

SENATE No. 550

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

FINAL REPORT OF THE JOINT SPECIAL COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED TO INVESTIGATE THE CAUSES OF DELAY IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF ADDITIONS TO THE SOLDIERS' HOME AT CHELSEA.

MAY 3, 1945.

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives.

At the special session of the Great and General Court, chapter 2, Resolves, Special Session, 1944, was enacted, as follows:

RESOLVE PROVIDING FOR A HOSPITAL ADDITION TO THE SOLDIERS' HOME IN MASSACHUSETTS AND PROVIDING FOR FURTHER STUDY BY THE POST-WAR REHABILITATION COMMISSION OF POST-WAR PROBLEMS OF THE COMMONWEALTH RELATIVE TO VETERANS.

Resolved, That there shall be expended under the direction of the governor from the War Emergency Fund, established by section ten of chapter three hundred and seventy of the acts of nineteen hundred and forty-three or from any federal funds available therefor, or both, such sums, not exceeding seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars in the aggregate, as may be necessary for the construction of a two hundred bed hospital or domiciliary addition to the Soldiers' Home in Massachusetts, at Chelsea, the number of each type of bed to be determined by the Trustees of said Home, and for furnishings and equipment for said addition, such construction to begin as soon as possible after the necessary priorities for first class materials have been obtained from the proper federal authority; and be it further

Resolved, That, because of the fact that the General Court recognizes the imperative duty of the commonwealth in collaboration with the

federal government to provide by legislation for the proper and adequate rehabilitation, physical, mental and financial, of all of its citizens serving, who shall serve or who have served in the armed forces of the United States during the existence of the present war and have been or shall hereafter be discharged from such service otherwise than by a dishonorable discharge, and because the General Court is of opinion that it does not have at the present time sufficient information to enable it to prepare and enact legislation adequate to accomplish the above objects and in order that an adequate program to carry out the above objects to the fullest possible extent may be devised, the Post-War Rehabilitation Commission is hereby authorized and directed to continue its investigation and study of measures for the assistance of residents of the commonwealth referred to in chapter seventy-one of the resolves of nineteen hundred and forty-three, with special reference to the subject matter contained in the preliminary report of said commission, being current house document numbered nineteen hundred and six. *Approved April 18, 1944.*

This proposal was based on a recommendation contained in the preliminary report of the Massachusetts Post-War Rehabilitation Commission, created under chapter 71, Resolves of 1943. The preliminary report is dated March 27, 1944.

On April 3, 1945, Senator William R. Conley of Chelsea offered the following order:

Ordered, That a joint special committee, to consist of three members of the senate, to be designated by the president thereof, and five members of the house of representatives, to be designated by the speaker thereof, is hereby established to make an immediate investigation of the causes of the delay in the construction of the two hundred bed hospital or domiciliary addition to the Soldiers' Home in Massachusetts, at Chelsea, as provided for in chapter two of the resolves of nineteen hundred and forty-four, Special Session. Said committee shall report the results of its investigation and its recommendations, if any, together with drafts of legislation necessary to carry the same into effect, on or before the second Wednesday in April, nineteen hundred and forty-five.

Approved by the committee on Rules of each of the branches, acting concurrently, the order was adopted by the Senate on April 4, 1945, and by the House of Representatives on April 5, 1945. Subsequently the President of the Senate appointed Senators Charles G. Miles of Brockton, Charles J. Innes of Boston and William R. Conley of Chelsea as members of the Committee on the part of the Senate. The

Speaker of the House of Representatives named Representatives Peter J. Jordan of Revere, Frederick E. Pierce of Greenfield, Joseph A. Milano of Melrose, David M. Cleary of Boston and Edward A. McCarthy of Chelsea as members of the Committee on the part of the House of Representatives.

INQUIRY.

In pursuance of said order, your Committee, on April 10, 1945, held a conference with Brigadier General William J. Keville, the Adjutant General, and chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Soldiers' Home.

