

Allegheny County Council

*County of Allegheny
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Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, August 29, 2007

4:00 PM

Conference Room I

Committee on Health & Human Services

***Mike Finnerty, Chair; Joan Cleary, Susan Caldwell, Brenda Frazier, Bob Macey,
and William Robinson - Members***

REVISED

I. Call to Order

Summary: *The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM*

Invited Guests:

Jim Flynn, County Manager or Designee

Dr. Bruce Dixon, Director, Health Department or Designee

William Simmons, Director, Shuman Center

Summary: *Invited guests in attendance: Derek Uber for Mr. Flynn; Dr. Dixon; and William Simmons*

Council staff in attendance: John Mascio and Jared Barker

II. Roll Call

Roll Call: Present: Joan Cleary, Susan Caldwell, Brenda Frazier, Bob Macey, Michael Finnerty, and Council Member Matt Drozd
Absent: William Robinson

III. Approval of Minutes

3385-07 Motion to approve the minutes of the July 5, 2007 Health & Human Services Committee Meetings.

Summary: *Ms. Cleary abstained because she said she did not attend the meeting*

Action: **A motion was made by Macey, seconded by Frazier, that this matter be Passed. The motion carried by the following vote:**

Votes: Yes: 5 - Caldwell, Frazier, Macey, Finnerty and Council Member Drozd
Abstain: 1 - Cleary
Absent: 1 - Robinson

IV. Agenda Items

Resolution

3141-07 A Resolution of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, urging the Allegheny County Chief Executive and Health Department to consider and, if practicable, arrange for the sale of property currently occupied by the Health Department and in need of significant repair, modernization, or rehabilitation, and to use the proceeds from the sale to benefit and further the mission of the Health Department.

Sponsors: Matt Drozd

Summary: *Mr. Drozd provided the Committee with a description of the bill. He said that the bill would urge the Chief Executive and the Health Department to consider, selling one or more of the properties currently occupied by the Health Department. The resolution*

further asks that any proceeds from the sale be used to further the mission and goals of the Health Department.

The resolution suggests that some of the buildings currently occupied by the Allegheny County Health Department may be in need of extensive repair and rehabilitation, but notes that some of these buildings may be in desirable locations for potential developers or other buyers. The general tone of the bill is that, rather than going forward with costly rehabilitation, repair or modernization activities, it may be prudent to put the property up for sale, whereby the Health Department could benefit from the proceeds.

He said that he thought this could save taxpayers money.

Action: **Held in Committee**

Discussion Topic:

Discussion of the needs of the Allegheny County Health Department with regard to facilities maintenance and/or renovation.

Summary: *Dr. Dixon distributed a document to the Committee entitled "Allegheny Health Department Facilities and Facility Use Analysis". The document read as follows:*

*ALLEGHENY COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
FACILITIES AND FACILITY USE ANALYSIS
JUNE, 2007*

Physical Plant

The Health Department occupies a combination of County owned and rental space for the staffing of its offices and the delivery of services to the citizens of Allegheny County. The need for communication electronically and by phone makes the rental space costs greater than annual rent and although in some instances reimbursable, most of the costs are sustained by the operating budget. The desire, therefore is to relocate all program staff offices for administration and for human health services to facilities in Oakland and to collocate Environmental Health services to the Clack Health Center (Arsenal) Complex at 40th and Penn Avenues in Lawrenceville. This latter facility is the site of the former Arsenal dating to the Civil War and the wall and two of the buildings date to that era. The entire site is part of a historic district and the wall and buildings are also designated historic by the City of Pittsburgh. A hospital building dating to 1908 is the main building and the support buildings were constructed by the Federal Government in 1933. The property was transferred to the City of Pittsburgh Health Department and to the County as its successor with covenants which call for its reversion to the U.S. Government in the event it is not used for health.

Service locations dispersed through out the community would remain decentralized.

The following facilities are occupied by the Health Department.

County Owned Facilities

1. 3333 Forbes Avenue, Oakland

*Built in 1934 as the location for the Juvenile Court the building has been occupied on the third and fourth floors by the health department since 1974. The first two floors remain vacant after the move of the Court to the former Jail in ***. This facility is the location presently for the administrative and executive offices and includes a personnel office, public information office, legal staff offices, directors office, epidemiology and biostatistics offices, printing and reproduction offices, computer services, fee and permit offices, business related offices such as accounting and contract monitoring, training, part of the Dental Sealant Program, and payroll and emergency preparedness offices. The Americorp Program is located here.*

2. 3441 Forbes Avenue, Oakland

This facility was formerly a service society building purchased by the County in the late 60's. Clinic services and support offices for Sexually Transmitted Diseases including HIV, Infectious Diseases and Immunizations, and a laboratory to support the Health Department services are located in this building.

