

DEFUND MCI-NORFOLK's MAIN LINE KITCHEN!

By Daniel L. Holland, MCI-Norfolk

I do not mean to sound insensitive to those in society who are having trouble finding and/or affording food, but it is unconscionable what is happening here at Norfolk with food. Those fortunate enough to have honest work, earning a base salary between \$75,000 to \$85,000 per year plus, are as well being offered unlimited overtime, working in the kitchen (not the cardinal offense). While the inmate population is being force-fed, cheap processed foods (that fall well below what the dietitian approves) select staff are preparing gourmet meals fraudulently purchased from the Inmate Food Account.

There is a Food Services Director, four lieutenants, and officers who are tasked with the running of Norfolk's kitchen. Statute 103 DOC 760, which is devoid of any "Substitutional Guidelines" states that food SHALL be made according to dietitian approved menus and follow corresponding recipes.

The principal problems here are two. First, even though the dietitian approves and certifies menus/recipes (required by statute) there is no further oversight by to insure that menus and recipes are followed- which they are not. Second, this lack of oversight results in the malfeasance of those entrusted to watch the 'henhouse' and order the proper inmate food. From the period of February 2018 thru February 2019 over \$23,000 was spent from the Norfolk Inmate Account on foods not consumed by the inmate population (FN.1). Most recently, while everyone's attention was focused on the COVID-19 pandemic (during the period of 3/03/20 thru 4/30/20, \$8,539.08 was pilfered from the Inmate Food Account (FN.2) and spent on foods such as "Beef Tenderloin Tips", pork products, "Gourmet Ground Coffee", "Gatorade", "French Vanilla Creamer", etc., while inmates were being fed (non-dietitian approved) items such as "RED. SODIUM TURKEY LOG"(which resembles 'burnt skin'), potato chips instead of potatoes, plain lettuce in place of vegetables, etc. It should be pointed out that these culpable authors must have gone through painstaking measures to balance the Inmate Food Budget while ordering gourmet items for staff consumption, and cheaply processed foods for inmates.

There is an account where food for staff is supposed to be ordered from (Staff/ Culinary Acct.). Also in a provision pursuant to DOC policy, 103 DOC 214, EMPLOYEE MEALS, implemented and monitored by the Deputy Commissioner of Administrative Services, where staff is "required to purchase a meal ticket at the cost of \$1.35 (plus meals tax) prior to consumption of a state meal, whether from a staff dining room or Main Line Kitchen.". The meal purchased from the Main Line Kitchen is the same meal being served to the inmate population.

103 DOC 214 was in no way intended to give these bad actors a free meal, or permission to ravage and pillage from an account intended to purchase inmate food at the expense of taxpayers. Additionally, if \$23,000 and \$8,539.08 (so far identified) was pilfered, there is an additional loss of the "meals tax" required by 103 DOC 214, viz, $\$23,000 + \$8,539.08 \times 6.25\%$ (meals tax) = \$1,971.19 in lost revenue, as meal tickets were never sold/purchased. There are public records requests pending looking at previous years.

I would first point out/concede that when the proper dietitian foods are ordered, and dietitian approved recipes are followed to the letter- the food is actually not bad, and as well quite healthy.

If both the approved menus and recipes are followed as required by statute, not only would men's long term health benefit, but there would also be the potential of men spending less time in medical over diet related issues such as hypertension, diabetes, per-diabetes (FN.3) the need for Metamucil, etc. Not following menus and recipes is especially egregious at Norfolk which houses the state's largest elder population.

To add insult to injury, the office where ill-gotten victuals are eaten, is cooled by an air conditioner which vents the hot air directly onto the sweltering floor where inmates are earning between \$1.00 to \$3.00 per day.

FN.1.

EXPENDITURES FROM THE INMATE FOOD ACCOUNT (Not Served to the Inmate Population)
<http://www.realcostofprisons.org/writing/nic-expenditures-from-inmate-food-account.pdf>

FN. 2.

NORFOLK INMATE COUNCIL FOOD REPORT February 2018 - February 2019 Invoices
<http://www.realcostofprisons.org/writing/norfolk-inmate-council-food-report-2019.pdf>

FN. 3.

Penny Wise, Pound Foolish by Daniel Holland
<http://www.realcostofprisons.org/writing/holland-penny-wise-pound-foolish.pdf>