On April 17, 1945, a second conference was held with Robert L. Whipple, chairman of the Emergency Public Works Commission, Hall Nichols, Secretary and Chief Engineer of that Commission, Paul W. Foster, chairman of the Commission on Administration and Finance, Mr. Hepburn of the firm of Perry, Shaw & Hepburn, Boston, architects, and Lawrence F. Quigley, Commandant at the Home.

As a result of these conferences an inspection of all facilities at the Home was made by your Committee on April 23, 1945.

On August 7, 1944, His Excellency, Governor Leverett Saltonstall, instructed the Emergency Public Works Commission to prepare plans and specifications and to construct the 200-bed hospital addition, as authorized by said chapter 2, Resolves of 1944.

Plans and specifications were prepared by the firm of Perry, Shaw & Hepburn, Boston, architects employed by the Commission.

The plans called for the construction of the new building on land adjacent to the Home and owned by the Commonwealth.

An examination of the record on this project will show that the failure to start construction was due to repeated changes in the basic requirements of the building, necessitating a re-study of the plans.

In enacting chapter 2, Resolves of 1944, the Legislature authorized the construction of this new addition without previous examination of the site. The repeated changes in

specifications were due, mainly, to the necessity of constructing the building within the allocated appropriation.

The Emergency Public Works Commission has reported that the authorized sum of \$750,000 is not sufficient for the construction and complete furnishing of the 200-bed addition. In this opinion your Committee concurs.

Grave doubt also has arisen as to the wisdom of erecting the addition on the present site, or whether the Commonwealth should accept the transfer of ten acres of land owned by the city of Chelsea on Powderhorn Hill, adjacent to the Home. Representative McCarthy of Chelsea, a member of this Committee, received a communication from the Board of Park Commissioners of the city of Chelsea, dated February 27, 1945, reading as follows:

DEAR SIR: — The Chelsea Board of Park Commissioners has authorized the transfer of park land in the city of Chelsea, known as Powderhorn Hill, to the State Board of Trustees of the Soldiers' Home and Hospital for the addition to the existing plant and equipment and for such other purposes as the Trustees deem necessary for the comfort and convenience of Massachusetts veterans.

The small section that has been developed and named as Malone Park is to be maintained by the State Board of Trustees. The area comprises approximately ten acres and is to be taken over in its entirety, relieving the city of Chelsea of all responsibility of maintenance.

Authorization passed February 27, 1945.

For the Chelsea Board of Park Commissioners,

MARY M. DOIRON, *Secretary.*

Your Committee inspected the Powderhorn Hill site. We are agreed that this location would be ideal for the erection of the proposed hospital addition. This location has many advantages, from a health and recreation standpoint, over the present location. The construction of a tunnel from the main building to the new wing would enhance its adaptability.

Our inspection also revealed the imperative necessity for a new and adequate heating plant. However, this requirement has been met by a recommended appropriation of \$306,000 in the General Appropriation Bill, now pending, for a new power plant and laundry building at the Home.

Facilities at the Home now are taxed to capacity. There are 227 members in the Hospital and 172 members in the

Home, with a waiting list. It is unfortunate that there has been any delay in increasing the facilities at the Home.

However, your Committee finds that the delay was not the deliberate act of any person or persons, but apparently due to overzealous efforts on the part of the Emergency Public Works Commission and the Home authorities in making repeated changes in plans and specifications (Appendix A).

In our opinion construction of this addition should have started five or six months ago. The Legislature always has been responsive to the needs of our war veterans, and if an additional appropriation of \$250,000 was necessary to complete this building it would have been forthcoming.

Therefore we recommend that the Legislature, in addition to the \$750,000 already provided, forthwith appropriate an additional \$250,000 for the construction of a 200-bed hospital or domiciliary addition to the Soldiers' Home in Massachusetts, at Chelsea, and that this proposed building be erected on a site known as Powderhorn Hill in the city of Chelsea.

It is further recommended that a mortuary room be added to these plans. Said room should be equipped with the materials so necessary for a room of this kind.

