

# **Subcommittee of the City Council and Alameda Health Care District Board Meeting Notes**

**Tuesday, May 14, 2024, at 2:00 PM  
City Hall Room 360**

## **Committee Attendees:**

Mayor Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft, in person  
City Manager Jennifer Ott, in person  
Fire Chief Nicholas Luby, in person  
Assistant City Manager Amy Wooldridge, in person  
AHCD Executive Director Deborah E. Stebbins, via Zoom  
AHCD President Dr. Bobby Deutsch, via Zoom  
AHS COO Mark Fratzke, via Zoom  
AHCD Board Member Jeff Cambra, in person  
AHS Chief Administrative Officer Mario Harding, in person

\* No additional attendees, either in person or remote via Zoom, were noted.

## **1 Call to Order/General Introduction**

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft called the Subcommittee of the City Council and Alameda Health Care District Board meeting to order at 2:02 PM on Tuesday May 14, 2024.

Members of the Subcommittee introduced themselves.

## **2 Oral Communication Non-Agenda (Public Comment)**

**Speakers may address the Subcommittee in regard to any matter over which the Subcommittee has jurisdiction or of which it may take cognizance that is not on the agenda.**

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft asked for any individuals with oral communications regarding non-agenda items to advise the attendees of their presence for inclusion.

Devon Westerholm, a member of the public participating via Zoom, lives on Clinton on the same block as Alameda Hospital, expressed concern regarding the impending HVAC replacement project. This project appears to involve large trucks parked next to her neighbor that will run 24/7 for the next four years to cool/warm the hospital during the replacement project. She expressed concern regarding noise and fumes. The neighbors, who are in the process of organizing a formal group, would appreciate notification and would like to have electric generators used – a comprehensive list of considerations they would appreciate was sent to Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft. The neighbors would also like verification that the vendor is working within city guidelines for noise, etc., and they would like an idea of how to communicate with the City during this project – there currently is no established method to do so. The mayor acknowledged the commentary by community member Westerholm.

### 3 City/District Issues

**3-A 2024-4035** Minutes of the Subcommittee of the City Council and Alameda Health Care District Board held on November 13, 2023

**Attachments:** [Minutes](#)

Motion to approve the minutes by Chief Luby. Seconded by Mario Harding.

No objections, motion carried.

#### **3-B Seismic Upgrade Plan/Financing**

Introduced by Dr. Bobby Deutsch, the Board has approved use of the parcel tax funds for seismic upgrades, along with other upgrades, and to allow completion of an 18-bed medical high-level skilled nursing facility (SNF) unit. Of the \$55M, \$28M approved to use for seismic upgrades and the balance for operational upgrades, with the remainder to return to AHS for operations. With a funding plan in place, the next step is to obtain a loan to start the project – seismic upgrades will occur first, and the SNF unit will follow.

Deborah Stebbins added that part of the plan includes a geographical tech study for further design work, part of which includes comprehensive notice to neighbors to keep them apprised of the project, including all aspects of the project and potential impact. As the seismic project advances, off-site parking will be explored.

Mark Fratzke added that he expects the long-standing commitment by AHS to Alameda will continue. He expects the seismic work to be extensive over the next four years, and we expect it to be completed on time.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft asked about the neighbor Devon Westerholm and whether someone can address the very reasonable request for regular communications: how will that be addressed, how will public commentary be addressed, and how will noise ordinances be complied with?

Mario Harding advised he is not aware of any trucks other than the MRI trucks currently parked. He advised that when the project does kick off, the generators required will be plugged into the hospital's power supply; there is no alternative to placing them adjacent to the hospital to ensure the chiller works properly. He expects to work with the Public Affairs and Community Engagement (PACE) group of AHS to distribute information to neighbors and/or HOA's to ensure consistent ongoing communication.

The marketing group within AHS will distribute letters based on ZIP codes to the community to detail the work. Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft asked if there will be noise associated with the chiller on the back of a flatbed. Mr. Harding advised there may be noise, but they will do their best to obtain quieter equipment if available, and every effort will be employed to attempt to dampen the noise. The hospital will be as open as possible to providing information and offer two-way communication – perhaps via a public email box.

Chief Luby asked about the duration of the 24 hour/7 day a week concern, and Mr. Harding advised the project will likely be active through 2027, and possibly as long as 4 years (2028). Additionally, there may be complications that require addressing along the way.

City Manager Ott requested that the next meeting of this body occur prior to the start of construction – currently estimated to commence near the end of 2024 – and include full details as well as the expected timeline for all of the equipment required so that a comprehensive communication plan to the community may be reviewed.

Mark Fratzke appreciated the neighbor's comments, and noted the main points, and will follow up internally to attempt to assist with addressing neighborhood concerns. He advised the temporary power will be electric, not fuel. There will be a temporary back-up generator that will run on fuel and will be placed as far away from the neighbors as possible. Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft believes there is never too much communication when construction can impact neighbors. Deborah Stebbins mentioned that Kristen Thorson with Porter Consulting knows a lot about neighbors and has a relationship with many of them. There is an HOA, West Lagoon Association, that may be able to provide mailing lists for communications.

### **Public Comment**

Tracy Jensen advised that she learned there is a plan at the State level to eliminate the operating room(s) at Alameda Hospital.

Ms. Stebbins mentioned AB2157, introduced by Assembly Member Bonta, calls for a statutory lien by the State for bond financing, which may benefit this project with better lending rates. Alameda should be proud to be able to accomplish seismic upgrades in time to meet the mandate.

### **3-C Operational Updates**

This is National Hospital Week, and several things are in place to thank our staff following National Nurses Week events last week. Mario Harding advised they are working on balancing the budget. Currently staff is immersed in handling fiscal plans for replacement of elevators, etc., and the new Associate Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Beth Mahler, is getting up to speed.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft mentioned that she and City Manager Ott met with James Jackson to discuss changes in operating rooms.

Mark Fratzke advised that starting three years ago, and continuing until the end of the seismic project, \$97M is coming to Alameda Hospital – which included the \$27M to move and fix the cafeteria, as well as to subsidize operations; in spite of that, Alameda Hospital is still experiencing negative margins. When the parcel tax is redirected, those margins will at least double to approximately \$13M. It was agreed that negative margins can be mitigated with different programs. Elective procedures in Alameda have been approximately \$4.4M unprofitable; therefore, moving those procedures to Highland or San Leandro hospitals, both with capacity to absorb additional elective procedures, helps reduce the loss in Alameda. By July 1, 2024, they expect to have these procedures migrated. Approximately 95% of the elective procedures were performed on those residing outside of Alameda (Oakland, San Leandro and Hayward).

233 emergency procedures occur at Alameda Hospital annually, less than one per day, with more complex operations occurring at Highland. They are working with the State to obtain a waiver to transition all emergency surgeries to Highland Hospital or San Leandro Hospital; however, that process will not be complete for a while. An on-call team is available, and will remain available, at Alameda Hospital for the required emergency surgeries to occur. The transition, if/when approved by the State, will be accomplished with no impact on patient safety. James Jackson advised the Mayor and City Manager that alternative positions at different hospitals will be offered to staff depending on the MOU of their respective unions.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft advised that she was at a ribbon cutting recently for an ophthalmology practice, and many doctors at the event communicated that there is no better place to do eye surgeries than Alameda Hospital. Mark Fratzke believes we can bring additional programs to Alameda Hospital in the future and will update the group as necessary.

#### **4 Adjournment**

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft thanked everyone for their time and good information.

The next meeting will be scheduled once the construction plan is better defined.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft at 2:47 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Allison Rigau  
Alameda Fire Department  
City of Alameda