

Open Work Session
Discussion of Poplar Hill Treatment Facility
March 5, 2019

Mr. Wayne Strausburg, Director of Administration, Mr. Weston Young, Assistant Director of Administration, Ms. Lori Brewster, Health Officer, and Ms. Ruth Colbourne, Director of Department of Corrections, came before Council. Mr. Young said he will start off with a timeline of events. He said nearly two years ago Governor Hogan declared a state of emergency to combat the opioid crisis. He said a year ago the County began a series of community forums called Taking Back Our Community, and these were held across the County regarding the opioid epidemic. He said, through those meetings, and through conversations with their Community Outreach Addictions Team (COAT), they learned of a significant gap in recovery services in the County. He clarified, while there is a current recovery provider in the County, if an overdose occurs outside of operating hours, or if a bed is not available during operating hours, the COAT team's only option is to transport that person across the Bay Bridge, if that is feasible. He said the individual could change their mind in this time, and he has learned that self-determination is a key component of addictions treatment, so COAT members need to be prepared to strike while the iron is hot, and when the individual is ready to seek treatment. He said there is a higher success rate when there is a 24/7 facility available, but, in some cases, due to this gap in services, they have had people who sought treatment die because the detox services were not immediately available.

Mr. Young said, on another front, the number one location where detox occurs in Wicomico County is the Detention Center. He said people arrive with an addiction-related offense, get detoxed, and, in time, released. He said they currently have an average of 40 inmates a month who are going through the detox process, but, when released, they typically fall back into the circumstances or lifestyle that got them there to begin with. He said approximately 2 of the 40 inmates undergoing detox are repeat offenders, so, in essence, it becomes a revolving door of frequent fliers. He reported, the County pays \$16,000 per month on average on detox services, which amounts to nearly \$200,000 a year, so the point is that the County is currently paying for this element of the crisis, which is somewhat quantifiable, but what is a bit harder to quantify is the needle transmitted diseases that come with this type of addiction, such as HIV and hepatitis. He explained, when they have inmates with those diseases in the facility, they have to pay for their treatment, which are additional costs. Mr. Kilmer asked what the recidivism rate is, to which Mr. Young responded, they said there are approximately 2 of the 40, on average, who have been back. He clarified, at any given time, there are 40 inmates who are going through detox treatment, and, on average, two of those have been through that process before, but then when they get released, something brings them back in. Ms. Colbourne added, two of them during the same month get released, and then come back in to be detoxed again that month. Mr. Kilmer asked how many prisoners there are total, to which Ms. Colbourne responded, approximately 300, but 287 was her last count.

Mr. McCain said he knows they do not have a plan at the moment in terms of a contract for Poplar Hill, but the conversations are happening. He then asked if the inmates would even be candidates for the program at Poplar Hill, to which Ms. Colbourne responded, the answer to that question would be yes and no because they have an extensive pretrial program. She clarified, they have 283 people inside the Detention Center, but they have approximately 300 people being monitored on pretrial release outside of the Detention Center. She said, once they have been released, they still see them once a month, or once a week depending on the extent of their substance use disorder, and either they get into some sort of treatment, or they are going to be back inside the Detention Center because they are going to pop dirty on a urine test. She said, even if they have been in jail, they can take them right to the treatment

center, and then they do not have time to go anywhere because they will be released to pretrial, and can get a handoff right into treatment. Mr. McCain said this reminds him of the healthcare world where population management is what it is all about. He clarified, hospitals are trying to keep people out of the hospital, but, in this case, they are trying to keep them out of the Detention Center, to which Ms. Colbourne responded, that is true. She said the \$16,000 Mr. Young referred to is on top of what it costs to house a basic inmate, so, when they add that up, it is \$65 per day per inmate, plus the additional cost of an inmate who is detoxing, and it is really a very large dollar amount that is impacting the County.

