

NEW YORK CITY
BOARD OF CORRECTION
MEETING OF JUNE 13 1990

Members Present

John R. Horan, Vice Chairman

David Schulte

Rose M. Singer

Excused absences were noted for Judge William Booth, Reverend Irvine Bryer, Jr., Angelo Giordani, Robert Kasanof, David Lenefsky and Barbara Margolis

Representatives of the Department of Correction

Michael Cleary, Executive Director, Management Evaluation
Division

John Maguire, Assistant Deputy Warden, Operations

Robert Wagenstein, Deputy Chief for Security

Others in Attendance

Paul LaRosa, New York Daily News

Earl Murphy, New York State Commission of Correction

Frank Reay, State Senate Committee on Crime and Corrections

Mark Lowery, New York Newsday

The Board went into Executive Session at 2:00 P.M. The meeting began at 2:30 P.M. Vice-Chairman John Horan welcomed the representatives of the Department of Correction and other guests.

Mr. Horan noted that a quorum was not present at the meeting, therefore issues requiring a vote by Members of the Board would be conducted by telephone.

Mr. Horan called for a motion to adopt the minutes of the May 11, 1990 Board meeting as amended. Board Member David Schulte referred to page two of the previous meeting's minutes and asked that it be amended to read that he had suggested that inmates be paid to clean the court pens. He added that someone from the Department should be made aware that Board Members visit Department facilities and have concerns and suggestions regarding the operation of those facilities. The motion to amend was then made by Mr. Schulte, seconded by Board Member Rose M. Singer and approved by the members present.

Executive Director Richard Wolf introduce Stewart Wakeling and Kaneez Dahodwala. Stewart was a student at the University of California at Berkeley and at Columbia. He will be working with the Board for a year and then will begin study at the Kennedy School at Harvard. Kaneez is a student at Rutgers and will be with the Board for the summer. Both have prison experience.

Deputy Director Maddy deLone then gave a status report on the Health Care Standards. She reported that she and Mr. Wolf had met with Carmen Rivera, the Director of the City's Division of Health Policy. She also met with the Directors of Health and

Enforcement at the Mayor's Office of Operations. The City has assured the Board that it would provide the Board cost estimates and final comments on the Standards by August 15, 1990 and that the City would be in touch with the Board to discuss concerns as they arose. Ms. deLone also said that she and Mr. Wolf had met with the Commissioner of Mental Health, the President of HHC and the Commissioner of Health to discuss prison health issues and the Health Care Standards. She was optimistic there would be City cooperation on the Standards.

Mr. Wolf then reported on the figures regarding suicides, homicides, escapes and erroneous discharges for the year thus far. All figures increased when compared to last year's figures. He stated that since the last Board meeting, there have been three homicides as follows:

On May 14, 1990, inmate Anthony Bryant of JATC was resisting transfer from one cell to another. He assaulted staff who in turn used force. As a result, he was sent to the emergency room at Elmhurst Hospital. He returned to the jail and was discovered unconscious the next evening, May 15, 1990. CPR was administered but he was pronounced dead at 8:00 p.m. at Elmhurst. The cause of death was determined by the Medical Examiner to be homicide.

On May 29, 1990, an officer at JATC saw a group of inmates huddled in one of the day rooms. When the inmates saw the officer they separated and inmate Erwin Dean was found stabbed with a shank. An inmate was later identified as the assailant and arrested.

On June 9, 1990, at AMKC two inmates, Robert Sota and Howard Waite, were involved in a knife fight. During this incident Sota was stabbed and killed.

Mr. Schulte asked if the professionals in the Department cannot reduce the availability of shanks being used by the inmates in the facilities. Deputy Chief Wagenstein responded that a special Departmental committee on security was actively investigating increased violence and related issues. Mr. Schulte asserted these were continuing problems the Department seemed incapable of dealing with.

Mr. Wolf then reviewed the status of the court pen standards. On June 6, 1990, he met with members of Deputy Mayor Mollen's office regarding coordinating improvements in the arrest to arraignment process (ATA) and promulgating minimum standards for the pens. Mr. Mollen's office is actively pursuing improvements in the ATA process. Mr. Wolf related that there were ongoing discussions regarding jurisdictional issues concerning the pens and noted Judge Booth's concern about the importance of extending any new standards to police lock-ups and central booking facilities.

The meeting then turned to Department requests for the variances. Mr. Wolf noted that although the number of inmates in the Otis Bantum Correctional Center (OBCC) had been reduced, enabling the Board to permit reductions in the number of officers in the unit, bunk beds that block sight lines had yet to be removed. Mr. Wagenstein assured the Board that these beds would

be removed promptly.

Mr. Cleary referred to page two of the June 6 variance request from Deputy Commissioner Sinai and noted that the Department wishes to continue housing female prisoners at densities greater than 60 sq. ft. per person at the Rose M. Singer Center (RMSC) and Wards Island.

The Department also wishes to continue existing variances granted for the MTF II (the Bibby Resolution).

Mr. Wolf then reviewed requests for variances regarding dorm capacities and program variances as described under items 2 and 3 of Mr. Sinai's letter.

Mr. Horan then moved to extend the above variances until the next meeting. Mr. Schulte seconded the motion and those present voted that the variances were approved subject to telephone votes of a quorum of Board members.

Mr. Cleary then informed the Board the White Street facility would be completed by this fall. He noted this would have the effect of easing population pressures within the system.

Mrs. Singer reported that her recent tour of RMSC with Mr. Schulte revealed that the institution was in totally unsatisfactory condition.

Mr. Horan thanked the representatives from the Department and others present for their participation. The meeting was adjourned at 3:20 p.m.