

M I N U T E S

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON INSTITUTIONS

August 5 and 6, 1976

Members Present

Senator Arden Booth, Chairman
Representative R.C. Zajic, Vice-Chairman
Senator Bud Burke
Senator Bert Chaney
Representative Eugene Anderson
Representative Glee Jones
Representative Ardena Matlack
Representative Rip Reeves
Representative Jim Ungerer
Representative Billie Joe Wisdom

Staff Present

John Schott, Legislative Research Department
Carl Tramel, Legislative Research Department
Bill Edds, Revisor of Statutes Office
Sherman Parks, Jr., Revisor of Statutes Office

Area Legislators

Representative Ambrose Dempsey
Representative Pat Hurley (August 5)

August 5, 1976

Kansas State Penitentiary

Chairman Booth opened the meeting by introducing the members and staff of the Special Committee on Institutions. He then introduced Representative Ambrose Dempsey from Leavenworth.

After several additional remarks, Senator Booth turned the meeting over to Mr. Ken Oliver, Director of the Kansas State Penitentiary. Mr. Oliver directed the Committee's attention to the booklet which focused on various aspects of operations at Kansas State Penitentiary. (This report is available for inspection in the Kansas Legislative Research Department.)

In his remarks to the Committee relative to the report, Mr. Oliver indicated that many of the problems which he had discussed with the Committee at its June meeting at the Kansas State Industrial Reformatory at Hutchinson were present at the Kansas State Penitentiary. He noted that the inmates are more violent and aggressive than inmates in previous years and that a number of inmates could appropriately be placed under psychiatric care in an appropriate therapeutic setting.

Kansas State Penitentiary is experiencing a relatively rapid turnover of correctional officers. These officers are leaving due to financial difficulties and a better employment environment at the federal prison in Leavenworth. Mr. Oliver added that a training session for both new and experienced correctional officers is pending and this situation provides additional stress for correctional officers, since all security positions at the institution must be covered.

In response to a question from a Committee member, Mr. Oliver stated that he was not particularly happy with the correctional officer training program and it is his intention to realign this program. Emphasis will be placed on emergency situation training and in other areas which have a more practical bearing on the actual day-to-day responsibilities and duties of a correctional officer.

Mr. Oliver told the Committee that the stress and tension of correctional work is such that a correctional officer should have early retirement benefits from the state civil service. He emphasized this matter at the meeting of the Committee at the Kansas State Industrial Reformatory in Hutchinson.

Mr. Oliver and several members of his staff explained the report to the Committee, covering such areas as organization, unit team operation, clinical services, legal services for prisoners, education, volunteer programs and capital improvements.

When asked to summarize the situation at KSP, Mr. Oliver stated that the primary problem was the concentration of people and the crowded conditions under which the inmates must live. It was his feeling that this situation significantly reduces the flexibility of the administration to classify and manage the inmates. The inmate rules and regulations are for approximately one-fourth of the population which needs stringent control and management. However, these maximum controls apply to the entire inmate population. In this regard, Mr. Oliver advocated the establishment of a medium security facility which would provide more management flexibility for those inmates capable of functioning in a less rigidly controlled environment.

The Committee then adjourned for lunch and a tour of the institution.

Afternoon Session

Following the tour of the Kansas State Penitentiary the Committee reconvened and began discussion of the all faith chapel fund at KSP. The discussion centered on whether or not the fund, which is approximately \$30,000, could be used by the institution for the construction of an all faith chapel. Questions considered during the discussion were whether there were adequate funds to build a chapel, whether these funds could be used to establish a chapel within a medium security facility and whether the institution had control over the fund. The Committee took no official action on this matter.

Additional discussion centered on problems with inmates and the construction of a medium security facility. It was Mr. Oliver's contention that a psychiatric treatment setting is the most appropriate mode of treatment for certain inmates at Kansas State Penitentiary. He felt that those individuals who require such a setting but are kept at KSP have made a significant contribution to unrest at the institution.

