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DeHoCo Closing Seen

By EDWARD WENDOVER

The gradual phase-out of
Detroit House of Correction
facilities may be in sight.

The first step was taken
last week when the Joint
Capital Outlay Committee of
the state legislature ap-

proved the appropriation of
\$5 million for a new state
correctional facility for wom-

en. According to John Am-
berger, superintendent of the
Detroit House of Correction,
the new state facility, which
will be built next to Ypsilanti
State Mental Hospital, would
house the 200 women state
prisoners now in DeHoCo.

In addition to those 200,
there are currently about 50
other women who are county
prisoners housed at DeHoCo,
Amberger said.

He said that if Wayne
county builds a new correc-
tional facility, it would
"hopefully" house those
women, which would mean
the entire women's division
of DeHoCo could be phased
out.

The state hopes to have its
new women's prison oper-
ating by July of 1975.

Amberger said he hopes
the phase-out of the men's
DeHoCo division as it now
exists will begin "as soon as
we get the women's division
taken care of."

The DeHoCo superinten-
dent told The Plymouth Mail
& Observer that he has rec-
ommended that when the
county builds a new jail, the
DeHoCo facilities should be
made into a trustee and
training division.

Of the 600 men currently

in-
soned at DeHoCo, about
475 of them are county pris-
oners, Amberger said. The
state has about 35 men there
and the remaining 90 repre-
sent prisoners from Detroit,
Plymouth, Livonia, West-
land, Garden City and other
surrounding communities.

Amberger said the DeHoCo
property located along Five
Mile Road west of Ridge
Road has been up for sale
through the Surplus Prop-
erties Division of the Detroit
Comptroller's Office for some
time. Its price tag is \$3.7
million and thus far no bids
have been considered high
enough.

He said that a decision on
the remaining prop-
erty—including the Women's
Division and the Men's Divi-
sion and administration
Building—will not be made
until later.

DeHoCo is one of several
public facilities which occupy
a large portion of the Five
Mile corridor in Plymouth
and Northville townships.
None of the property is tax
producing for the local com-

munities and the sale of any
portion would represent a
sizeable addition to local tax
roles.

While state officials have
criticized the condition of the
DeHoCo buildings in terms of
health and sanitation stand-
ards, Amberger said the fac-
ility "isn't really in that bad
shape."

He said there are some
good features of the prison
and cited the operation of the
women's division through
cottages as one of the good
ideas built into DeHoCo.

"DeHoCo was built for a
different sort of correctional
philosophy (than is now
used)," Amberger explained
as the reason the facility's
effectiveness has declined.

"Now the emphasis is on
education and training (the
prisoners)," he said.

The superintendent added
that a complete phase-out
could take some time and
that most employees working
there would be taken onto
the staffs of the new state
women's prison or the new
county jail.

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Clarenceville Vote: 1.36 Pct.

Clarenceville School Dis-
trict residents turned out 80
percent Monday to re-elect
Norman L. Hunt to a third
four-year term on the school
board.

Hunt was opposed. Only
1.36 per cent of the district's
3,871 voters went to the polls
despite a long ballot and two
contests in the Schoolcraft
College district.

Clarenceville voters fa-
vored the same candidates
as did others in the School-
craft race.

They gave incumbent Paul
Kadish 48 votes, incumbent
Nancy Blatt 44 and Dr. Ger-
ald Cox 26 for the six-year
term.

Remaining votes went to
James Higgins, 16; Noel
Little, 13; Gerald Lunden,

11; Alfred Ringsred, 10; and
Richard Burk, 8.

Ronald Cowden led Mark
McQueten for the two-year
term, 37 to 27.

There were no voided bal-
lots and no write-in votes.

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