact that at the Zadan-kai (table-talk) held with the stockade releasees on March 8, Mr. Sakamoto, a releasee and Ward 3 principal of Language School, assured the Committee that he will expend his efforts for the betterment of the center condition indirectly through education of children, which will ultimately result in the education of the parents. Mr. Huycke recommended that a special committee composed of evacuee members and appointed personnel, connected with the schools, should work in co-ordination with Dr. Gunderson on this matter.

Next business taken up was in respect to the general camp clean-up week, based on sanitation and fire protection. Dr. Pedicord was asked to take the floor to elaborate from the medical angle. Some of the statements included in his explanation were as follows: that health and fire protection are so closely correlated that one overlaps the other; that this place has many disease carriers among the rodents that fire hazards become rodent breeding grounds; that piles of kindling wood and coal piled against wash rooms are good breeding grounds. Upon question raised, Dr. Pedicord responded that garbage cans should be placed 20 feet away from the residence.

Mr. Hoffman was next called upon to explain from the fire protection angle. He went on to say that with very low relative humidity here in Tule, moisture drawn from grass wants to catch on fire and tends to burn rapidly; that with insufficient water pressure relative to the rapidity with which the place is prone to burn, every measure must be taken to prevent the start of a fire. He cited the recent fire in the Colorado River Center, where six barracks were wiped out. He stressed the danger involved in the disposition of hot ashes, which menaces every colonist in the Center. At the same time, the colonists in the new area should be informed strongly of the fact to refrain from removing asbestos boards placed for protection, since such are not replaceable.

Mr. Owens supplemented on Mr. Hoffman's statements, stressing especially the immediate necessity of clean-up for the sake of protection.

Mr. Black thereon read a tentative draft of a memorandum to be published relative to the proposed clean-up week, starting March 13 and ending March 18, subject to modification, suggestions, or corrections by the body. B. Akitsuki

suggested that #1 (to eliminate unsanitary and unhealthy conditions) and #4 (reduce unsightliness and trashiness) should be consolidated, inasmuch as consideration in respect to newness of the construction should be taken into account. Mr. Black believed that the inspection committee, which will judge the competition, (to be selected by Civic Organization, from the Hospital, fire, and Police Departments) should be maintained as a permanent committee and competition should be on monthly basis with the award of a chicken dinner to the winner. Pennant award on ward basis was suggested. Means by which clean-up process will be undergone is as follows: crews of workers to be employed to gather and pile rubbish and trash from the fire-breaks and the open areas on the borders of the Center for removal by truck crews; truck crews to be employed to gather and remove piles of rubbish and trash from roadways, fire-breaks and open areas on the borders of the Center; voluntary assistance by all residents to clean up their own quarters within and without their own quarters and blocks; voluntary assistance by block residents to gather coal and kindling supplies at least 20 feet from all buildings; the winner is to be awarded a chicken dinner which will be enjoyed by the entire residents of the winning block. Number of employees to be hired is yet unknown, Mr. Black stated.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Byron Akitsuki
Executive Secretary