Mr. Holloway asked if what they are saying is that a lot of these people who would go into the detox center at Poplar Hill would be people with ankle bracelets who have been convicted of some kind of crime, to which Ms. Colbourne responded, or they could be awaiting trial. She said, once they have been released by the judge, they have been deemed safe enough to be released under the pretrial monitoring program. Mr. Holloway asked if it would not just be people leaving the hospital who need detox, to which Ms. Colbourne responded, no, it could be her people too. Mr. Dodd asked if she is saying that 40 of the inmates may be going to this detox center, to which Ms. Colbourne responded, not all at one time, but that is the average per month. Mr. Young said the intention is to address the addiction before they commit crimes that put them in this cycle the County is paying for. He said, if they can get them before they are breaking into cars to feed their addiction, they are never going to go into that system to begin with. Mr. Dodd asked, would current inmates have to be transferred to this possible detox center, to which Mr. Strausburg responded, that is not the model, and that is not going to happen. He clarified, the model is people who voluntarily want to get themselves cleaned up, and he has no appetite for court ordered people being sent to this facility as that is not the model. He said they want people who have made the conscious decision that they want to get well, and people who have been court ordered have not made that decision, in most cases. He said, at maximum, 60 beds is how it is modeled right now. He said their model from the start has been when COAT or anybody else interfaces with an addict who has made the decision at that moment that they are tired of it, they want to get help, and want to get well, and they are trying to find a facility they can take them to for comprehensive treatment, and they would be detoxed. He said, if they still were committed to getting well, they could stay there until they were well, and not having a judge say they are going to go down to Poplar Hill. He said that is the last thing the Administration wants. He said they do not want an extension of the penal system.

Mr. Young said, not long after the community forums, the Executive ran into the Secretary of Public Safety and Correctional Services, Mr. Moyer, regarding the recently vacated Poplar Hill prerelease unit facility, and was told there were no future plans to utilize this facility, and that it would remain vacant. He said discussions then began with the State regarding a potential lease of the facility with the goal of providing a comprehensive, multi-prong, high quality approach to the delivery of services to individuals in need of substance use treatment. He said this would be a regional facility that would include 23-hour observation and detoxification services, residential treatment, recovery housing, and a workforce employment component at the end of the program, but open only to citizens of Maryland's Eastern Shore. Mr. Cannon asked who the gatekeeper would be, to which Mr. Young responded, the gatekeeper would be the service provider. He clarified, whoever is selected to run this facility, the County would have a memorandum of understanding with that person, but they have also considered having a Health Officer support the admission of that person. Mr. Cannon asked if they sent out a request for proposal on that, to which Mr. Young responded, they put out a request for qualifications, and he will get to that.

Mr. Young continued, and said, at that point in time, they began the tours of the facility with State staff. He said they had several Secretaries of General Services come down, he mentioned Secretary Moyer, and they also had Clay Stamp at that time who was running the Opioid Operation Center. He said, as this

project seemed more and more feasible, they invited Council to attend a tour, and the majority of Council did. He then thanked Council for attending the tour. He said the Governor and Lieutenant Governor threw their weight behind the concept of this project, and lease language began to be drafted. He said, while they are still in the drafting process, the basics of the lease are for \$1.00 per year, and they would have a 20-year lease term with two 5-year renewals, among a bunch of other pertinent details. He said, later, on January 10, 2019, the Lieutenant Governor unexpectedly announced nearly a million dollars for renovations to the facility, and, since then, they have had conversations regarding United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development having grant money available for opioid facilities like this, who, short of throwing money at the County, are very interested in partnering.

Mr. Young said, as he mentioned, they had a request for qualifications issued by Purchasing for a service provider to run this facility. He said the deadline for those submittals was February 13, 2019, so this is still fairly recent. He said, of the half dozen entities that showed interest, they received two bids, but, unfortunately, one came in late, and they have their rules. He said the one they did receive on time has a similar successful program in Delaware, and it also turns out that they have utilized USDA Rural Development low-interest loans to cover renovation costs. He said he believes the example they had in their packet was in Harrington, Delaware where they renovated an old shopping center, and turned it into this, so they have experience in what they are proposing.

