

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CORRECTION

June 5, 1972

A regular meeting of the Board of Correction was held on Monday, June 5, 1972, at the offices of Stroock & Stroock & Lavan, Room 2520, 277 Park Avenue, New York, New York.

Present at the meeting were Messrs. Becker, Dribben, Kirby, Schulte, Rev. Wilson, and Mrs. Singer. Also present by invitation of the Board were John M. Brickman, Executive Director of the Board; Arden Culver, Executive Secretary of the Board; Lesley J. Spector, Director, Clergy Volunteer Program; Mary Pickman, Legal Advocate Program; Kenneth G. Nochimson, Legal Advocate Program; Terry Strauss, Research Assistant, Criminal Justice Coordinating Council; William Goodstein, Counsel to the Board; and Michael J. Dontzin, Counsel to the Mayor. Mr. Dribben acted as Chairman in the absence of Mr. vanden Heuvel and Miss Culver acted as Secretary of the meeting.

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 3:16 p.m.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of the meetings of May 1 and May 12 were adapted.

Mr. Brickman declared that he had been asked by Mr. vanden Heuvel to raise the matter of the case of the "Tombs Seven," and asked whether the Board wished to take the position that correction officers should be treated as were the inmates, with fines being suspended. A general discussion of the matter ensued.

Mr. Brickman then announced the funding of the Legal Advocate Program ("LAP"), and introduced Ms. Pickman, Legal Advocate I, and Mr. Nochimson, Legal Advocate II. Mr. Brickman stated that Ms. Pickman was a graduate of Columbia Law School, had been associated with Fulton, Walter & Duncombe, had been admitted to practice in New York State in January 1969, and from December 1971 to present had been Assistant General Counsel of the New York State Special Commission on Attica.

Mr. Brickman also stated that Mr. Nochimson had been associated with the Board as senior law interne during the previous year and that he would be graduating from New York Law School on Sunday, June 11.

Ms. Pickman discussed the funding of the LAP and declared that four law internes had been hired. She discussed a tentative list of topics, including a study of the 35 inmates who had been in detention the longest and the gathering of statistics on the turnover of cases in the various Supreme Courts to examine the delay between the time men are convicted and sentenced. Ms. Pickman then mentioned the deplorable condition of the court pens, stating that the inmates' grapevine had it that they were used as a harrassment technique. A general discussion then ensued regarding the LAP.

The Chairman requested that Ms. Pickman write a weekly progress report and distribute copies to the members of the Board, and Ms. Pickman agreed to do so.

Mr. Brickman then informed the Board that Mr. Kirby's son had recently died, and Mrs. Singer suggested that a letter be sent on behalf of the Board. The Secretary agreed to prepare such a letter.

Mr. Brickman then discussed the topic of summer projects, and a general discussion ensued regarding the matter. As to proposed travel to evaluate the Washington, D.C. work-release program, Mr. Brickman agreed that the staff would seek to gather data by telephone and letter, and determine later whether travel would be necessary. Ms. Strauss added that Henry Ruth had gone to Washington and had felt it was a worthwhile project.

Mr. Schulte said that the Civil Jail was a fire trap. He further stated that we should check back to Lowry to see if this is truly a fire trap.

Mr. Brickman mentioned that it would be useful if Board members led the monthly inspections of institutions.

After discussion, it was determined Mr. DeMonte would lead the visit to the Branch Queens House of Detention, Rev. Wilson would lead the visit to the Bronx House of Detention, and Mrs. Singer would lead the visit to the Correctional Institution for Women.

At 5 p.m. Messrs. vanden Heuvel and Dontzin entered the meeting. Mr. vanden Heuvel assumed the Chairmanship of the meeting.

The Chairman raised the question of recent correspondence between Commissioner Malcolm and himself. A general discussion ensued regarding the matter. The Chairman stated that the Board was not going to be merely a critic, but that it was going to offer constructive solutions. He stated that the next step was to meet with Commissioner Malcolm.

The Chairman then declared that this would be Ms. Strauss's last meeting since she was leaving CJCC, and that her place would be filled by Ms. Debbie Powers, who had worked with the Horizon Project.

A general discussion then ensued of the Department's building program, with the participants in agreement that a prison mental health facility was vital.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.