



North Bay Village Recommendation Memorandum

DATE: July 9 2019

TO: Honorable Mayor, Vice Mayor and Members of the Village Commission

FROM: Mayor Brent Latham

SUBJECT: Resolution on Immigrant Child Detention Center in Homestead

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation is for an honest and open discussion of the role of the Commission in advocacy on this issue, and a decision reflecting that discussion.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The Homestead Temporary Shelter for Unaccompanied Children has generated controversy in our community, and not without reason. Immigrant children, some of whom have been actively separated from their families by the United States government, are being kept in questionable conditions for long periods of time, in some cases against federal regulations, in a facility which is being run on a government contract by the subsidiary of a private prison management firm.

This dynamic creates unhealthy opportunity for mental, physical and sexual abuse, all of which have been reported at similar centers across the U.S. Several children have also died in custody at similar centers.

While it may be argued that North Bay Village has no role in this national issue, this is a moral and not a political discussion, affecting all Americans including us here in North Bay Village. Quite personally, as an individual who has spent a great deal of my career actively fomenting youth development and well-being in Latin America and specifically in Central America, I believe it simply untenable to remain silent in a position of some power, while all the while these children have no formal structure to advocate for them.

The idea is to keep this advocacy as simple, straight forward and non-judgmental as possible. The juxtaposition of a for-profit center operating without adequate supervision for the care of unsupervised minors with no one to protect or advocate for them creates a situation rife for abuse in which the best interest of the children will never come first.

This resolution advocates for a simple outcome: as long as such detention centers are deemed necessary, this center should be immediately transitioned to not-for-profit or

direct government control and management, eliminating the economic motivation for mistreatment of children too young and disempowered to advocate for themselves.

BUDGETARY/FINANCIAL IMPACT (Finance Dept.)

None

PERSONNEL IMPACT

None

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COMMISSION OF NORTH BAY VILLAGE, FLORIDA, URGING ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT WITH JURISDICTION OVER THE HOMESTEAD TEMPORARY SHELTER FOR UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN TO IMPROVE CONDITIONS THEREIN; URGING THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES TO IMMEDIATELY TRANSITION THE HOMESTEAD TEMPORARY SHELTER FOR UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN INTO A NOT-FOR-PROFIT SHELTER RUN BY SKILLED NOT-FOR-PROFIT ENTITIES; PROVIDING FOR TRANSMITTAL; PROVIDING FOR IMPLEMENTATION; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE

WHEREAS, North Bay Village (the “Village”) is a community of immigrants, with over half of our population having been born outside the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, the Village is a welcoming community built on equality and opportunity, which strives to provide an environment in which people of all origins, creeds, genders, sexual orientation or identities, and economic circumstances, can find a home to enjoy and which to thrive; and

WHEREAS, the Village is part of larger communities, including Miami-Dade County, the State of Florida, the United States of America and, in the greatest sense, the community which encompasses all humanity; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of the Village are saddened and outraged at the conditions currently faced by children at the Homestead Shelter for Unaccompanied Children, some of whom have emigrated from their countries of origin alone and others who have been actively separated from their families by American officials; and

WHEREAS, the Homestead Temporary Shelter for Unaccompanied Children is operated by Caliburn International, whose main business is to operate private prisons,

and that the operation for profit of a child detention center is clearly not compatible with the best interests of the innocent children housed therein; and

WHEREAS, myriad reports have documented unsanitary, unsafe and mentally debilitating conditions for the children housed in the shelter, conditions which will only worsen as detentions increase and numbers of detained children increase; and

WHEREAS, the Homestead Temporary Shelter for Unaccompanied Children operates in larger Miami-Dade Community, the Commission and citizens of North Bay Village feel it necessary to act to correct this injustice in our greater community; and

WHEREAS, history has taught us that those who object cannot remain silent while reprehensible acts are perpetrated against the innocent.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND COMMISSION OF NORTH BAY VILLAGE, FLORIDA, AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Recitals. The foregoing recitals are confirmed, adopted, and incorporated herein and made a part hereof by this reference.

Section 2. Village Position. Our local, state and national authorities are urged to act in concert with citizens to improve conditions for children held in the Homestead Temporary Shelter for Unaccompanied Children, emphasizing the step laid out in Section 3.

Section 3. Village Position. The Department of Health and Human Services is urged to immediately transition the Homestead Temporary Shelter for Unaccompanied Children into a not-for-profit shelter run by not-for-profit entities trained and skilled to do so.

Section 4. Transmittal. The Village Clerk is hereby directed to transmit a certified copy of this Resolution to the Secretary of Health and Human Services of the

United States, the members of the Florida State and U.S. Congressional Delegations, the Mayor and members of the Commission of Miami-Dade County, the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, the Director of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and the Commissions of the neighboring cities of Miami, Miami Beach, El Portal, Miami Shores, Surfside, Bal Harbor, Bay Harbor Islands, Sunny Isles Beach, North Miami, North Miami Beach and Aventura, as well as Homestead.

Section 4. Effective Date. This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

The foregoing Ordinance was offered by _____, who moved its adoption on first reading. This motion was seconded by _____ and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

Mayor Brent Latham	_____
Vice Mayor Marvin Wilmoth	_____
Commissioner Jose R. Alvarez	_____
Commissioner Andreana Jackson	_____
Commissioner Julianna Strout	_____

PASSED AND ADOPTED this ___ day of _____, 2019.

Brent Latham, Mayor

ATTEST:

Elora Riera, CMC
Village Clerk

APPROVED AS TO LEGAL SUFFICIENCY:

Weiss Serota Helfman Cole & Bierman, PL
VILLAGE ATTORNEY