Mr. Young said one of the things brought up that came to their attention is that there is House Bill 715 and Senate Bill 419 for is a female prerelease mandate. He said it is one page, and has several heavy hitters signed to it, so they are told the chance of it passing is high, but it states "The Commissioner shall operate a prerelease unit for women." He explained, there is a chance that, if the County does not move on this, it is going to return as a prerelease unit for women, and they will not have control over who comes into that facility. He said, to be fair, the current service provider does not have restrictions on where people come from for treatment. He said, having received a qualified service provider, and nearing a final draft of the lease for the facility with the State, they requested this meeting tonight. He said, ultimately, the lease and any grant monies they accept would have to be approved by Council, so it is important Council knows where the Administration is with this.

Mr. Holloway asked why Mr. Young mentioned 23 hours instead of 24 hours, and what would they do about the other hour, to which Ms. Brewster responded, it is 23-hour observation and/or detox. She explained, they determine what the level of care is that the person needs during that 23-hour observation process.

Mr. Davis asked if there is another facility like this in the State, to which Mr. Young responded, this will be the first, and he thinks that is why the Governor and Lieutenant Governor are very supportive of it because they could then mimic it elsewhere in the State regional facilities. Mr. Davis then asked how people get detoxed on the Western Shore, to which Mr. Young responded, the Metroplex is big enough to support 24/7 facilities. Ms. Brewster added, it depends on what Mr. Davis is talking about as far as the Western Shore. She clarified, if he is talking about Western Maryland, they are having some of the same issues, and they are looking at this project as the potential for a project they may want to replicate in Western Maryland. She said the Metroplex has a large cadre of detox providers that are available to the citizens in the Metroplex, so they do not have the issue of transporting individuals from rural areas to the metropolitan area, and they also do not have to sit on a waiting list. Mr. Davis asked where the funding will come from to run this, to which Mr. Strausburg responded, that is one of the next steps, and one of the things they are trying to figure out. Mr. Holloway said, it said in the newspaper that the County was going to get \$900,000 to begin with, and they would start construction in March when they

get that money. He then asked if they are going to start construction and repairs before they secure more funding, to which Mr. Young responded, the thought is that they would get the grant money from the State, and they have also made it clear to Mr. Steve Shue, who replaced Mr. Stamp in the Opioid Command Center, that the County would gladly take any other money they have, and USDA grant money with the help of the selected service provider to begin renovations. He said any additional renovations would be put on the service provider themselves because they can take out a low-interest loan through USDA Rural Development. He said Medicaid funds them, so the operation would be funded by the service provider. He said they have Medicaid and private insurances paying the bills for the people who go through that facility. Mr. Davis asked if the County would be funding them, to which Mr. Strausburg responded, no. Mr. Young added, that is not the intention at all. He clarified, the County would be a pass-through for grants to help with the renovations. He said the more renovations the County could cover with that grant money, the less the provider would have to take out, and that would give them a higher chance of success long-term. Mr. Holloway asked, if the operator does not work out, would the County end up with it since somebody has to pick up the slack, to which Mr. Strausburg responded, that would be part of what they would have to negotiate. He said the next step is for them to negotiate an agreement with the provider that they believe works, and that the provider believes works. Mr. Strausburg said he will be very candid with Council that he is at a juncture where he would not bring the current lease from the State over to Council because he is not at all comfortable with their representations on environmental issues, and he is not at all comfortable with what they want the County to warrant with regard to possible environmental issues. He said, if they cannot get that language ironed out, from his standpoint, he would walk from it because this is a building that was built in the mid to late 1960s, there is a water treatment plant, and a sewage treatment plant, to which Mr. Holloway responded, that would cost \$15,000 a month to operate. Mr. Strausburg said the State has agreed to cover those costs, but, as far as he is concerned, that facility as it exists right now is the State's liability, and they are trying to move a portion of that liability over to the County, and he is firmly opposed to the County taking on that sort of risk. He said it is their problem, and it is their issue to remediate, not the County's. He said it is only \$1.00 a year rent, but that is a huge liability that, certainly, he would not bring before Council.