Respectfully submitted,

CHARLES G. MILES.
CHARLES J. INNES.
WILLIAM R. CONLEY.
PETER J. JORDAN.
FREDERICK E. PIERCE.
JOSEPH A. MILANO.
DAVID M. CLEARY.
EDWARD A. McCARTHY.

APPENDIX A.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS,
EMERGENCY PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION,
ROOM 402, 20 SOMERSET STREET, BOSTON, April 11, 1945.

Re Massachusetts State Project P-V3, 200-bed hospital addition,
Soldiers' Home, Chelsea.

His Excellency, MAURICE J. TOBIN, *Governor, the Commonwealth of
Massachusetts, Executive Department, State House, Boston.*

SIR:— On August 7, 1944, Governor Saltonstall, under the provisions of chapter 2 of the Resolves of 1944, instructed this Commission to prepare plans and specifications and construct a 200-bed hospital addition to the Soldiers' Home in Chelsea, for a sum not to exceed \$750,000. A copy of this directive is attached herewith for your information.

On August 15, 1944, the Commission employed the firm of Perry, Shaw & Hepburn as architects and they proceeded forthwith to develop preliminary sketches for this project. These sketches were prepared by them in connection with the authorities of the Soldiers' Home and were submitted with estimates to this Commission on October 19, 1944. The Commission reviewed these carefully and suggested modifications and economies which reduced the volume of the building by approximately 90,000 cubic feet, and these revised plans were referred to the Trustees on November 15, 1944. On December 4, 1944, Commandant Quigley and Mr. Laughlin of the Soldiers' Home discussed these plans with the engineers of the Commission, and expressed the opinion that the present kitchen was inadequate in size and improperly located to serve the new addition.

The Commission instructed the architects to study this matter carefully and employ experts. As a result of this study, it was the considered judgment of the Commission and the Trustees of the Soldiers' Home that the addition should include a kitchen sufficient to serve the 200-bed addition and the present hospital section. Under this arrangement, the present kitchen would be

adequate to serve the domiciliary portion of the Home, including some expansion.

The inclusion of the kitchen materially added to the space required in the addition and necessitated a re-study of the plans. Revised sketches incorporating these changes were submitted to the Commission on January 31, 1945, and simultaneously to the Trustees. On February 19, 1945, the Trustees of the Soldiers' Home advised that these plans were satisfactory to them, and the architects were again instructed to proceed with working drawings. At that time it was estimated that the \$750,000 appropriation was barely sufficient to complete the project, allowing \$30,000 for furnishings.

In the process of developing their working drawings, the architects consulted further with Commandant Quigley and were told by him that additional space and equipment should be provided, which up to that time had not been brought to their attention. A complete re-estimate of the project was then made by the architects incorporating all of the ideas desired by Commandant Quigley which indicated a total cost of nearly \$1,000,000.

As a result of further study by the Commission, considerable economies have been developed, so that the Commission believes that the building can be completed, exclusive of movable furnishings and equipment, for \$750,000. At a meeting of the Commission on April 10, 1945, the architects submitted revised drawings incorporating the savings recommended by the Commission, and an estimate of the total cost, including furnishings and movable equipment, of \$901,000.

The Commission is of the opinion that the facilities now provided in the building are adequate but not excessive, although it proposes, if the present plans are to be developed and put out for bids, to call for alternates on certain items, such as the elimination of one elevator, a reduction in the extent of stainless steel cabinet work, and the omission of a dumb waiter. If these items were all excluded from the building there might be a reduction in cost of \$25,000 to \$30,000.

The periodic changes in basic requirements by the authorities of the Home have necessarily delayed progress on working plans, but in so far as possible the architects have proceeded with the preparation of working plans for those portions not affected by the basic changes. They now inform us that the plans and specifications should be ready for bids in six to eight weeks, if no further basic changes are required.

As the enabling legislation calls for the construction and complete furnishing of the 200-bed addition, and as it does not appear that the authorized sum of \$750,000 is sufficient for this purpose, the Commission submits this report for your information, and such instructions as you may wish to give it.

