

**Open Work Session
Capital Improvement Program Fiscal Years 2022-2026
Department of General Services
January 19, 2021**

Mr. Pate Matthews, General Services Supervisor, came before Council and said he is here to answer any questions Council may have for his Department's proposed projects. Mr. Dodd asked Mr. Matthews to briefly go over the projects.

Mr. Matthews said the first project is the old courthouse HVAC replacement, and presently they are having an engineering study done on this work. He said they have a hodgepodge of systems there, but the main problem is that the building is 90 years old. He said it is a steam heating system, steam blower, with steam radiators, and they are having steel pipes fail everywhere – within the walls, within the floors, and there is really just no way to fix them. He said they are getting the engineering study done to completely revamp the system, which is going to also create a significant amount of construction just because of the way the building was built. He said most of the walls there are either concrete or brick, and anywhere from 8 to 14 inches thick, which presents its own set of issues trying to get duct work through walls, electricity through walls, etc. He clarified, that is why the number is \$2.5 million dollars.

Mr. Dodd said that is a solid building. He then asked if the plan is to keep the piping in the walls, to which Mr. Matthews responded, yes. He clarified, the piping will stay in the walls, but it will be abandoned. He said they actually have three steam loops there right now for various sections of the building, and they actually had to completely shut one down because of the steam leaks literally coming out of the wall. He said this is probably something that should have been looked at 20 to 25 years ago and gradually brought up to speed, but now it is to the point where they have to do something.

Mr. Hastings asked if they have a full understanding of all of the projects that currently need to take place at the old courthouse, as he knows it is significant, and he does not know if there is a plan for the building itself or anything further. He said he knows they have done a lot on the outside, but the inside, of course, is where the real issues are, to which Mr. Matthews responded, their first four projects scheduled this year are at the old courthouse. He said, along with the HVAC, they have water infiltration issues. He said he had the engineering study done on that, and it is going to be a matter of funding as it starts literally from the top down, and there is going to be a significant amount of brickwork that has to be done. He clarified, not that they will do it all of this right now, but they will do it in phases because, ultimately, the windows in that building should be replaced. He said there are several projects that need to be done in that building, but they are just going to have to take them one at a time now, get them back to a good condition as opposed to substandard, and then stay on top of things. He said, ultimately, there is a plan, but right now they are playing catch up. Mr. Hastings said he appreciates Mr. Matthews taking the time to address that building, as it is a landmark of sorts. He said his great grandmother worked in the building for 30 years in the 1940s and 1950s, so he really does appreciate it. He said it would be a shame to lose an asset, and he feels like it has been far too long where they did not address it, so he really does appreciate Mr. Matthews taking the time. Mr. Matthews said the structure itself will be there for a lot of years just because of the way it is built, but, unfortunately, that adds to the expense of anything they want to do to it. He clarified, it is not going to be an inexpensive building to work on,

but the structure itself is worth spending the money on. He said, to replace that building, they would probably be looking at \$150 million dollars, and probably looking at \$4 million to tear it down, not that that is even on the table, but just to give Council an idea of the asset they have in that facility.

Mr. Matthews said the next project is in the same building with electrical upgrades, which is also having a study being done on that right now along with the HVAC study because the same engineering firm is doing both. He said, if Council has ever walked through the building, they will notice exposed conduits running everywhere in the building, and with the HVAC system upgrade they are going to have to do some power upgrades to support the new equipment.

Mr. Matthews said the next project is what they are calling the one-stop shop, which would be for the Clerk's Office. He explained, presently, the public has to go everywhere in the building from one side to the other, and ultimately for security reasons they would like to be able to have the public go into one central area. He said the room is there, but it is not available at this time as it is presently holding land records. He said the Clerk's plan is to have most of that stuff scanned into storage, and the paper copies could be eliminated. He said then there will be representatives from each individual office – the Criminal Division, the Register of Wills, and the Civil Division would each have a representative in this one-stop area where the public could go to one room and have their needs met rather than have the public throughout the building. He said the safety concern is the main factor, and it is a space usage thing.

Mr. Dodd asked how long it will take to scan all the documents, to which Mr. Matthews responded, he has no clue, but he knows there are a ton of them. Mr. Dodd asked when Mr. Matthews thinks the room will be available, to which Mr. Matthews responded, he would say three years if possible depending on the priority the court system puts on it, which is out of his control. He said he believes the staff there is on board with having this as the one-stop, so he thinks once they have staff to buy into it and realize they are doing this for the staff's good as well as the public, things will move right along.