Mr. Holloway said they were talking about Mr. Shue saying it is a facility for Eastern Shore residents, but back in January there was a meeting, and Delegate Sheree Sample-Hughes asked him that question, and his response was that he did not know if limiting it to Eastern Shore residents was practical or even allowed under the law or State rules. He said people are now leaving the Eastern Shore to go to the Western Shore to be detoxed, but there is not going to be anything that could control people coming from the Western Shore to the Eastern Shore, and that is what he is hearing is one of the biggest concerns from citizens, which is the same issue they have with Eastern Correctional Facility. He said the concern is this not being a clearinghouse for criminals and it being a purely voluntary operation. He said, if a person went in front of a judge and the judge asked if they agreed to go into a treatment facility instead of jail, they would be volunteering very quickly to go there, and that is a big concern.

Mr. Holloway said there was a boot camp 20 to 25 years ago, and he talked to one of the long-term Deputies today, and that boot camp was supposed to house only juvenile offenders who were not violent offenders, but he was told they had murderers, and armed robbers. He said that lasted a year, but the building is still there. He said he does not see any way to control this thing after it is implemented, if it is implemented, to which Mr. Young responded, again, the current service provider in the County has no restrictions on where they come from, and, to be honest, if they cannot have that restriction, he does not think they would move forward with this. He said he understands Mr. Shue's answer because, if they put State money towards this, or Federal money, he does not know whether

they can restrict it. He said they have not spent those monies yet, so, if it turns out that they would have to take somebody from Baltimore, they would back away from this. He said their intention from the start originally was for Worcester, Somerset, and Wicomico because they have enough people locally to keep this facility filled. He said, that being said, when Caroline County heard about this, they reached out. He said, when the Health Officers for the entire Eastern Shore found out about this, they recognized the need. He said, again, they can keep it filled, but he hears Mr. Holloway's concerns because they are the Administration's concerns as well. He said they would back away from this if it was forced that they would have to take non-Eastern Shore residents, to which Mr. Holloway responded, he can tell him, if there is any State money involved, he will have to. He said that is, basically, what he is saying.

Mr. Holloway said Mr. Young mentioned that other County Health Officers have stepped up, but they do not have the money to spend, so it is the County Council. He then asked if other County Councils have stepped up and offered to cost share in any of this, to which Mr. Young responded, again, they do not plan to spend any Wicomico County money other than him talking to Council right now, which could, technically, be classified as spending money towards this. He said the conversation with the other Counties has been, if somebody came from Somerset or Worcester, would they provide, or help provide a job for that person so they go back to their home County with a job lined up so that, ideally, they do not fall back into that same cycle of going in and out of the correctional facility, or in and out of the hospital. He said they all seemed open to that because they are not asking for money, but are asking for help lining up jobs. He said the other element to that is they usually ask how it competes with their local service provider, so it could be McCready in Somerset. He said, again, this is a gap in service that no Eastern Shore provider has. He said, if they could send somebody to Somerset County to handle an after-hours overdose, they would, but they are having to go off the Shore because there is not a facility now, and they were purely trying to help facilitate and push the State into creating a regional facility. He said they are trying to act as a pass-through to help get something here, and there is risk with that with the lease. He said, if the service provider selected shuts down because it did not work, that is all going to be written into the legal ease they have with that service provider, to which Mr. Strausburg added, it will be imbedded in the lease. Mr. Holloway said, if they filed bankruptcy, they would not have any of that, and it does not matter how many leases they sign. He said, if they are operating in Delaware now, they are probably a Delaware corporation, so, if they come to Maryland, they will probably file a new corporation in Maryland. He said they are not going to have a personal guarantee on the owner, to which Mr. McCain responded, they face that with every contract. Mr. Holloway said they are looking at a 20-year lease on this place that is going to be around the County's neck with something to do with it, and they will have people down there who need treatment. He then asked, what if they wake up one day and it is like it was in Germany when the prisoners woke up one morning and the Germans were gone? He said that might be the situation down there, to which Mr. Strausburg responded, he understands Mr. Holloway's point, but they are covering that in the lease document. He said, if this does not work, and one of the very long negotiating points was what if this does not work, and the State was trying to impose upon the County the obligation that the County would have to relocate all of these patients, and they said absolutely not. He clarified, they would not accept that obligation as that is the care provider's obligation. He said, again, they will not bring Council a lease that does not cover that, and they will not bring them an operating agreement that does not cover that. He said, if they cannot get very, very good environmental warranties and an indemnification, then they are not going to bring Council the lease either. He said Mr. Holloway's points are well taken, and they understand the points, but those are the things they have to try to work through in order to see whether or not this has legs and can be executed. He said, in terms of Mr. Shue, that office has had enormous churn, so there have been communication gaps. He said, from the outset, the Lieutenant Governor, Mr. Clay Stamp, and everybody else involved in this project knew that Wicomico County was not taking anybody other than a

voluntary Maryland Eastern Shore citizen who wanted to get well. He said, if Mr. Shue is saying he is not sure they can do that, then he needs to go talk to Governor Larry Hogan.

