

HEART MOUNTAIN MEETINGS OF BLOCK CHAIRMEN AND COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Camp administrative structure included the use of Block Chairmen to serve as resident representatives and liaisons between internees and WRA staff. Chairmen conducted block meetings to discuss local issues and concerns, and in turn, relayed directives from the WRA. Chairmen relayed local issues to WRA staff for resolution or action.

The administrative structure was implemented early in camp history. First residents arrived in August 1942 and By September 4, 1942 the election of temporary Block Chairmen was held and the first Block Chairmen's Meeting was held. At these initial meetings the Chairmen met with a variety of WRA staff according to particular issues raised. By August 20, 1943 the Community Council Meetings began which included Block Chairmen, the WRA Camp Director as well as relevant lower echelon administrative staff. Block Chairmen's Meetings continued to be held concurrently.

The minutes provide a detailed source of the trials and hardships of camp residents and their creative efforts to resolve them. While many issues were resolved at the Camp WRA staff level, as formal Prisoners of War, residents used their right to communicate their grievances to the President of the United States through their negotiator, the Spanish Ambassador to the U.S.A.