

SF Chronicle

Refugees

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Going to

Placer Site

About 400 Vietnamese refugees from Camp Pendleton will live in now-empty Weimar Medical Center in the Sierra foothills here for up to three months, it was decided yesterday.

By a vote of 10 to 21 the center's board of directors decided to turn over the facility to a refugee aid group called Food for the Hungry Inc., or a 90-day period.

The refugees are expected to begin arriving within the next few weeks.

The facility is owned by 15 northern California counties, which each send representatives to the governing board.

Earlier, the board had voted to lease the center to the refugees but made the agreement contingent on approval by the Placer county board of supervisors.

The Placer county board voted 3-2 to bar the refugees. The action prompted the governing board to call special session yesterday, and they overruled the Placer county objections.

Dan Goodwin, coordinator of the facility, said yesterday that a cleaning crew from Food for the Hungry had already begun preparing the empty center to receive the refugees.

A spokesman for the refugee tent city at Camp Pendleton said yesterday that it was not known which of the refugees would move to the center.

It was reported last week that if the plan were finally approved, former South Vietnamese premiere Nguyen Cao Ky might be among those going to Placer county.

The center will be used to house and feed the refugees and as a kind of halfway house to ease the Vietnamese into American life.

Food for the Hungry will pay the center \$5000 a month rent and a \$5000 deposit, and will provide its own security force.

The facility was set up 50 years ago as a tuberculosis sanatorium. After several changes of ownership it is again under the jurisdiction of the group of northern California counties.

It has been empty since the beginning of the year, according to officials.

Our Correspondent