3. Building 1, Clack Health Center

This former hospital building presently houses the Food Program, the Childhood Lead Screening Program, the Dental Program and part of the Dental Sealant Program, and the Tuberculosis Clinic and staff offices. A pharmacy to support the Health Department is also located here. An auditorium used for general meeting is located on the second floor. Space for the painter, the engineer and the electrician is located in the basement as is storage of records which must be protected under existing health law.

4. Building 2, Clack Health Center

This building, a former garage and part of the original civil war structures, is the location of the carpenter shop and the location of maintenance equipment for grass cutting and snow removal as well as limited storage of supplies.

5. Building 3, Clack Health Center

This building is presently occupied by the Three Rivers Wet Weather Project, a combined project of the Allegheny County Health Department and Alcosan, administered as a non profit agency.

6. Building 4, Clack Health Center

This building, a former double house, is presently unoccupied

7. Building 5, Clack Health Center

This building, the former nurses residence, is occupied by the Drinking Water, Solid Waste, Sewage, and Recycling Program and the Plumbing Program

8. Building 6, Clack Health center

This building, also a former Civil War Building is occupied by the Central Supply section and is a central mail distribution center and central receiving facility. Couriers employed by the Health Department make deliveries of supplies and mail from this facility to other health locations and some non health facilities.

9. Building 7, Clack Health center

This building is occupied by the Air Quality Program including the asbestos licensing and permitting and the abrasive blasting sections. One emergency response officer and the only County radiation safety officer is located here. A major addition funded by Clean Air Fund monies was added to the building in 1972.

10. Building 8, Clack Health Center - (under construction)

A new state of the art laboratory building is being constructed on the complex and is scheduled for occupancy in September, 2007. This will allow sophisticated testing to occur and includes a small portion equipped as BioSafety Level 3 to allow for testing in the event of a serious man made or natural emergency with safety to workers and the surrounding community.

Facilities on County Property Adjacent to Health Department

1. The Female Offenders Program operated by a non profit agency occupies space at 3333 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, 15213 adjacent to the main office building.

Rental Facilities

Staff Offices

1. 3019 Sassafras Way, Pittsburgh, 15201

This site is occupied by the Housing and Community Environment Program

2. Penn West Building, 907 West Street, Wilkinsburg, 15221

This site houses the Chronic Disease Programs, the Maternal and Child Health Program and the Injury Prevention Program.

3. Investment Building, 239 Fourth Avenue, Pittsburgh, 15222

This facility houses the administrative offices and a clinic of the WIC Program. The Clinic operates Monday - Friday 7:30-4:00 and one Saturday monthly.

Service Delivery Sites

1. Wilkinsburg Family Health Center, 807 Wallace Avenue, Wilkinsburg, 15221

Located at Hosanna House, Wilkinsburg, this site provides subsidized low cost health care to residents of the Eastern communities in association with Alma Illery Health Center and Hosanna House. Forbes Health System previously provided a subsidy but that has lapsed. A WIC Clinic is also located in separate space in the building and operates Monday-Friday, 8:00-4:00.

2. Lawrenceville Health Center, 3936 Butler Street, Pittsburgh, 15201

Located in trailers in space owned by the UPMC Health System (formerly Saint Margaret's Hospital) is a WIC Clinic (7:30-4:00 Monday-Friday and one Saturday monthly) and pediatric Dental Clinic operated daily Monday thru Friday.

3. *Sto Rox Health Center, 710 Thompson Avenue, McKees Rocks
A WIC Clinic operating once weekly (Tuesday 8:00-4:00) is located here.*

4. *School House Building, 1100 Washington Avenue, Carnegie, 15106
WIC services (Monday - Friday 8:00-4:00) and a plumbing office operating daily
Monday thru Friday 7:30-4:00 is located in this space.*

5. *Wander Building 339 Fifth Avenue, McKeesport, 15132
A WIC Clinic (Monday-Friday 8:00-4:00 and one Saturday Monthly), a Dental Clinic
operating daily Monday thru Friday, and Plumbing office (Monday-Friday 7:30-4:00) is
located in this building as well as offices of the Resource Mothers Project.*

6. *Hill House, 1835 Center Avenue, Pittsburgh, 15219
A Dental Clinic operating daily Monday thru Friday is located here.*

7. *830 Pittsburgh Street, Springdale, 15144
A WIC Clinic operates from this facility on Wednesday and Thursday weekly from 8:00 -
4:00.*

8. *559 Miller Avenue, Clairton, 15025
The WIC Program operates a Clinic every Monday from 8:00-4:00.*

9. *Westinghouse Human Service Center, 519 Penn Avenue, Turtle Creek
A WIC Clinic is operated here Monday through Friday from 8:00-4:00.*

10. *UPMC South Pittsburgh Health Center, 1630 Arlington Avenue, Mt. Oliver
WIC services are delivered here Monday through Friday 8:00-4:00. Dental services are
delivered daily Monday thru Friday.*

