

MINUTES

MAY 21, 1980 MEETING

BOARD OF CORRECTION

A regular meeting of the New York City Board of Correction was held on May 21, 1980 in the Board's Conference Room at 51 Chambers Street, New York, New York.

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

Excused absences were requested and approved for Mr. David Lenefsky and Mr. Jack Poses.

Board staff present were Michael Austin, Michael Cleary, Sherry Goldstein, Judith LaPook and Joseph Smith.

Peter Tufo chaired the meeting and Sherry Goldstein served as secretary.

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 2:15 p.m.

The minutes of the April 16, 1980 meeting were adopted.

After discussion about the severe overcrowding in the City's jails it was agreed that the gravity of this situation should be communicated to the Mayor, the City Council and the State Commission of Correction. A telegram would also be sent to Commissioner Thomas Coughlin as an update to the Chairman's letter of May 13, 1980. It was agreed that the Board would issue a public statement on the current overcrowding within New York City jails.

Mr. Tufo then discussed his May 19, 1980 meeting with the Mayor and his top advisors. The Chairman stated that in light of City Hall's ongoing reevaluation of the proposed transfer of Riker's Island to the State, he had requested a meeting with the Mayor to present the Board's position on the transfer. Mr. Tufo stated that the Mayor complimented the Board on its report on the proposed transfer, stated that his (Mr. Tufo's) analysis of the situation was helpful and that he (the Mayor) would reach a decision by the end of the week on whether or not the City should still support this proposal.

It was agreed that the Board would issue a public statement concerning the transfer situation if the Mayor's decision was not to continue with the deal.

Ms. LaPook reported on the Tomb's recreation situation. She said that the Department's so-called "Lasker submission" was just a draft and that the matter was not yet formally before Judge Lasker. The Department and Legal Aid were still in the process of negotiating. She stated that the most serious problem was the adequacy of recreation space. The plans now call for 3 mini-gyms. The Department states that each prisoner will be able to get 1 hour of indoor recreation a day

by operating the three mini-gyms 12 hours a day each. However, no indoor space would be available for basketball or other large muscle exercise.

After some discussion it was agreed that the Board should go on record in a letter to the Department stating its opinion that a full size gym should be incorporated in the schematics.

Mr. Tufo asked the status of the Department's requested amendment to the recreation standard.

Ms. LaPook replied that she and Deputy Commissioner Schall were close to agreement on appropriate language for the recreation denial procedure.

Mr. Tufo stated that the Board should respond sympathetically to the Legal Aid Society's letter of May 15, 1980 concerning recreation.

Ms. LaPook then explained each of the Department's current variance requests.

Mr. Michael Ciaffa and Mr. Michael Mushlin of the Prisoner's Rights Project of the Legal Aid Society joined the meeting at 3:00 p.m. to present their position on the Department's variance requests as indicated in Mr. Ciaffa's letter to Chairman Tufo on May 20, 1980.

After discussion concerning the variance issues, Mr. Tufo thanked Mr. Ciaffa and Mr. Mushlin for their time and stated that the work of the Prisoner's Rights Project was extremely helpful in the minimum standards compliance effort.

The Board's determinations on the Department's variance requests are attached.

It was agreed that in the letter to the Department transmitting the Board's determinations the contact visit effort at Elmhurst Hospital Prison Ward and Kings County Hospital should be endorsed in principle.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.