

## COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE

### Inter-Office Communication

**DATE:** September 12, 2016

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

**FROM:** Héctor Colón, Director, Department of Health and Human Services

**SUBJECT:** **An informational report from the Director, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), providing an update on the use of the Child Adolescent Treatment Center (CATC) for the education of juveniles and local alternative placements**

#### **Background**

This report is being provided in response to questions that arose by the Chairman concerning a revenue deficit report submitted by the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) Facilities Management Division. One of the underlying causes cited in the deficit report included the vacating of CATC space by tenants that serve Delinquency and Court Services Division (DCSD) youth. This informational report is intended to address the reason for the departure of these DCSD providers from CATC and the use of CATC as a location for local alternative placements for juveniles.

#### **Discussion**

##### ***Educational Services Provided at CATC***

For several years, Wauwatosa School District has taught up to 66 youth receiving shelter services from DCSD providers at the CATC campus. In 2015, St. Charles, the agency responsible for providing boy's and girl's shelter services, decided to transition these programs to its own campus located at 151 S. 84<sup>th</sup> St. in Wauwatosa due to available space and cost savings. In January 2015, the boy's shelter program was relocated and in May 2015 the girl's shelter program transitioned out of CATC.

All of these youth are now being educated primarily by Milwaukee Public Schools in closer proximity to their communities with transportation assistance provided by St. Charles.

With the departure of the shelter programs, Wauwatosa School District continued to teach youth as part of Wraparound's FOCUS program operated by St. Charles until March of 2016. After this date, St. Charles transitioned the FOCUS youth to its own campus. By the end of May, Wauwatosa School District notified the Facilities Management Division that it too would be vacating the building.

Facilities Management Division reached out to Wauwatosa to consider all options for an increased footprint if Wauwatosa School District saw CATC as an opportunity to streamline operations and support Milwaukee County at the same location. Wauwatosa School District reviewed that option in May and June of 2016 and again stated they are not interested in an expanded footprint at this time.

Now only about 33 percent of the CATC space designated for office use remains occupied. Tenants include Milwaukee County's Emergency Medical Services, University of Wisconsin-Extension and Milwaukee Academy.

### ***Plans for Local Alternative Juvenile Placements***

In light of the issues uncovered with the State-operated Lincoln Hills School for Boys, DHHS has been diligently pursuing local juvenile placement options for the last several months. Earlier this year, DHHS and the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) – Architecture and Engineering and Facilities Management Divisions explored the potential use of the CATC location for a residential facility as an alternative to juvenile corrections.

Although the CATC building was studied as an option, both DHHS and DAS-Facilities agreed that the CATC building presented substantial drawbacks as a suitable location for a residential treatment facility as identified below:

- The overall space is too large at 190,000 square feet which impedes the cost effective delivery of services.
- Minimum annual operating cost is \$1 million, including utilities. The building is currently tied into the Milwaukee Regional Medical Center (MRMC) thermal plant and an expensive future capital need being recommended is to install chilled water and steam systems.
- Significant capital investment is required for the roof, auditorium, and building specific hot/chilled water systems in addition to the retrofitting that would be required for a residential facility.
- The mixed use of the facility is problematic for tenants.
- Two of the dormitories are not physically connected to the schoolhouse, posing a host of issues when operating a residential care facility. This could be addressed but at substantial cost.
- Leasing the remaining vacant space is challenging due to the restrictions on the type of organization/population potentially eligible to lease the space. For example, collocating minors with agencies that may provide services to adults would not be feasible.
- Outstanding bond debt still remains on some of the CATC buildings and any future use would need to be reviewed to ensure all tenants meet the requirements of the bond covenants.

In addition, since this building opened in 1973 as a 120-bed psychiatric hospital for children and teens, DHHS has radically altered its service delivery model and now relies on its extensive network of providers for service delivery so that youth can be treated in the community in which they live. Further, the building cannot affordably stay partially occupied – currently only 33 percent is occupied - and the Facilities Management Division has recommended existing tenants relocate and the County mothball the facility.

As a result, DHHS is exploring other properly sized locations to site a residential step down for youth who are: 1) at risk of being placed in the State of Wisconsin Department of Juvenile Corrections (DJC),

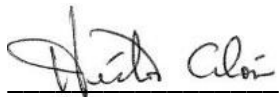
2) transitioning out of the DJC or 3) transitioning out of the Milwaukee County Accountability Program (MCAP) detention phase and who cannot go home right away due to the need for additional support, supervision or family issues.

DHHS has identified a local provider and facility that would offer quality programming and staff secure shelter for youth. This September cycle, DHHS submitted a request to the County Board seeking authorization to begin negotiations with the Carmelite Home for Boys to operate a Type II Residential Treatment Center (RTC) for youth who are eligible for a Department of Juvenile Correctional placement.

The Carmelite Home for Boys, located at 1214 Kavanaugh Pl. in Wauwatosa, is currently licensed as a Type II RTC for up to 39 boys. Since Carmelite is located within the City of Wauwatosa, DCSD could continue its collaboration with Wauwatosa School District in providing the educational component of the programming in conjunction with Carmelite.

### **Recommendation**

This report is informational and no action is required.



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Héctor Colón, Director

Department of Health and Human Services

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