



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139
Tel. 498-9024

PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT
MICHAEL P. GARDNER,
Director

TO: Robert W. Healy
City Manager

FROM: Michael P. Gardner
Personnel Director

RE: Incidents of violence at Neville Manor

DATE: March 8, 1990

On February 18, 1990 a fight occurred between an on duty employee of the dietary department (who was late from returning from meal break) and an off duty nursing department employee. The fight occurred in the parking lot, at or near the off duty employee's car. Based upon interviews it appears to have been precipitated by an argument over a spilled soft drink in the car. The two employees apparently had a boy friend - girl friend relationship and had been sharing a meal time together when tempers flared. There were allegations that a knife was involved and one of the parties did sustain a minor cut on the nose (medical treatment declined). It could not be determined who initiated the fight.

After the complainants were separated a parent of each arrived on the scene and other confrontations occurred, but no physical injuries resulted. Police were called, order was restored and the matter was investigated. No arrests were made.

One of the employees was discharged for fighting. The other resigned before notice of discharge could be served on her. The terminated employee was later allowed to submit a resignation, making the termination moot. Both individuals were temporary, at will employees, without civil service or union job security rights.

On February 20, 1990, there was a fist fight involving another employee of the dietary department, a long term Civil Service, Union employee, and a citizen non employee of the City. The fight was quickly broken up, without apparent injury.

Upon investigation, it appears that the non employee, who was the son of a woman with whom our employee apparently had a personal relationship, came to Neville Manor to speak to our employee. He asked to speak to him outside. When our employee left the building he was apparently attacked by surprise ("sucker punched" in the words of the employee). Our employee then fought back. He was

Incidents of violence at Neville Manor cont.

suspended for five days for leaving his work station and for fighting, rather than retreating. This fight appears to be completely unrelated to the earlier one.

The two incidents remain under investigation; tentative conclusions have been drawn however. First, it appears that no work related tensions or disputes were involved in the incidents. Second, it appears that racial or cultural tensions, or hostilities played no part. Third, it seems reasonably clear that both disputes had their origins in the tensions and hostilities that arise among individuals involved in apparently close or intimate personal relationships, or others affected by such relationships.

To prevent recurrences, the City has advised the employees of Neville Manor and Union Officials that fighting on the premises, even if apparently unprovoked will not be tolerated. The City has renewed its request to the Union, of long standing, that workers in the dietary department gradually be replaced by employees of the firm hired to manage dietary departments operations.

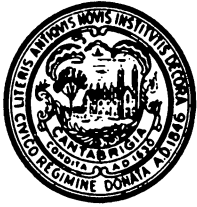
We believe this would unify control over operations, and improve service. Unfortunately the union has rejected this request to date. The City has thus begin to fill positions from the Labor Service list. The City is going ahead with plans, already underway, to provide interpersonal skill and cooperation training to Neville Manor employees.

As a result of the hiring freeze and other efforts to increase economies in operations there are a number of vacancies, in the Dietary, Housekeeping and Nursing Department at Neville Manor.

These include the following:

Nurse Aide 6 (4 Full-Time, 2 Part-Time);
Utility Aide 1 (Part-Time); Laborer, Housekeeping,
2 (Part-Time); Laundry Worker 3 (1 Full-Time, 2 Part-Time);
Laborer, Dietary 3 (Part-Time); Utility Food Worker
3 (1 Full-Time, 2 Part-Time).

There are now 9 temporary employees filling positions at Neville Manor. Current effort are underway to obtain the cooperation of the Commonwealth Department of Personnel Administration in filling many of these jobs on a permanent basis.



20

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EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

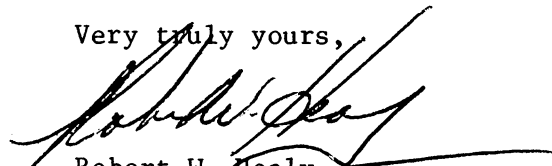
RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

March 12, 1990

To The Honorable, The City Council:

In response to Awaiting Report Item No. 40, dated 2/26/90, relative to the incident of violence which occurred at the Neville Manor, attached please find a response from Michael P. Gardner, Director of Personnel, regarding this matter.

Very truly yours,



Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mev
enclosure

S-242

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

March 12, 1990

Placed on file