Mr. Dodd said Mr. Young told Mr. Holloway a few minutes ago that it was a good question when he asked where funding would be coming from, but then just a few minutes ago he said they do not plan on using County funding. He said it sounds like they do not have a plan yet, and it sounds like they want Council to agree on this, but they do not know where the money is coming from, to which Mr. Young responded, they have nearly a million dollars on the table for renovations. Mr. Dodd said it will probably cost a lot more than that, to which Mr. Young responded, yes. Mr. Holloway said they heard in the newspaper that it would be \$6 to \$8 million, to which Mr. Cannon responded, he heard \$10 million. Mr. McCain clarified, Mr. Strausburg and Mr. Young just said that the additional dollars would be part of the negotiations with the service provider.

Mr. Young said, in terms of percentage of male to female who are being affected by the epidemic, 70 percent are male, and 30 percent are female, so the thought was that they propose starting with 20 beds, something small, work out the kinks, and then go forward. He said, if they renovate for just 20 beds, that is going to be cheaper than renovating for 60 beds, and will be cheaper than renovating for 60 coed beds because then they would need separate showers, and a host of additional work, so that renovation cost is going to fluctuate. He said internally they looked at \$2 to \$2.5 million with some contingency that would cover a large portion of that renovation. He said there is no air conditioning out there right now. He said, in terms of funding, the thought is that they have \$972,000 on the table from the Governor's Office, they have USDA with an undisclosed amount that they would be willing to pitch in because they said opioids and broadband get priority with them, and that is grant money, and whatever that difference is, again, the service provider may take that \$2.5 million and blow it out of the water, or say they can do it for less. He said they will need some input on that, but, if they do not get grant money to fund the renovations, the service provider will have to take out a low-interest loan with USDA. He clarified, again, not County money. He said all of this has been a work in progress, and that is why it has taken until tonight to actually have enough for Council to chew on.

Mr. Dodd said Mr. Young mentioned that a service provider will have to take out a low-interest loan. He then asked, when he sent out his request, did he discuss that with the service provider, to which Mr. Young responded, they are aware. Mr. Dodd asked if he discussed it, not if they are aware, to which Mr. Young responded, again, as he mentioned, the one person who submitted on time has a history of getting low-interest loans from USDA Rural Development to renovate facilities, so they know what is needed to do this. He said the more grant money the County can get to help with the renovations, the better off they will be in terms of not having to borrow as much money, which improves their return on investment, and improves their chance of being a success. He clarified, again, they are still not proposing using County taxpayer funding. He said Council has heard during prior meetings that the Board of Education and the Airport need it, among every other Department. He said they will walk away from this if the County has to run it or throw money towards it. He said this is something the State should be picking up, to be honest, to which Mr. Holloway responded, that has been the argument. He said the State should do it in the first place, to which Mr. Young responded, but they are not, and they still have people dying and suffering, and they are paying for them in the jail, so they are trying to get this started.

Mr. Davis said all of the numbers Mr. Young keeps throwing out are about renovations. He then asked where the operating cost is going to come from, to which Ms. Brewster responded, the provider is able to bill for Medicaid and private insurance to operate the facility. Mr. Davis asked if that is the reason the Nursing Home is failing, because of Medicaid, to which Mr. Strausburg responded, the Nursing Home is

failing because they do not have enough people in beds. Mr. Davis asked if Ms. Brewster is saying that these people who are on drugs are on Medicaid, to which Ms. Brewster responded, if they do not qualify for Medicaid or have a private insurance, it is covered under the Medicaid Program for substance use called Gray Area. She said they are not insured, but they need treatment, and they meet the qualifications for funding for treatment. She said on a yearly average they have 300 individuals who they serve with their COAT team that they have to access some type of treatment for, and the longer they sit there and wait for these individuals to be given a bed, the less likely it is that they are going to maintain sobriety and become clean and sober. She said she shared with Mr. Young just today that last week they had an individual who overdosed, drove themselves to an emergency facility, got out three hours later, and was picked up again with an overdose because they did not have access to treatment. Mr. Holloway said they might not have taken it anyway because they have to volunteer for it, to which Ms. Brewster responded, of the people that their COAT team members interact with, if they are Wicomico County residents, they have better luck getting them into treatment. She said they are at a 54 percent rate of accessing treatment for these individuals, but that may be higher if they had something in the County.

Mr. Holloway asked if the Lower Eastern Shore Delegates are endorsing this, to which Mr. Strausburg responded, they have not heard of anyone who does not. He clarified, they have not heard anyone who said they are not in favor of it. He said, if they are not in favor of it, they have not spoken with the Administration. He said the thing he would tell Council is that he does not disagree that this should not be a County responsibility. He said, however, they will recall, the State, essentially, walked away from mental health. Mr. Holloway said, getting to the mental health part of this, he asked Mr. Strausburg the day of the Legislative meeting about this, and he said he had contacted the State twice about the Holly Center. He said all of their Legislators were there that morning. He then asked if any of them stepped forward, or if Mr. Strausburg made any more attempts to try to rectify that, to which Mr. Strausburg responded, the issue with the Holly Center was, again, the Attorney General who is handling the lease, and the County has finally gotten two leases now for two cottages. He said he cannot explain how the State apparatus works other than it works very, very slowly. Mr. Holloway said maybe it would be better for this County and all of the Counties combined to send a clear message to the State that they need this center, and they would like the State to run it instead of getting the Counties involved because they are going to get hung on this one. He said they are talking about an out of state company coming in to run this thing that will probably form an LLC so that, if it does not work, they will be gone. He said Wicomico County, just like the boot camp, is going to be sitting there with a \$1.00 per year lease, to which Mr. Strausburg responded, they will have a carve out in the lease, and he is not going to let that happen. He said whoever did the drill academy he cannot answer for, but he can answer for this facility.

Mr. Holloway asked what the Administration was looking for tonight, to which Mr. Strausburg responded, they just wanted to bring Council up to speed. He said they have had more questions than they have answers, so they did not come here tonight to ask Council to approve anything, but they wanted Council to understand exactly where they are, what they have, and what they do not have. He clarified, they are not saying they want a greenlight from Council, but they want Council to understand where they are with regards to the progress of this project, what the hurdles are, what the potential issues are that can kill it, and they wanted Council's input as to what their concerns are.

Mr. Taylor said he will mention one point that might be of interest to everyone regarding Eastern Shore residents. He said a person can become a resident of the Eastern Shore almost overnight by just simply moving here and changing their domicile, to which Mr. Young responded, and that is why they want to have a Health Officer approve the recommendation if they can go that route. He said that would take

care of that because they could see the game they are playing, to which Mr. Taylor responded, there is a thing called equal protection that he thinks they might get held up on.

Mr. Kilmer said, as he understands it, part of the reason for the middleman, which it seems the County is, for lack of a better term, is that they can limit this to Eastern Shore residents, to which Strausburg added, and the State is not going to do it, and that is the issue. He said they are trying to do it in this fashion, and work out the kinks and the valid concerns Council has, or it is not going to happen. Mr. Kilmer said it seems to him that, in regards to the issue of residency and limiting it, he has talked to folks in the area, and they have said much of the same thing. He clarified, they have said there are so many people that these beds will be filled, and they would not have to worry about that. He said he is not sure they could count on that, but it seems that the legal issue would be one they would want to get nailed down first before they spend any more time working on this. He said, if they cannot have the limiting factor, Mr. Strausburg said that would be a deal breaker, and, obviously, he thinks it would be for Council, so they should not be pursuing these other opportunities if they cannot do that. He said Council asked Mr. Wilber about this a couple of weeks ago, but he had not looked into it, and Delegate Sample-Hughes was great to ask that question of Mr. Shue. He said it was not quite a no, but more of an "I don't know," and sometimes at those hearings a "no" is an "I don't know" at the same time. He said it seems like getting that nailed down would be the important thing, or they are kind of spinning their wheels here because, that is a deal breaker for Mr. Strausburg and Council, to which Mr. Strausburg responded, quite frankly, he may be stuck on the lease, to be honest. He said they have been talking about this and, if he were back in his private sector days, he would have walked away by now and just told the attorney on the other side that, if he does not understand this, then he is out. He said that is really where he is right now. He said, if they do not get a reasonable lease that provides the County with appropriate protections, he is not in favor of sending anything to Council, to which Mr. Young added, if they do not get a good agreement with the service provider, it is the same thing. Mr. Kilmer said it sounds like Administration is trying to tell Council that they are talking about this more long-term, and Council is not going to be rushed into this. He said these issues are important for him, but there is also the issue of total cost estimate. He said the newspaper said "Weston Young said \$10 million dollars," but they need to have this in part of the CIP so they have a firm plan before they approve anything. Mr. Young said, as far as timeframe, the one thing will be the Governor's money because they have other facilities they can throw that towards that are not on the Eastern Shore.

Mr. Holloway said it is his understanding that another provider came forward to the COAT team a few months ago and offered detox services. He then asked if that is correct, to which Ms. Brewster responded, they have a provider in this County that offers detox services, and they have open admission two days a week. Mr. Holloway said they offered to increase that, but there would be a cost. He then asked if that is true, to which Ms. Brewster responded, they have not discussed that with her. Mr. Holloway asked if detox is only offered two days a week, to which Ms. Brewster responded, no, that is not what she said. She clarified, they have open access two days a week, so they open up their admissions two days a week, and, if they have a bed, they admit the person. She said, if there is no bed available, then the person does not get to go into treatment. Mr. Holloway said his understanding was that they offered it to the COAT team, but it was going to be an expanded version, and there was going to be a cost because they have to provide a doctor to be involved in this, to which Ms. Brewster responded, that is what they have because they already do detox, so they have to have a doctor on site. She said the COAT team is an extension of the Health Department, so, if they were talking to the COAT team, they were not talking to her, so she cannot answer that.

Executive Bob Culver then came to the podium and said he just wants to reaffirm what Mr. Young said. He said Mr. Shue called last week and, basically, said they have until the end of this month to either move forward with the money, though it does not have to be spent now, or make somewhat of a decision. He said his exact words were "fish or cut bait." He said they are willing to come to the next session on March 19th and tell Council what the State's point of view is as far as what the Governor is feeling, and possibly the Lieutenant Governor may be coming down with them. He said it would be Mr. Stamp, Mr. Shue, and possibly Boyd Rutherford coming to talk to Council because they want this to move forward. He said he needs to know whether or not Council is willing to have them come and talk to them, or if they want him to tell them no, but then they would lose the money at the end of March. Mr. McCain said he would like to see them here. He said they keep referencing them, and referring back to them, so he would love to see them sitting here so they can ask these questions directly to them. Mr. Strausburg said they cannot answer for the State, to which Mr. McCain responded, they need to go straight to the horse's mouth. Mr. Culver said the State has until the end of this fiscal year to use that money up; otherwise, they will put it towards another facility somewhere in the State. Mr. Dodd said he thinks they should have been before Council by now, to which Mr. Holloway added, they have been talking about this for a year. Mr. Dodd said now Council is pressured to put them on the Agenda for the next meeting, to which Mr. Strausburg responded, that particular office has gone through enormous churn, so, again, he cannot answer for the State. Mr. McCain asked if they need to answer Mr. Culver's question about them coming before Council, to which Mr. Cannon responded, they will go through the normal process. He said, if they have the people lined up, they can put in the request to say they want it on the agenda. There was no further discussion.




John T. Cannon, President



Larry W. Dodd, Vice President, District 3



Ernest F. Davis, District 1



Marc Kilmer, District 2



Josh Hastings, District 4



Joe Holloway, District 5



William R. McCain, At-Large



Laura Hurley, Council Administrator