

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CORRECTION

July 8, 1975

A regular meeting of the Board of Correction was held on Tuesday, July 8, 1975 at the New York City House of Detention for Men ("HDM") 14-14 Hazen Street, East Elmhurst, New York 11370.

Present were Mr. Jackson, Mr. Kirby, Father Rios, Mr. Schulte, Mrs. Singer and Mr. Tufo. Also present by invitation of the Board were Marc Rosen, Executive Director; Michael D. Cleary, Executive Secretary/Fiscal Officer; Barbara Armstrong, Acting Director, Clergy Volunteer Program; Stephen Fisher, Staff Assistant; and Jeff Buss, Robert Gerrard, Nancy Kessler, Brian Maas and Jose Sanchez, internes.

Present from the Department of Correction were Luis Cadiz, Deputy Commissioner; Arthur Rubin, Warden, HDM; and Henry Finkel, Correction Officers Benevolent Association ("COBA") delegate at HDM.

Mr. Tufo served as Chairman and Mr. Fisher as Secretary of the meeting.

The meeting was called to order at 2:55 p.m.

The Board asked Warden Rubin to explain the problems the institution experienced over the July 4th weekend. Warden Rubin stated that on the July 5 4-12 tour, 12 officers called in sick thereby crippling the tour by delaying the evening meal and lock out. As a result, the evening meal was not finished until 10:30-11:00 Saturday night. Inmates started several small fires to protest the fact that they were not able to lock out. Warden Rubin stated that a reserve force of officers from Rikers Island Headquarters, the Transportation Division and the Academy were ordered to the institution.

On Sunday July 6 Warden Rubin stated that he ordered men in to work who were off on pass days. By doing so, he declared, he was creating additional future problems by tampering with the institutional work schedule. Officers who had worked 17 hours were excused for a day. The institution had enough personnel on the 4-12 tour for normal feeding and lock-out.

On Monday, July 6, the institution was basically back to normal although all available men were needed to provide the most minimal services. Warden Rubin noted that the delivery of inmates to court was a little late, and that educational classes had to be cancelled. Medical services were in operation throughout the whole period, although a few nurses did not show up.

The Board inquired as to the shortage of officers at the institution. Warden Rubin responded that he was 55 officers short of his normal quota of 406. This figure represents the addition of officers for the special housing areas of the Adolescent Detention Center, which are now under the jurisdiction of HDM.

At this point, Warden Rubin informed the Board that Officer Henry Finkel, the COBA representative at HDM wished to attend the meeting. The Board invited Mr. Finkel into the meeting.

Officer Finkel stated that morale among the officers was at its lowest point because of the tremendous amount of overtime an officer must work and the fact that he can never get two consecutive pass days. In addition, Officer Finkel declared that the institution is used as the dumping ground for troublemakers in the Department and this affects the regular officer's perception of his job. Moreover, he stated that officers assigned to Headquarters do not want to work overtime at HDM.

Warden Rubin stated that 16 correction officers were brought back from those that were layed off. He also stated that 12 officers from the Correction Academy worked 26 hours around the clock over the weekend.

At 3:30 p.m., Officer Finkel left the meeting.

Warden Rubin stated that there was a general feeling among the inmates that they were not getting enough activities. He noted that with the hiring of more CETA workers, he could free officers from performing clerical duties and thereby utilize them in a more resourceful manner.

At 3:32 p.m., Ms. Armstrong, Mr. Cleary, Mr. Gerrard and Ms. Kessler entered the meeting.

Warden Rubin informed the Board that Prison Health Services was not certifying inmates for transfer to the Ossining Correctional Facility or performing the proper medical exam upon admission. Apparently, the doctors feel they are not getting sufficient physical security, he said. Warden Rubin declared that if he could raise the number of Ossining transfers, he could relieve some of the overcrowding in the institution. An attempt was made to invite Meredith Conti, the institutional unit medical manager, to the meeting, but she was not in the institution.

At 3:40 p.m., Warden Rubin left the meeting.

The Chairman stated that he would recommend to the Commissioner that 55 correction officers be assigned to HDM as soon as possible.

At 3:45 p.m., Deputy Commissioner Cadiz left the meeting, and Messrs. Buss and Sanchez entered.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Schulte and seconded by Mrs. Singer, a request for an excused absence for Reverend Wilson was approved.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Schulte and seconded by Mrs. Singer, the minutes of June 2 and June 17 were approved as amended.

A discussion ensued on the Board's report on HDM. It was agreed generally that the Board would await action by City Hall and the Department before it takes any further action. The Chairman stated that in connection with the HDM report, the Department is proposing a bail review for inmates detained on \$1,000 cash bail. It is estimated that 1100-1200 inmates would thus be eligible for review, and that the overall City wide detainee population could be reduced by 500 inmates.

The date of the next Board meeting was discussed. It was agreed that the next meeting would be with Supervising Warden Buono at Rikers Island Headquarters or at the Adolescent Reception and Detention Center.

The matter of contact visits at the Queens House of Detention was raised. It was noted that these visits are being denied to some inmates for arbitrary and capricious reasons. The problems will be looked into.

A discussion ensued on Directive #9 as it pertains to the Clergy Volunteer Program. Father Rios and Reverend Wilson will review the revisions and report to the Chairman.

The status report on projects was discussed.

At 4:25 p.m., Mr. Kirby entered the meeting.

The recent problems at ARDC were discussed. It was noted that since the Adolescent Detention Center closed in June, the inmate population at ARDC has doubled. In addition, it was stated that there appeared to be a rise in the number of infractions at this institution, and that this might be the result of provocation by officers. It was decided that Mr. Kirby and Father Rios will head up a task force to look into these problems and advise the Board at its next meeting whether it should undertake a study of the institution on a priority basis.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Tufo and seconded by Mr. Schulte, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.