

MINUTES

December 2, 1981

Board of Correction

A regular meeting of the New York City Board of Correction was held on December 2, 1981 at the office of the Board of Correction, 51 Chambers Street, New York.

Chairman Peter Tufo called the meeting to order at 2:45 p.m. with Board members Mr. John Horan, Mr. Wilbert Kirby, Mr. David Schulte and Mrs. Rose M. Singer in attendance.

Excused absences were approved for Mr. Angelo Giordani and Mr. David Lenefsky.

Board staff present were Michael Austin, Michael Cleary, Judith LaPook, David Johnson, Sherry Goldstein, Fr. Robert Harrison, Thomas Prendergast and Barbara Treen.

Barbara Treen served as secretary.

Mrs. Singer requested that her statement of support for the Prison Construction Bond Act in the October 14, 1981 minutes be corrected to read .. 'would provide some relief for the overcrowding..'

David Johnson reported on the Thanksgiving Day escape of Edwin Enchantequis from the Anna M. Kross Center.

Discussion followed regarding the Safety and Security report. It was agreed that Board members would provide comments on the draft report.

Thomas Prendergast then reported on the suicide of Patrick Rubino at the Queens HDM on October 14, 1981.

Michael Austin reported that Frank Schneiger, one of the Board's consultants, has been involved in developing a stress management training program for correctional personnel.

Discussion ensued regarding overcrowding in the City's jails, particularly in dormitories for sentenced prisoners. Although the Board's standard requiring that individuals in dormitories be provided with 75 sq. feet of living space applies only to detainees, not sentenced prisoners, she indicated that there is great concern that in most instances sentenced prisoners in dormitories currently are provided with only 35-40 sq. feet of living space. According to Ms. LaPook, the Department shares this concern and intends to alleviate the problem through the construction of additional modular space. On the larger issue of chronic systemwide overcrowding,

Ms. LaPook stated that staff has been directed by the Chairman to explore the feasibility of holding a series of Board sponsored symposia on jail overcrowding.

Ms. LaPook then reported on the Department's request for an extension until June 30, 1982 of the current variance from the requirement that lockers be provided for each prisoner. Ms. LaPook stated that the Department was making a good faith effort to comply with this standard despite the fact that the Board had granted extensions of the variance to date totalling three years. It was agreed to send a strong letter to the Department chronicling the administrative errors which led to this intolerable delay and requesting that the Department reevaluate its request.

Ms. LaPook then reported that Judge Lasker was considering the appointment of a special master to monitor and expedite the Department's efforts to comply with the consent decrees. He asked the Department, the Board and the Legal Aid Society to consider the feasibility of having the Board or a member of the Board serve as the special master. Following discussion, it was agreed that Judge Lasker should be informed of the Board's willingness to have its Chairman serve as the special master.

Michael Austin reported that the Center for Community Justice was conducting an evaluation of the Inmate Grievance Resolution Program. Their report is scheduled to be submitted by the end of January 1982.

Peter Tufo reported that the Department of Health, responding to the Board's draft mental health standards, had informed the Board that it would not accept the Board's standards governing the Department of Health's services in City correctional facilities. It was decided to discuss this matter with the new Commissioner of the Department of Health when he takes office.

The Board agreed with staff's recommendation that a study of nursery services in the City's jails be undertaken.

The next meeting was scheduled for January 12, 1982

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.