Mr. Matthews said project number five is for this building, really this wall right here. He reported, with every hard rain from the west, Mr. Dwyer has water coming in his windows down below. He said it has been addressed previously with caulk, etc., but that is not the problem, the problem is between the brick and the interior wall itself. He said they just went through an exercise at the new courthouse that was kind of the same thing, and it was never properly flashed, so they are going to figure out what it takes to get this wall waterproofed to keep the water from coming in this building.

Mr. Matthews said the next item is Permits and Inspections office renovations, which will be new flooring and reconfiguring some of the spaces, and generally sprucing it up and cleaning it up.

Mr. Matthews said number seven is the Wicomico Nursing Home generator replacement. He explained, right now the generator they have there is 26 years old, and does not support the necessary equipment should there be an outage. He clarified, the necessary equipment being refrigerators and freezers. He said they can keep the lights on, they can keep the heat on, and they can keep some air conditioning on, but they would be upgraded from a 150 to a 225 KW generator for that facility.

Mr. Matthews said project number eight is the air handler replacement for this building, which is an ongoing project for which they are having the engineering study done as they speak. He explained, the air handlers in this building are original to the building, so, in theory, whatever they spend on replacing, they will realize a return on efficiency.

Mr. Davis asked if anyone ever found out where the flooding was coming from that was occurring at the Health Department across the street, to which Mr. Matthews responded, yes and no. He said it is groundwater. He said there is a pit with sump pumps in it presently, and they had talked about repairing that floor in previous discussions, but they have decided to wait until they see what happens down the street at the Ross. He explained, there will be several hundred piles driven down there, and rather than throw good money after bad, they are waiting to see what happens when all of those piles are driven because it is going to change the hydraulics of that area. He said, when the County bought it and changed it from J.C. Penney's to the Health Department, the basement floor had a layer of grout poured on it, which is anywhere from an inch to 2 inches thick to level the floor, and the grout did not adhere to the concrete. He said the concrete was not properly treated for adhesion, so what has happened there now is anywhere there was any moisture that came through the concrete, it pushes grout up, and that is why the basement over there is closed off. He said the floor is dangerous, and until they know what is going to happen down the street that could affect them, they just are not going to spend any money on it, so they will see what happens with that building and go from there.

Mr. Dodd asked if it is the mold that makes it dangerous, to which Mr. Matthews responded, no, it is the floor itself. He explained, there are places where there are humps in the floor as big as this table that are 3 inches high. He said the moisture has caused the grout to heave, and it is just dangerous to go in and walk on it, and it is just not safe. Mr. Dodd said he would suspect there is mold in there too, to which Mr. Matthews responded, no. Mr. Dodd asked, even with all that moisture, to which Mr. Matthews responded, no.


Mr. Holloway asked if the issue with what goes on down the street could have an ill affect on the Health Department building, or would it help it, to which Mr. Matthews responded, the superstructure should not be affected, but the basement floor is where their concern is because it is below ground, and when they drive that many piles, they are going to change the hydraulics of the area. Mr. Holloway asked if it would make it worse, to which Mr. Matthews responded, it could. He clarified, it could be that once it is made worse and stabilizes, then they are okay, so they did not want to take a chance on fixing it, and then having them drive piles, and then all of a sudden, they are right back where they started.

Mr. Hastings said he saw in last week's Salisbury Independent the Looking Back on January 14, 1986, and in the article, it looks back and says the Wicomico County Council voted to build a new County Health Department on a 30-acre area where the new County jail would be, and basically, they were not quite sure what they were going to do with the building on Carroll Street. He said it is amazing to see they have gone all of these years later and they are still facing some of the same issues. Mr. Dodd said he saw that as well. Mr. Matthews said he does not think the Health Department Hurdle Building came over there until 1990. He said every plan and drawing he has seen is from the 1990s, so this could have been when they purchased land for the Sheriff's Department or something, but he really does not know. Mr.

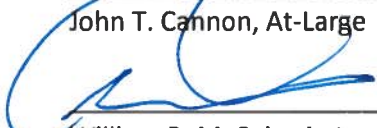
Hastings said he will look into it because he loves reading articles. Mr. Dodd said, when he read that, he had several questions himself.


Mr. Cannon asked if there is anyone trying to pursue any type of grants for the old courthouse because of the fact that it is a historic building, to which Mr. Matthews responded, not at this time. He clarified, he needs to look into that, but not at this time. Mr. Cannon said it may not be Mr. Matthews' exact responsibility, but, when talking to the Acting County Executive, he knows they have been talking about grants for some time now, and whether or not they hire a grant writer in this new budget session to oversee many Departments in the County, whether they look at individual Departments, and General Services might actually be a good one where he brings someone in as a grant writer, but it seems like it might be an option. There was no further discussion.


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