

HIGHLIGHTS - COOK COUNTY CORRECTIONS BOARD MEETING
FRIDAY, JUNE 9, 2006, HELD AT THE COOK COUNTY CORRECTIONS
FACILITY – DIV.5

PRESENT: Chair Iola McGowan, Vice-Chair Munir Muhammad, Board Members Howard Brookins Sr. and Esequiel Iracheta, Board Legal Advisor Joseph Consolo, Assistant Executive Director Scott Kurtovich, Undersheriff Zelda Whittler, Vera Bonds aide to Commissioner Bobbie Steele, Board Secretary Shirley Moore, and Frances Sowa, LWV Observer.

The meeting came to order at 12:35p.m. Minutes of the last meeting were approved.

Proxy Issue:

On May 26th, the Board had requested a legal opinion regarding whether Board member Gilbert Marchman could give a general proxy to Mr. Muhammad to be exercised at all meetings which Marchman did not attend. Chair McGowan submitted the question to Mr. Consolo, and requested that he present his opinion at the June 23rd Board meeting.

Directors' Report:

As of 8 A.M., May 26th, there were 9,282 detainees. An additional 1,750 defendants were on community supervision and intervention. 32 inmates were in various hospitals. 389 inmates had been transferred to other corrections facilities during the previous week.

In addition, 116 women were housed in the Women's Justice Services program, 158 women were on Sheriff's furlough, and 17 pregnant detainees were housed elsewhere.

Director Kurtovich stated that the two latest academy classes of 53 and 31 officers, will replace the number of those lost through attrition, and that future graduating classes will add to the number of correctional officers at the facility.

Unusual Occurrences

Director Kurtovich stated that the period had been relatively quiet; A woman detainee in Division 3 had suffered a seizure and died before reaching the hospital.

Chair McGowan Questioned Mr. Kurtovich about an alleged beating in the Receiving Room at Division 11 on Sunday June 4th. According to reports, an incoming detainee hit an officer and was beaten by five officers. Kurtovich replied that the matter was being investigated by police and the internal affairs unit. He further stated that the detainee did not require hospitalization.

Further, according to Kurtovich, the situation in the receiving room, where as many of 200 arrestees may be processed at one time, requires that the officers quell any disturbance before it gets out of hand. He stressed that the out-dated receiving area was not designed to accommodate current volume and that the sheriff's 2007 budget request includes an appropriation for a modern receiving area.

Report on Recruit Training & Correctional Development

Carmelita Wagner Director of Training presented an overview of in-service training. Department personnel receive 24 hours of college credit, under an agreement with Moraine Valley Community College. The curriculum contains 480 hours of instruction,

whereas the mandated standard is 200 hours. In addition, all employees are required to attend at least 40 hours of continuing training each year. In answer to Board questions Ms. Wagner described the psychological component of the training, including cultural diversity, suicide prevention, and 12 hours of crises intervention. She stated that personnel are trained to de-escalate a situation before it becomes physical.

Also in response to Board questions, Mr. Kurtovich stated that there is no psychological testing per se of new recruits at the entry level, but that supervisors and administrators make determinations of fitness for duty when issues arise. Employee Assistance is available to all county employees and their families on a confidential basis, re domestic problems, substance abuse, etc.

The Board adjourned at 1:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Frances Sowa