In discussing the role of a medium security prison, Mr. Oliver explained that such a facility would enable KSP to deal specifically with the longer term, maximum security prisoner. A medium security facility would allow those individuals requiring less supervision to be placed in a setting where additional responsibilities and privileges could be granted.

Following limited further discussion of this matter, the Committee thanked Mr. Oliver and his staff for their presentation and adjourned until 10:00 a.m., August 6, at the Kansas Correctional Institution for Women.

August 6, 1976

Kansas Correctional Institution for Women

Chairman Booth called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. He introduced the members of the Committee to the new director of the Kansas Correctional Institution for Women, Mrs. Sally Halford. Following several brief introductory remarks, Chairman Booth turned the meeting over to Mrs. Halford.

The Director began by giving the Committee a brief personal history and explained that her most recent position was manager of an ex-offender service center in Columbia, Missouri.

In explaining her basic philosophy of corrections, Mrs. Halford stated that she believes in the team approach and a participatory decision-making model for operating the institution. She also stated that she endorses the unit team concept.

In discussing the inmate population, Mrs. Halford stated that most of the inmates are young and currently there are no federal women prisoners at Kansas Correctional Institution for Women. The oldest inmate is 62 years of age and the youngest is 17 years of age. The current population of 87 is approximately half black and half white. In response to a question from a Committee member, Mrs. Halford noted that the crimes for which the women have been convicted are similar to crimes committed by men.

In discussing the various inmate programs at KCIW, Mrs. Halford explained that a vocational program at the institution is the result of contractual agreement between the institution and the area vocational-technical school in Kansas City, Kansas. Efforts are under way to provide individual programs for the inmates in areas such as welding. CETA programs are available to inmates if they are a maximum of 18 months from parole eligibility. Also under contract are adult education, GED and college courses from St. Marys in Leavenworth.

A member noted that the recreational facilities at KCIW are experiencing minimal use. Mrs. Halford replied that she would like to increase use of this facility, but such increased use would require additional supervisory personnel who, at this time, are not available.

In response to a question from a Committee member, Mrs. Halford stated that the maximum security cells at the institution are not used and that there is no "maximum security" operation at KCIW.

The Kansas Correctional Institution for Women participates in a work release program through Topeka and Wichita. While four inmates are currently waiting for placement at these work release centers, no KCIW inmate is currently at either center.

In discussing the day-to-day operations of the institution, Mrs. Halford described the jobs that are generally available to the inmates, including housekeeping, gardening, etc. The most common complaint of the inmates is that there is not enough to do.

In discussing the personal situation of the inmate, Mrs. Halford explained that each individual has her own room and that there have not been any serious disruptive problems at the institution.

In relation to medical services, Mrs. Halford explained that the inmates are no longer taken to the Graham Clinic in Leavenworth. A local doctor now comes to the institution twice weekly to check those inmates who need medical attention.

In response to general questions from the Committee in several areas, Mrs. Halford explained that they are attempting to develop a drug program and that there have been minimal problems with contraband entering the institution.

Following several additional questions and comments, the Committee adjourned for a tour of the institution and lunch.

Afternoon Session

Following the tour and lunch, the Committee reconvened to conclude its visit to the Kansas Correctional Institution for Women. In response to a question, Mrs. Halford indicated that there are currently ten misdemeanants at the institution.

Chairman Booth thanked Mrs. Halford for her presentation and tour of the institution.

Upon proper motion, the minutes of the July 8 and 9 meeting were approved. Staff then brought to the attention of the Committee the 106th Congress of Correction, sponsored by the American Correctional Association. After some discussion, it was moved and seconded that John Schott and a maximum of two legislators from the Committee attend this meeting in Denver on August 22 to August 26. Motion carried.

Senator Booth informed the Committee that the next meeting will be held at the Winfield State Hospital and Training Center and the Toronto Honor Camp on September 13 and 14. The meetings on both dates will begin at 10:00 a.m.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Prepared by John Schott

Approved by Committee on:

9-14-76

Date