

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
INTEROFFICE COMMUNICATION

DATE: August 20, 2021

TO: Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Shakita LaGrant-McClain, Director, Department of Health and Human Services and Aaron Hertzberg, Director, Department of Administrative Services

SUBJECT: From the Directors of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Department of Administrative Services providing a report on the decision to remain at the Marcia P. Coggs Human Services Center

FILE TYPE: Informational Report

REQUEST

This informational report is being provided as part of the ongoing communication with the board on the status of the DHHS ‘No Wrong Door’ approach and facility requirements. This report also addresses the decision by the Department of Health and Human Services to maintain the Marcia P. Coggs Human Services Center as the primary location for its operations.

POLICY

Specific Adopted Budget Amendment:	1B005
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As part of the 2021 Adopted Capital Budget, the County Board approved budget amendment 1B005. This amendment required that a written plan detailing the project scope and location for the redeployment of staff be submitted to the County Board for review prior to the release of approximately \$4.7 million in funds being held in contingency to support a portion of the costs of this project.

BACKGROUND

DHHS Administration Relocation Project

DHHS and the Department of Administrative Services-Facilities Management Division (DAS-FMD) have been working together for over two years to strategize and plan a relocation of DHHS administrative staff from the Behavioral Health Division (BHD) Mental Health Complex, Marcia P. Coggs Human Services Center (Coggs) and the Vel Phillips Youth and Family Justice Center in support of the DHHS “No Wrong Door” approach to customer service which is guiding the facility-related decisions.

This approach promotes the co-location of DHHS employees to a visitor-friendly facility to best serve the needs of customers. The planned transfer of in-patient services to the new Universal Health Services hospital currently under construction in West Allis and subsequent closure of the Mental Health Complex also require relocation of DHHS staff from the Mental Health Complex.

Decision to Remain at the Coggs Center

For over a year, DHHS has been working with FMD to identify an alternative location to the Coggs Center. After DHHS leadership reviewed a number of long-term lease options and buildout plans, the decision was made to remain at the Coggs Center due to the significant operating costs associated with the annual leases. The annual operating leases for the alternative locations presented enormous fiscal challenges to balancing the budget without resorting to programmatic or staffing cuts. The average annual lease cost ranged between \$2 million to \$2.9 million.

The original impetus for relocating from the Coggs Center was the building's lack of accessibility. This concern remains unchanged and is now the focus of a redesign effort being undertaken by FMD and its space consultant.

Ultimately, the choice to remain at the Coggs Center was viewed as the best option as Coggs has been a long-recognized location for providing and receiving community services. The decision to consolidate DHHS staff at Coggs while investing in the building is well aligned with County strategic focus areas as well as the DHHS strategic plan.

In particular, a decision to remain at the Coggs Center:

- Accommodates more of DHHS's programs and services under one roof
- Enables closer proximity to the new Mental Health Emergency Center (MHEC) and our Housing staff who are located at 6th & Walnut
- Places staff and services physically closer to residents served by DHHS – with many services and staff moving from Wauwatosa to the heart of Milwaukee

Recently, DHHS and FMD conducted a walk thru of the building with a number of community stakeholders to gather feedback on the changes that are needed to ensure ease of access and a positive customer experience. This experience starts at the front door and continues throughout the first floor which is the focus of the preliminary planning and design work currently underway. In addition, investment is necessary to address the deferred maintenance needs, additional office reconfigurations for other County departments and functions, and potentially tenant improvements to maintain the State of Wisconsin as a tenant.

Funding

As mentioned in file 21-436, deferred maintenance requirements over the next 20 years are estimated to cost \$46 million. DHHS submitted a request of \$23 million for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding as part of the county’s \$183 million award. In addition, DAS-FMD staff is currently developing and refining capital project requests and preparing a five-year capital improvement plan to address the various capital needs starting in 2022. These capital project requests include a portion of the deferred maintenance requirements as well as accessibility and tenant improvement requirements. The five-year capital improvement plan is estimated to be approximately \$40 million.

The 2021 budget amendment (1B005) directs that approximately \$4.7 million be held in an allocated contingency pending review by the County Board of a report detailing the project scope and location. It is anticipated that a report requesting release of the allocated contingency will be submitted for the December County Board cycle so that full scale planning and design work can begin. Because BHD employees are being relocated to the Coggs Center, a portion of these funds are coming from BHD and will need Mental Health Board approval.

Related File No’s:	20-110, 21-314, 21-436
Associated File No’s (Including Transfer Packets):	
Previous Action Date(s):	

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT & RACIAL EQUITY COMPONENT

The relocation of DHHS staff and functions support the DHHS “No Wrong Door” approach, which aligns to the County’s strategic plan in the following ways:

- Determining what, where and how we deliver services to advance health equity
- Investing “upstream” to address root causes of health disparities
- Enhancing the County’s fiscal health and sustainability
- Dismantling barriers to diverse and inclusive communities

FISCAL EFFECT

This report is informational only. There is no fiscal effect.

TERMS

As there are no contracts under consideration as part of this informational report, there are no contract terms to provide.

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITEES

Shakita LaGrant-McClain, Director, DHHS
Aaron Hertzberg, Director, DAS
David Muhammad, Deputy Director, DHHS
Matt Fortman, DHHS Fiscal Administrator
Clare O'Brien, Budget & Policy Director, DHHS
Peter Nilles, Director, Facilities Planning and Development, DAS-FMD
Adam Stehly, Project Manager, DAS-ED
Stu Carron, Director, Facilities Management Division, Department of Administrative Services

PREPARED BY

Clare O'Brien, Budget & Policy Director, DHHS
Peter Nilles, Director, Facilities Planning and Development, DAS-FMD

APPROVED BY

Shakita LaGrant-McClain
Shakita LaGrant-McClain, Director
Department of Health and Human Services

Aaron Hertzberg
Aaron Hertzberg, Director
Department of Administrative Services

ATTACHMENTS

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cc: David Crowley, County Executive
Sup. Jason Haas, Chair, Finance Committee
Sup. Felesia Martin, Chair, Health Equity, Human Needs, & Strategic Planning Committee
Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, Office of the County Executive
Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, County Board
Steve Cady, Research Director, Comptroller's Office
Janelle M. Jensen, Manager, Legislative Services, Office of the County Clerk
Pam Matthews, Fiscal & Management Analyst, DAS