

MINUTES  
JUNE 18, 1980 MEETING  
BOARD OF CORRECTION

A regular meeting of the New York City Board of Correction was held on June 18, 1980 at the offices of Tufo, Johnston & Zuccotti, 645 Madison Avenue, New York City.

In attendance were Chairman Peter Tufo, Vice-Chairman John Horan, Mr. Angelo Giordani, Mr. Wilbert Kirby, Mr. David Schulte, Mr. David Lenefsky and Mrs. Rose M. Singer.

Absences of Mr. Jack Poses and Rev. Samuel Holder were noted.

Board staff present were Michael Austin, Michael Cleary, Joseph Smith, Judie Ennett, Rubin Estrada, Sherry Goldstein, Fr. Harrison, Jeanette Spencer, Rolando Torres, Barbara Treen, Doug Tsuruoka, Joyce West and Intern Jacque Simmons.

Also in attendance were Deputy Commissioner Mark Corrigan and Deputy Commissioner Ellen Schall of the Department of Correction and Mr. Frank Schneider.

Peter Tufo chaired the meeting and Barbara Treen was secretary.

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Frank Schneider reported on the interagency Mental Health Project. He briefly outlined the development of the interagency mental health task force and then outlined how the task force would implement the goals that had been established. He spoke of the immediate need to define the role of prison mental health and the responsibilities of each agency within the coalition. He proceeded to discuss the pilot project at ARDC as well as the effort to attempt to analyze the attitudes of mental health staff, the working environment, training and additional factors contributing to the delivery of mental health services. Once the programmatic information from ARDC is retrieved, correlations will be made with other institutions. Mr. Schneider spoke of the high attrition rate among mental health workers. Deputy Commissioner Schall agreed that there is cooperation from the Department on the project and that a dialogue has been initiated among the concerned agencies. Mr. Schneider concluded his presentation by stating that he believed the best way to improve the quality of mental health services would be to consolidate prison mental health services into a single facility that would attract good professionals who could deliver proper services. He agreed to return in the fall to give a progress report.

Deputy Commissioner Mark Corrigan then spoke about the impact of the PEG budget reductions on the Department's ability to comply with the minimum standards. He stated that the Department will undertake an analysis of the manner in which uniformed staff is now deployed. Deputy Commissioner Corrigan said that it was his personal belief that the Department's uniformed staff was not now deployed properly. Specifically, correction officers are assigned to posts and tasks which are not authorized while other authorized posts are

unmanned. It was Deputy Commissioner Corrigan's opinion that the Department could meet its security requirements and comply with the minimum standards and consent decrees by reassigning staff and filling only authorized posts.

Deputy Commissioner Corrigan went on to discuss the overcrowding problems at H.D.M. caused by the presence of over 600 State-ready prisoners at that facility. He indicated that they were under a great deal of pressure to reduce the H.D.M. population and had therefore proposed to move State-readies from H.D.M. to C-76 despite overcrowding in the dorms at C-76. It was suggested that opening some dormitory space in C-95 for City sentenced prisoners might alleviate the problem. Deputy Commissioner Corrigan indicated that he would explore this possibility but thought that substantial work would be required to make this space suitable for that purpose. Deputy Commissioner Corrigan then described the Department's master planning effort. Following the demise of the Rikers Island transfer proposal, the Department had begun to prepare a master plan for the utilization and renovation of the existing City correctional facilities. According to commitments made to Judge Lasker, the plan is to be completed by September 15, 1980. Deputy Commissioner Corrigan also discussed briefly the Department's contingency plans in the event of a strike by correction officers on July 1, 1980.

The Chairman then returned to the regularly scheduled agenda.

Mr. Horan stated that the minutes of the May 21 meeting should reflect Rev. Holder's absence. Mr. Horan made a motion to adopt the corrected minutes. Mr. Kirby seconded the motion and the May 21 minutes were adopted as corrected.

Mr. Tufo reported that the Board's FY 81 budget had been approved without any reduction in personnel.

Commenting on Deputy Commissioner Corrigan's statements on the State-ready problem, Mr. Tufo stated that the Board had made numerous efforts in the past to have the State assume responsibility for its prisoners in a timely fashion, but the State had consistently responded that they did not have space available to house these prisoners. Based on this experience he predicted that no quick action would be taken by the State to assume responsibility for these prisoners.

Mr. Tufo stated that following the demise of the Rikers Island transfer proposal, he had requested that the Board be involved in the City's efforts to develop a master plan for its present correctional facilities and in the negotiations between the Legal Aid Society and the City to settle the Benjamin litigation. He reported that both of these requests had been honored.

Michael Austin then discussed various operational problems that staff had recently unearthed at ARDC. Field staff was then called upon to report on conditions at their respective institutions.

Michael Cleary reported on the Department's efforts to implement the inmate grievance procedure at the H.D.M. Complex and the Queens H.D.M. He stated that full implementation has been hampered by resistance from COBA and line personnel at these two facilities.

Sherry Goldstein updated the Board on the status of the Department's efforts to develop an inmate classification system. She stated that the plans call for each new admission at H.D.M. to be searched in a separate private cubical

and not in view of the other new admissions. All officers working in this area will be receiving special training.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:40 p.m.