

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

DATE: March 22, 2019

TO: Supervisor Theodore Lipscomb, Sr., Chairman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Mary Jo Meyers, Director, Department of Health and Human Services
Prepared by: Mark Mertens, Division of Youth & Family Services Administrator

SUBJECT: An informational report from the Director, Department of Health and Human Services, providing an update to Wisconsin Act 185

Background

Over the past few years, the County Executive and Milwaukee County Board have been working with key stakeholders to address the crisis at Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake and have embraced policies surrounding the creation of a local alternative option for Milwaukee County youth to be placed in a safe environment, closer to home.

In March 2018, the Wisconsin State Legislature adopted Act 185 paving the way for the development of local alternatives to Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake. Act 185 directs the closure of Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake for use as youth correctional facilities by January 1, 2021 and authorizes County-operated Secured Residential Care Centers for Children and Youth (SRCCCYs). Under Act 185, the Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC) maintains supervision over juveniles with adult court sentences and youth in the Serious Juvenile Offender Program (SJOP), but the supervision of youth under other correctional placements is now transferred to the counties.

Under the Act, the State Building Commission can authorize up to a total of \$40 million to counties for the planning and construction of these facilities. Eligible construction costs include new construction as well as the renovation of an existing structure. To qualify for the funds, counties must submit grant applications to the Juvenile Corrections Grant Committee in DOC by March 31, 2019. In March, the County Board approved the submittal of Milwaukee County's application (File No. 19-236).

As part of its efforts to keep policymakers informed as the project evolves, DHHS has been providing monthly informational updates to the County Board.

Discussion

The Steering Committee and workgroups continue to address the following critical components of this project: Stakeholder Engagement, Programming and Location. The committee and work groups reflect a stakeholder network of 40 to 50 people who bring subject matter expertise in human services, criminal justice, law enforcement, education, therapeutic treatment, community advocacy, health and wellness, judiciary practice, systems reform, data analysis, facility design, government and finance.

State DOC Grants Committee & Milwaukee County Application Submittal

On March 21, the Juvenile Corrections Grant Committee met for the first time and adopted a motion to seek letters of interest from counties to comply with the March 31 deadline. The committee requested that the letters of interest include the following information, if available:

- Cost of the facility
- Intended capacity
- If the facility will be stand-alone or co-located with a detention center
- If the facility will be new construction or a remodel
- If the facility will serve males, females, or both
- If a county will be submitting a multi-county application

Stakeholder Engagement & Communication

Milwaukee Common Council President, Ald. Ashanti Hamilton hosted a Neighborhood Session on March 14. DHHS was initially scheduled to present at the meeting; however, the meeting was repurposed to address the State's announcement of its plans to build a Type 1 facility at the 6600 N Teutonia site. DOC Secretary Kevin Carr addressed the crowd, in addition to Mayor Tom Barrett and Director Mary Jo Meyers.

- Milwaukee residents, youth justice reform advocates, service providers, law enforcement professionals, public defenders, and many elected officials attended (Rep. David Bowen, Rep. David Crawley, Sen. Lena Taylor, Rep. LaKeshia Meyers, Sup. Felicia Martin, Sup. Supreme Moore Omokunde, Judge Joe Donald).
- The Hmong American Women's Association (HAWA) brought a group of youth to listen and voice concerns.
- There were also a number of individuals from Glendale in attendance: elected officials, the Superintendent of schools, and residents who voiced opposition to the State facility.

One-on-one Meetings with Key Stakeholders:

Administrators have continued to meet with stakeholders to ensure they understand Act 185 and the County's commitment to youth justice reform. Discussions on potential partnerships to expand vocational opportunities for youth have also occurred during these meetings.

In December 2019, DHHS, in partnership with the Office on African American Affairs (OAAA), convened a group of individuals to draft a Community Development Agreement. This agreement will cover expectations as to how the youth secure care center will be built. For example, community priorities, expectations on targeted business participation, the Request for Proposals (RFP) processes and deliverables for construction vendors will be taken into consideration as part of the overall project.

The Community Development Agreement is now completed and has been submitted for approval to the County Board as part of a separate file for the April cycle.

Programming

The programming workgroup has continued to meet to identify programming best practices. In addition, a Girls Subcommittee of this workgroup has been established to find better, more effective and less restrictive means of serving girls. In fact, Milwaukee has been selected as one of four sites to work with the *National Crittenton Institute's National Girls Initiative (NGI)* to examine effective policies and programs that address the needs of girls in the youth justice system.

Historically, girls end up in confinement because they are perceived as needing protection from commercial sexual exploitation or other risks to themselves and not because they present a danger to the community.

On March 28-29, Crittenton will be visiting Milwaukee for an initial meeting with stakeholders to discuss the local issues, talk with local girls and their families, and begin to assess the need for technical assistance in Milwaukee. The goal is to develop strategies which will result in better programming that utilizes alternatives to incarceration for girls, reducing or eliminating the need for serving them in the youth justice system and expanding the continuum of effective services for girls in all phases of the system.

Location

Over 40 locations were assessed to determine their feasibility based on several criteria and the team identified two locations – 6101 W. Mill Road, Milwaukee and 6600 N. Teutonia Avenue, Milwaukee. Unfortunately, both of these locations became unavailable to Milwaukee County. The team is actively pursuing other potential locations and will have a recommendation in the coming weeks.

Facility Planning

Last November, the Milwaukee County Board adopted File No. 18-633 authorizing the creation of a capital project for the SRCCCY with a budget of \$3 million. An additional \$500,000 was approved in March (File No. 19-235) as part of a transfer from DHHS' 2018 operating surplus increasing the total budget to \$3.5 million. This capital project enables DHHS to move forward on the planning and design for a local facility so that Milwaukee County youth can be closer to their families.

The design team is nearing completion of the schematic design phase. A rendering has been developed by the contracted firm, Continuum Architects, to depict the entrance of the SRCCCY being proposed. Please see the attached picture.

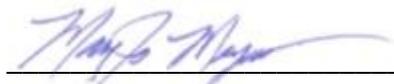
The design is based on a new facility with 40 beds, plus renovation of a portion of the Vel R. Phillips Youth and Family Justice Center to accommodate an additional 22 beds. The design has incorporated all elements of the proposed programming as well as sustainability criteria from both the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) and WELL green building rating systems. Further, design development is on hold pending final site selection. (Development of the schematic design has proceeded based on the Teutonia site and due to the above-mentioned relocation, will have to be reset to a new location.) A substantial portion of the work to date will apply to any final location.

The Construction Manager has developed a detailed project schedule and plan to achieve the January 1, 2021 Lincoln Hills/Copper Lake closure date as currently mandated by Act 185. The plan indicates

that construction must begin in July which certainly relies on the final selection and acquisition of the site and development of specific site plan and associated construction documents. Risks to this schedule have been identified and we are actively working to manage. Uncertainties around the State activities (grant review and award, DOC regulation, proposed timing and funding changes in proposed State budget) will remain challenges for the entire project team to navigate.

Recommendation

This report is informational and no action is required.



Mary Jo Meyers, Director
Department of Health and Human Services

Attachment

cc: County Executive Chris Abele
Hon. Maxine A. White, Chief Judge
Raisa Koltun, County Executive's Office
County Supervisor James "Luigi" Schmitt
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