

Order Study of Death in Bridewell

BY WILLIAM SLUIS

The Evanston City Council set up a special committee last night to investigate the death of an Evanston man in Bridewell Hospital Nov. 17 after he had been transferred there from Evanston Hospital.

The investigation was promoted by charges from black groups that the prisoner, a black, was transferred under pressure from Evanston police and city officials.

John Cox, 19, of 2208 W. Foster St., was taken by police to Evanston Hospital Oct. 24 after he attempted to hang himself in his cell in the Evanston police lockup after his arrest the day before for involuntary manslaughter for the fatal beating of his son, Sidney, 2, in the family home.

Cox, who was paralyzed, was transferred from Evanston Hospital after Magistrate Richard Jorzak of Evanston Court signed an order sought by police to move the youth.

Wayne F. Anderson, city manager, said last night in a memo made public at the council meeting that the transfer was necessitated by the cost to the city of keeping Cox in Evanston Hospital and maintaining an around-the-clock police guard

Evanston Unit to Hear Charge in Inmate Death

Hearings on charges of laxity on the part of the Evanston Police Department and officials of Evanston Hospital in connection with the death of John E. Cox, 19, of 2208 Foster Av., Evanston, on Nov. 21 will continue tonight before a City Council committee.

Members of an Evanston citizens group charged that the police and hospital were negligent in allowing Cox to be transferred from Evanston Hospital to County Hospital and later to the House of Correction Hospital, where he died of injuries he suffered when he attempted to hang himself in the Evanston City Jail. Cox had been charged with the death of his 2-year-old son.

At hearings yesterday, Mr. and Mrs. James Cox, 1908 Foster Av., Evanston, testified that they saw their son at County Hospital. They said he was transferred from County Hospital to the House of Correction Hospital altho he was too ill to be moved.

Evanston Study Blasts Prisoner's Death Phillips, Richard

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Evanston Study Blasts Prisoner's Death

BY RICHARD PHILLIPS

Evanston police, the public defender's office, a magistrate, County Jail, and two hospitals were criticized last night by a special Evanston City Council committee investigating the death of a prisoner shuffled by police between three hospitals last Nov. 17 despite the fact that he was in a coma.

John E. Cox, 19, of 2208 Foster Av., Evanston, died Nov. 20 in Cermak [formerly Bride-well] Hospital after being moved by police from Evanston Hospital to County Hospital. Then to Cermak Hospital four

days before. He had been in a coma since Oct. 24 when Evanston police found him hanging in his cell after his arrest the previous day on charges of beating to death his 2-year-old son.

Gives Wrong Advise

The special five-member City Council committee headed by Ald. Shel Newberger [9th] criticized the Evanston police, specifically Capt. James Gillespie and Lt. Tom Joyce, chief of detectives, for allowing a detective to misadvise the Cox family that they would have to pay his hospital bills [in Evans-

ton Hospital] if he were released on bond, despite the fact that Evanston Township has emergency medical assistance available to the poor.

"This enormous expense obviously frightened a poor family and made it less likely they would try to raise the \$250 bond," the 38-page report said. Joyce was also criticized for failing to notify Cox' wife that he was being moved by police to County Hospital.

Evanston Hospital came under fire for failing to notify officials of the County Hospital neurological ward that Cox was being transferred there, con-

trary to its own procedures, and County Hospital was criticized for failing to cooperate in the investigation.

Official Refuses to Appear

Dr. Jeb Boswell, County Hospital's director of admissions, refused to testify at committee hearings or answer questions by committee members, the report said.

"We can only regretfully conclude that in its handling of . . . Cox, Cook County Hospital performed in a manner it would like to conceal," the report said.

Cox reportedly was never admitted to County Hospital af-

ter his transfer from Evanston Hospital. Instead, committee members said, he was shuffled thru the hospital to a squadrol which took him to Cermak Hospital.

Magistrate Richard Jorzak of the Evanston Circuit Court "could have prevented the whole tragedy," by releasing Cox on his own recognizance, instead of setting bond at \$250, the report said. In addition, the public defender's office failed to ask the magistrate for a lower bond.

Newberger asked for an investigation by the Illinois Courts Commission into Jorzak's handling of the case.

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Votes for a Probe in Prisoner's Death

Yates, Ronald

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Votes for a Probe in Prisoner's Death

BY RONALD YATES

The Evanston City Council voted last night to ask the Illinois Courts Commission to investigate the Evanston Circuit Court's handling of a prisoner from that suburb who died last November after being shuffled between three hospitals despite the fact that he was in a coma.

The council acted on the recommendations of a special five-member committee, headed by Ald. Shel Newberger [9th], appointed to investigate the death of John E. Cox, 19, of 2208 Foster Av. Cox died Nov. 20 in Cermak [formerly Bridewell] Hospital four days after being shuttled by police from Evanston Hospital to County Hospital to Cermak Hospital while in a coma.

Cox had been in a coma since Oct. 24 when Evanston police found him hanging in his cell

after his arrest the previous day on charges of beating to death his 2-year old son.

The council voted unanimously for the Evanston corporation counsel to ask the Courts Commission to investigate both the Public Defender's Office and the Evanston Branch of Circuit Court's handling of the case. The Newberger report, which was released Jan. 25, criticized Magistrate Richard Jorzak of that court for failing to release Cox on his own recognizance instead of setting bond at \$250.

Newberger said last night that "essentially, there had been no legal representation of any kind for Cox."

The city will ask the Courts Commission to determine whether the Evanston Court acted fairly and whether there was "gross negligence."

Evanston Passes Prisoners Policies

Sluis, William

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Evanston Passes Prisoners Policies

BY WILLIAM SLUIS

Evanston's new policies for the handling of hospitalized police prisoners are expected to serve as model procedures for other cities, according to City Manager Edward A. Martin.

The Evanston City Council unanimously enacted a resolution setting forth the new policies. "This goes beyond what any community has done," said Martin.

Sets Guidelines

Included in the resolution are exact procedures for guarding or moving a hospitalized prisoner as well as specific guidelines

for notifying his family, securing his freedom with bail, and, in some cases, the city paying prisoners' bills.

The action followed the controversy and public hearings that began with the death of John Edward Cox, 19, in Bridewell's Cermak Hospital.

Cox was the first of two black Evanston prisoners who died in the hospital.

Hangs Himself

Last Oct. 24, Cox was arrested in his home at 2208 W. Foster St., Evanston, and charged with involuntary manslaughter in the death of his two-year-old son, Sidney.

Several hours later, Cox hanged himself in his cell at the Evanston lockup, leaving him unconscious and paralyzed.

After lingering near death for more than two weeks in Evanston Hospital, Cox was moved to County Hospital, where he was refused admission and then to the Bridewell, where he died.

Criticism Follows Death

His death led to criticism of Wayne Anderson, city manager at the time, by Ronald Scott Lee, director of Evanston Neighbors at Work. Blacks, led by Lee, accused Anderson and other city officials of placing the cost of Cox's hospitalization ahead of the prisoner's best interests.

Similar criticism followed the death of Eugene Tillman, 46, a heart patient who died in the Bridewell Hospital last May after his arrest in Evanston on a traffic charge. Tillman, who was arrested in a weak and incoherent state, died of his heart condition and complications of pneumonia and malnutrition, doctors said.

The new policy, calls for "the best possible medical care" and seeks to avoid or delay a prisoner's transfer to the Bridewell Hospital.

Altho Evanston does not accept specific responsibility for payment of a prisoner's bills in a private hospital the new policy does provide for the city to pay if no other source is found.

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