

**TO:** Juvenile Welfare Board Members

**FROM:** James E. Mills, Executive Director   
Lisa A. Sahulka, Director of Programs & Finance 

### **Requested Actions**

The Juvenile Welfare Board is requested to approve a one-time only allocation of \$21,346 to the Pinellas Cares - HelpLine program for moving costs.

### **Options**

1. Approve the request.
2. Deny the request.
3. Take any other action the Board deems appropriate.

### **Recommended Actions**

Approve a one-time only allocation of \$21, 346 to the Pinellas Cares – HelpLine program for moving costs.

### **Source of JWB Funds**

FY 01-02 Program Budget – One Time Only Program Contingency Fund.

### **Fiscal Impact**

The One Time Only Program Contingency Fund would be decreased by \$21,346 from \$125,000 to \$103,654.

### **Narrative**

In 1996, the Board of Directors of Family Resources Inc., voted to divest itself of two programs: the Volunteer Action Center (VAC) and HelpLine. In 1999, these programs were merged with an existing community-based organization named Pinellas Cares, Inc. (PC). At the same time, contracts with public and private organizations were transferred to PC, but Family Resources continued to provide administrative and fiscal services for those programs while PC concentrated on building its organizational capacity. In July of 2000, the two organizations completed the separation of the remaining administrative functions and Pinellas Cares became fully in charge of its operations, budget and programs, although they continued to be located at the Family Resources site, paying for space and utilities.

Recently, the number of PC staff has almost doubled, the equipment has increased significantly, and the agency has added 2-1-1 services. These changes, although highly commendable, have put a severe strain on the staff and programs because of the limited available space at PC's current St. Petersburg location. This space is inadequate for current staff and inadequate in terms of any future expansion. Consequently, in December 2000, the Pinellas Cares Board of Directors undertook a search for a significantly larger location to house the VAC, HelpLine, Community Voice Mail, and the 2-1-1 programs. At the same time, area stakeholders have recommended that a mid-county location would be the better option for Pinellas County, because the current location often misled consumers to think the programs were limited to St. Petersburg. An available site of approximately 4,800 square feet, located on Ulmerton Road in space owned by the Pinellas County Housing Authority was located and available with a five-year lease for \$6 per square foot. The PC Board approved of this site and signed an agreement with a move-in date of November 1, 2001.

In order to prepare the Ulmerton Road office for occupancy in November 2001, the space must be wired for the Automatic Call Distribution (ACD) system, for computer linkage, and for Internet access. The new 2-1-1 service began this summer and has replaced the old HelpLine seven digit number. 2-1-1 depends upon telephone and Internet systems as well as the ACD system to handle the 79% increase in call volume that PC has experienced since 2-1-1 was implemented. The ACD telephone system is able to distribute these calls without busy signals or long waiting periods and enables staff to measure how many calls are coming in, how long they are waiting, and how many people terminate their call before speaking with a 2-1-1 representative. The availability of 2-1-1 in Pinellas County will benefit all consumers and will be an industry standard for years to come as many communities across the state and the country are waiting for this service to come to them. The United Way of Pinellas County has been a long-time partner in funding VAC and HelpLine services, and have recently agreed to provide an additional \$14,000 to PC for the installation and monthly charges of the 2-1-1 service.

The telephone system, the ACD, and the computer systems are the backbone of the 2-1-1 and the PC organization. It is critical that these items be moved and re-installed so that 2-1-1 remains open for calls. The agency is planning the move in phases, in order to minimally disrupt services and avoid any down time.

Finally, the new facility lacks a security system, which is essential to protect staff and equipment at all times, especially evenings (PC provides 2-1-1/HelpLine services 24 hours per day, seven days per week). To help facilitate this move and provide security, PC is requesting \$21,346 on a one-time-only basis from the Juvenile Welfare Board. These costs are itemized as follows:

Security installation	ADT	\$3,112
Moving of offices and equipment	Mayflower	\$3,234
Wiring and Cabling	GC Networks	\$6,000
Telephone/211 system installation	Verizon	\$9,000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$21,346</b>

PC has sought multiple bids for the security, moving, and cabling installations, however the installation of the telephone and 2-1-1 system will be done by Verizon, who is the sole provider and installer of 2-1-1 systems in Pinellas County.

Staff Resource person: Gary Cernan