Description of Physical Facilities and Proposed Uses

3333 Forbes Avenue

The first two floors are presently unoccupied and need renovation prior to occupancy. The front doors are locked and all visitors and staff must enter via the rear door. A handicapped access ramp is present on one back door but that is usually locked since it opens onto the unoccupied second floor and severe deterioration of the ramp is evident. The storm water catch basins in the rear parking lot are in need of emergency repair and pose a significant liability. The building mechanicals are in need of replacement/repair. The chillers located in an area to be converted into a conference room leak and are at the end of their useful life. They need to be moved to a separate space in the rear parking lot to free up space and reduce noise from their operation. The elevator needs to have its electrical system upgraded and the carriage does not meet

handicapped standards. The water and gas lines have recently been replaced due to long standing leaks. The roof has severe leaks and is presently being bid for replacement. The cast iron plumbing stacks are both constricted and leaking and need to be replaced. Restrooms need to be upgraded throughout the building. Computer wiring and telephones for the third and fourth floors are adequate but are not present on the first and second floors and there is little room in the main telephone conduit from Forbes Avenue for new lines. A voice over IP telephone system is anticipated to begin deployment in late 2007. General landscaping is needed and will be done by Health Department staff. Lighting of front needs to be addressed. Parking is limited and a two story parking garage in the present parking location should be considered in the future

Projected uses include constructing an auditorium on the first floor (handicapped ramp already in place from front of building) in space formerly the juvenile court waiting room, moving the Executive and Legal offices, the Fee and Permit offices, the Public Information offices and the personnel offices to the first floor. A central reception/greeting area needs to be constructed and the restrooms updated and modernized. The Maternal and Child Health offices, the Injury Prevention Offices and the Chronic Disease Program Offices in Wilksburg, the Dental Offices at Clack, and the WIC Offices in Pittsburgh would move to the remaining space on the second, third, and fourth floors. Biostatistics and Epidemiology, Emergency Preparedness, training, and general administration would remain. Computer services would be consolidated on the fourth floor in secure space. Depending on the proposed reuse of the Female Offenders building, staff offices for Sexually Transmitted Disease, Infectious Disease, Tuberculosis and relocation of the pharmacy would be to this building.

3441 Forbes Avenue

This building has exceeded its useful life. The elevator is broken over 50% of the time and parts are not readily available. The cooling and heating systems are multiple and often non operational. The roof leaks severely and part of the brick parapet wall recently fell into the parking lot of the adjacent facility resulting in damage to a vehicle but fortunately no personal injury. The laboratory will move later in 2007 to its new facility at Clack Health center. The configuration of the building is not conducive to the services provided. There is no privacy for the STD Clinic - patients register in an open area of the hall and the waiting room is too small to accommodate the numbers of patients seen. The exam rooms are too small to allow both genders to be seen in all rooms and there is no room for learners from the University of Pittsburgh, Carlow University, Duquesne University and other institutions who frequently request learning opportunities. The infectious disease program sees patients on the third floor in a single room where there is no privacy (three patients in single chairs in the same room) and the waiting space is frequently exceed by the numbers of patients. The property is probably best sold and the profits used for renovation of other facilities.

Female Offenders Building

It is proposed that this building be converted into a consolidated clinic space for TB,

Infectious Disease and STD. The construction is such that there are no bearing walls and the open space would be reconfigured into exam rooms with hand wash sinks and space for the TB X-ray equipment as well as an adequate and consolidated waiting room. A handicapped entrance and elevator must be constructed. Limited space for direct clinic staff is available but pharmacy and staff offices would be in the adjacent 3333 Forbes Building.

Clack Health Center

General Grounds

The walls need to be repaired and reset and gates need to be constructed at the main entrances to provide security. Landscaping needs to be addressed to make the area more attractive. Parking is limited and a two story underground garage should be considered for security of vehicles as well as add to the park like setting of the complex. A central chiller station should be constructed with lines to each of the buildings to replace the existing inefficient, costly, and unsightly window air conditioners. Gutters need to be cleaned annually and will be done by Health Department staff.

Building 1

The building structurally is intact and work on the refurbishment is started using Health Department trades employees. The front has been repainted and the sides are presently being painted. New underground electric service for the entire complex has been installed in the basement and computer fiberoptic lines have been replaced throughout the complex. The basement will become a central hub for computer (and Voice over IP telephone) services. The interior needs to be reconfigured and rehabilitated and this will occur progressively over the next several years. After the TB Program moves to 3333 Forbes an auditorium and learning and training center will be constructed on the first floor in space presently occupied by TB. Space on the first floor occupied by the Pharmacy and the TB Program offices will become a central lunch room facility and exercise facility for staff. Restrooms need to be constructed in this area. The Housing and Community Environment Program will be combined with the Childhood Lead Program and located on the second floor. The Food Program remains on the third floor. After the move consideration to combining the Housing and Food Programs should be examined.