Respectfully submitted,

ROBERT L. WHIPPLE,
Chairman.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS,
MILITARY DIVISION,
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
280 STATE HOUSE, BOSTON, 3 August, 1944.

His Excellency LEVERETT SALTONSTALL, *Governor of the Commonwealth,
State House, Boston.*

DEAR GOVERNOR SALTONSTALL: — At a meeting of the Trustees of the Soldiers' Home in Massachusetts, held today at the Home, it was unanimously voted to request Your Excellency to direct the Emergency Public Works Commission to prepare plans for the erection of a 200-bed hospital building, in addition to facilities already existing at the Captain John Adams Hospital, in accordance with the legislative Resolve approved April 18, 1944.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) WILLIAM J. KEVILLE,
*The Adjutant General,
Chairman, Board of Trustees, Soldiers' Home in Massachusetts.*

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS,
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON, August 7, 1944.

HALL NICHOLS, *Secretary, Emergency Public Works Commission, 20
Somerset Street, Boston.*

MY DEAR MR. NICHOLS: — Chapter 2 of the Resolves adopted at the Special Session of the Legislature in April, 1944, provided as follows:

Resolve providing for a hospital addition to the Soldiers' Home in Massachusetts and providing for further study by the Post-War Rehabilitation Commission of Post-War Problems of the Commonwealth relative to Veterans.

The first paragraph of this Resolve directs the Governor to expend not to exceed \$750,000 in the aggregate for the construction of a 200-bed hospital or domiciliary addition to the Soldiers' Home, the number of each type of bed to be determined by the Trustees of said Home. Under date of August 3, 1944, General William J. Keville, chairman of the Trustees of the Soldiers' Home, informs me that the Trustees voted unanimously for a 200-bed hospital building in addition to the facilities already existing.

Will you please inform me that your Commission will undertake this work at once, and will report to me from time to time on its progress. The ultimate responsibility for this building lies in me. I am relying upon your Commission as the administrative agency to carry out this legislative order under my direction.

Will your Commission please inquire whether or not there are any federal funds available for assistance in such construction, and will it make proper application at the earliest possible moment to obtain the necessary priorities for first-class materials, and inform me of the results of said inquiries in order that prompt decisions may be made.

Very sincerely yours,

s/ LEVERETT SALTONSTALL,
Governor of the Commonwealth.

200-BED ADDITION TO SOLDIERS' HOME — MASSACHUSETTS STATE
PROJECT P-V3.

Total cube, 870,563 cubic feet (including sub-basement, 51,455).	
870,563 cubic feet at 65 cents (including heating, plumbing and electricity at \$170,000)	\$565,866 00
Miscellaneous equipment not included in the above:	
All cabinet work, including dust cabinets, pharmacy, laboratory, central workroom, storage room, solution room, operative suite, linen closets, utility rooms, treatment rooms, linen storage, pharmacy storage, X-ray storage	56,325 00
(This estimate is purely a guess and is based on rather vague assumption of relative amounts of stainless steel, enamel, metal, wood, etc.)	
Sterilizers and operating room lights	18,000 00
Valves and equipment for central suction, air and oxygen (not including piping)	1,500 00
Elevators	37,500 00
Dumb waiter	3,925 00
Clothes chute	1,000 00
X-ray (built in)	2,500 00
Kitchen equipment	36,000 00
Heating, lighting and plumbing in connection with kitchen equipment	8,000 00
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	\$730,616 00
Architects' and engineers' fees	46,507 00
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Cost per cubic foot, 89.2 cents	\$777,123 00
Miscellaneous portable equipment not included in above:	
X-ray	\$26,500 00
X-ray for chest examination	3,000 00
Miscellaneous equipment	55,000 00
Furnishings — dining-room chairs, tables, trucks, china, glass, silver and pans	39,500 00
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	124,000 00
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Cost per cubic foot, \$1.035	\$901,123 00

