

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
May 12, 1983

Present:

Kent Mason	Margaret Saguto
Judy Morenoff	Howard Etterman
Susan Wiant	Leighton Dudley
Jane Sachs	Martha Jackowski
Ken MacLean	Bob Jardin
Ed Fones	Ann Harrington

The meeting was opened by Mr. Mason at 3:45 P.M., May 12, 1983, at the Pre-Release Center in the Life Skills training area. Mr. Mason welcomed the members and explained the purpose for establishing the Community Involvement Committee. The purpose can be summarized as follows:

- To maximize communication and coordination between PRC staff and community members.
- To assist the PRC staff in ensuring that residents receive necessary and useful community treatment services.
- To assist the Pre-Release Center in developing community understanding and awareness of the correctional and re-integration process.
- To serve as an advocate group and speak out when isolated problems arise, providing political leaders and the press with perspective and to reduce the over reaction when the isolated problem incident occurs.
- Provide community perspective and advice on program issues to the Center Director.

The role of the Community Involvement Committee was discussed, emphasizing the need to make the meetings meaningful to the participating members by focusing on specific issues which the Committee could significantly assist in.

It is generally understood by the Committee members that the Committee will meet at least 3 times yearly (fall, winter, and spring) and more frequently, depending upon Committee members desires should the Committee get interested in an item they want to quickly follow up on. The time for this Committee meeting - late Thursday afternoon - was discussed and the members present indicated this time was convenient.

It was explained that Committee members would be acting as "volunteers" to the Center and, as such, had to complete a number of forms and be briefed on emergency procedures. The forms were explained, confidentiality discussed, and emergency procedures reviewed. The Committee members were to take their folders with them and complete the forms at their leisure and bring them to the next meeting.

Next, the Committee members participated in a get acquainted exercise during which time each Committee member interviewed another member and then introduced each other to the group. The Committee obviously represents a varied background of highly skilled individuals.

Mr. Mason handed out a suggestion of "Potential Activities of the PRC Community Involvement Committee". The issues presented on this handout were briefly discussed.

Sue Wiant, the Community Release Coordinator at the PRC, described the case of a current resident who has very severe mental and physical health problems and whose suitability at the Pre-Release Center was questionable. This individual's history was described as well as the potential alternative to impact on this individual. There seems to be no place else for this individual to be placed, yet the Pre-Release Center is not designed for this sort of mental health problem. A number of suggestions were made including NIMH as a potential resource for this individual.

The next item of business was selecting a Chair and a Vice Chair for the Committee. No one volunteered so Mr. Mason will follow up on a one-to-one basis to identify a willing Committee member. It was emphasized that the Chair and Vice Chair should not be a government employee. The role of Chair and Vice Chair will be more as facilitators of the group meeting process and Mr. Mason emphasized that the staff will provide the backup to ensure agendas are prepared, etc.

Review was made of the potential activities the Committee may want to become involved in. Two items seemed to surface - those involving mental health and those involving public awareness. The following items were agreed as things to work on between now and the next meeting:

1. Develop an NIMH linkage, if possible. Ken MacLean agreed to assist in this process.
2. Become involved in the "Interact" Committee of the Health Department. Kent Mason will follow up with a contact with Jim Herrell to see if this is possible. The Interact Committee will be reviewing the mental health problems in jails.
3. Defining the mental health population flowing through the correctional system - Martha Jakowski agreed to assist in developing a process to document the types of problems and the extent of the problems.
4. Kent Mason will follow up with Committee members to identify a Chair and Vice Chair for the Committee.
5. Committee members were asked to think about ways of impacting on public awareness of the correctional process and particularly the need for reintegration services.

The topic of the next meeting will be public education, as well as a follow up on mental health issues.

The date of the next meeting will be in September after the 15th of the month. The specific date will be determined based upon the availability of Committee members to attend.