Building 2

No changes anticipated although better heating and cooling should be provided. An upgrade of the existing three phase power to allow multiple machines to operate must be undertaken.

Building 3

After cessation of the Three Rivers Wet Weather Program this space will be used by Emergency Response. The building exterior is to be painted after Building 5.

Building 4

The space is presently unoccupied and has been vacant since 2002. The building is to be rehabilitated and used by the Drinking Water, Solid Waste, Recycling and Sewage Program. The wiring is original to the 1933 construction and computer and telephone services need to be deployed. Heating and cooling are needed and the previous alterations constructed by the Arsenal Family Health Center need to be removed. The exterior is to be painted along with rehabilitation. This will be done with Health Department employees over the next year. This reuse is supported by a recent Controller's Office audit of the plumbing program.

Building 5

Painting and repair of the exterior will be started after completion of Building 7. New phone lines (Voice over IP) are needed since existing lines are not operational due to corrosion. Waterproofing of the basement is needed and will be done by contract. The front porch will need repaired/replaced at the time of painting. The interior needs rehabilitated. The plumbing offices will be consolidated to this facility as recommended by the recent Controller's audit.

Building 6

No changes of use are anticipated but computer and telephone lines need to be run underground. Cleaning of brick and re-pointing will be done with low priority.

Building 7

Painting of the exterior is presently under way. The front porch is to be repaired this fall. Half of roof and gutters were replaced in 2007 and additional repairs to be made early 2008. Pointing and brick repair are to be done this fall. The interior needs rehabilitated. Central cooling and heating are already in place. The use by the Air Program will remain.

The rental space for services will remain but leases for Penn West, McKeesport and Carnegie Plumbing, for WIC administration, and for Housing can be cancelled or allowed to lapse.

Act 315 allows for repairs but not new construction or capital improvements. Thus most of the work should be done by existing personnel or contract to make the necessary improvements although major items such as the relocation of chillers and new construction of a chiller station and expansion at Clack should be capital items. There has been interest in attempting to obtain Federal money for the Clack Complex since it is a former Federal facility and has the above mentioned deed restrictions. If money is not available, consideration should be given to deeding the Oakland property to another non profit agency (such as RIDC) and renting the space back with a reversion to the County after a specified period of time (30 years). Act 315 allows the payment of rent to a non profit agency (but not the County itself) for the use of the Health Department and since the draw down of PaDOH money is not maximized this would result in some cost savings. There has been discussion of selling the Oakland facility and receiving property back in kind but this is perhaps a long term process and the needs are more immediate, especially for clinic operations serving the residents of the County.

He said that they would like to consolidate space so that some divisions are all together in one building.

He said that if the Health Department were called upon to inspect some of the buildings that they would condemn their own buildings. He said that roofs leak and that paint and plaster are peeling. He also said that the building does not provide adequate handicap access, and that the cleanliness and conditions of the buildings are deplorable. He described how he would like to combine services into buildings to make access more feasible. He said that there is a lack of privacy for people seeking services.

He referred to the document he distributed, describing the buildings and functions and their needs. He said that they could receive some money from the state for renovation but not for new construction.

Ms. Caldwell asked how Council could help him obtain additional tradespeople. Dr. Dixon said that they would need to create positions within the Health Department to do that.

The Chair said that they will revisit this issue at their next meeting.

Discussion of the conditions at Shuman Center.

Summary: *Mr. Simmons described the conditions at Shuman Center. He said the Center is experiencing aging problems and that he knows of no comprehensive plan to keep up with needed repairs. He said they are currently developing a plan with the County's Public Works department regarding roofing conditions. He said that the heating and cooling systems are not functioning properly. He also said that general cleanup of the building has been neglected over the years. He said it needs painted and power washed; new toilets; and new showers. He said they need to develop a comprehensive review and cost analysis to address these issues.*

Mr. Fitzgerald said that it is very important to find out what the cost would be. He said that he is concerned about some Federal funding cuts which would result in the County having to fund these repairs.

Ms. Caldwell said she was concerned about the security of the facility. She said that should be prioritized. She also suggested that maybe some of the trade students could do some of the work. Mr. Simmons said that would be good for general maintenance but for renovations he would prefer having professionals do that work.

The Chair asked Mr. Simmons if he prioritized these needs. Mr. Simmons said that the roof, heating and cooling systems, and kitchen would be first on his list.

Discussion took place relative to the County's Public Works department's role in the rehabilitation process.

The Chair said asked Mr. Simmons to develop a cost analysis regarding renovation and repair. Mr. Simmons said that they are working on that and will report back to the Committee.

V. Adjournment

Summary: *The meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM*