



Brattleboro Retreat

Memorandum

To: House Corrections and Institutions Committee
From: Louis Josephson, President & CEO, Brattleboro Retreat
Date: April 19, 2019
Re: Level 1 Bed Expansion

Dear Committee Members,

In follow up to the House Corrections and Institutions Committee hearing on Tuesday, April 16, I am writing to provide information on work done to date in relation to the Brattleboro Retreat's Level 1 bed expansion project.

Since Tropical Storm Irene hit Vermont in 2011, the partnership between the Brattleboro Retreat and the State has grown significantly. This growth includes the construction of the 14-bed Tyler 4 Level 1 unit in 2013 and the new, soon-to-be-constructed, 12-bed unit. The combined capital cost to the State for these 26 Level 1 beds is \$10.8 million.

By way of background on the current bed expansion, the Retreat submitted an initial project proposal to the State in October, 2018. Prior to the signing of a contract with the State in December, the Retreat took a number of steps to ensure this much-needed project would start in a timely manner.

This included initiating conceptual work with an experienced healthcare architect, hiring a construction manager, and terminating the lease of a long-time tenant in our Linden Lodge building.

In November we commenced a wholesale move of our fiscal services department to office spaces across the street in order to prevent overlap between administrative functions and future clinical programs in Linden Lodge.

The Retreat took these early actions with a sense of urgency in order to accommodate initial plans that had been proposed to meet a pressing need and that were based on the best information available at the time. As such, our initial vision for this project involved two major changes: 1) relocate our existing adult co-occurring disorders inpatient unit to space on the first floor of Linden Lodge; and 2) utilize the space vacated by our co-occurring unit as the site for a new Level 1 adult inpatient unit.

While this initial work was taking place we requested bids from sub-contractors to complete the

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next phases of the project. We also proceeded with abatement of hazardous materials, decommissioned an older elevator, and continued discussions regarding architectural design options. In addition, a letter was submitted to the District Coordinator of the Natural Resources Board asking for a ruling on Act 250 jurisdiction.

Through ongoing meetings with our clinical leadership, design, and facilities teams, we were able to take a deeper dive into the project's many requirements and make a detailed assessment with revised projections indicating the available \$5.5 million capital budget would result in the creation of two clinically and environmentally sub-par units.

In late March we made the determination that in order to provide a high quality care environment and set the stage to meet the future needs of the state, it would be prudent to invest the funds in a single location. Given the work that has taken place to date, we concluded that the better choice was to focus on the space in Linden Lodge. This option eliminates the requirements in the original plan to relocate patients and to temporarily take six inpatient beds off line during construction.

While the revised scope of the project focuses entirely on renovations to Linden Lodge, the request of \$5.5 million remains unchanged based on what it will require to build a modern, 12-bed, Level 1 inpatient unit in an older building that meets today's standards of care.

On April 10 we received approval from the Agency of Human Services, the Department of Mental Health, and the Department of Buildings and General Services to move forward with changes to the original plan.

Our existing co-occurring unit will remain in its current location as a 22-bed adult in-patient unit. New drawings for a 12-bed Level 1 unit in Linden Lodge are being developed, and we anticipate opening the new unit in the first half of 2020.

Project costs to date total approximately \$702,000, with \$388,000 having already been paid and \$314,000 currently being processed. The breakdown is below:

- Relocation of fiscal services: \$350,000
- Architectural design: \$294,000
- Engineering: \$32,000
- Permitting/Miscellaneous: \$26,000.

I recognize this memo contains a good deal of information. I am available to appear before your committee at any time to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Louis Josephson".

Louis Josephson, Ph.D