



Planet Depos[®]
We Make It *Happen*[™]

Transcript of Public Hearing

Date: February 15, 2023

Case: State of Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board

Planet Depos

Phone: 888-433-3767

Fax: 888-503-3767

Email: transcripts@planetdepos.com

www.planetdepos.com

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
HEALTH FACILITIES AND SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

-----X
IN RE: Public Hearing :
Regarding an Application :
for Permit for a Proposed :
Construction and/or :
Modification Project from :
Northwestern Medicine Lake :
Forest Hospital : Project 22-047
-----X

PUBLIC HEARING in accordance with requirements of
the Illinois Health Services Planning Act
Conducted remotely
Wednesday, February 15, 2023
1:10 p.m. CST

Job No.: 480511
Pages 1 - 18
Reported by: Kristine Wesner, CVR

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24

Public hearing, held remotely.

Pursuant to agreement, before Kristine
Wesner, Certified Verbatim Reporter, and Notary
Public in and for the State of Illinois.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24

A P P E A R A N C E S

PRESENT:

ILLINOIS HEALTH FACILITIES AND SERVICES

REVIEW BOARD, represented by:

JOHN KNIERY, Public Hearing Officer

GEORGE ROATE, IDPH Staff

MICHAEL CONSTANTINO, IDPH Staff

MICHAEL MITCHELL, IDPH Staff

DOUGLAS DORANDO, IDPH General Counsel

ANN GUILD, Compliance Manager

525 West Jefferson Street, Second Floor

Springfield, Illinois 62761

217.782.3516

ALSO PRESENT:

Christina Dietz, applicant

Bridget Orth, applicant

Anne Igoe, SEIU Healthcare representative

Ann Hall, public member

Myndee Balkan, public member

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 MR. ROATE: Good afternoon. My name is
3 George Roate. I'm accompanied by John Kniery,
4 administrator, and Mr. Mike Constantino, senior
5 Certificate of Need reviewer. We're from the
6 Illinois Department of Public Health and represent
7 the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review
8 Board. We're here to conduct a public hearing on
9 the proposed project known as Project 22-047:
10 Northwestern Lake Forest Hospital. As per the
11 rules of the Illinois Health Facilities and
12 Services Review Board, I would like to read the
13 legal notice into record.

14 In accordance with the requirements of
15 the Illinois Health Facilities Planning Act,
16 notice is given of receipt to modernize and expand
17 an existing acute care hospital in Lake Forest,
18 Project 22-047: Northwestern Medicine Lake Forest
19 Hospital, Lake Forest. Applicants: Northwestern
20 Lake Forest Hospital and Northwestern Memorial
21 Healthcare. The applicants propose to modernize
22 and expand its existing hospital, located at
23 100 North Westmoreland Road, Lake Forest,
24 resulting in the addition of 84 medical surgical

Transcript of Public Hearing

February 15, 2023

5

1 beds and 12 intensive care beds. The project cost
2 is \$388,787,687.

3 A public hearing will take place
4 pursuant to 20 ILCS 3960. The hearing is
5 scheduled for Wednesday, February 15, 2023, at
6 1 p.m. at the city of Lake Forest Municipal
7 Services Facility, 800 Field Drive, Lake Forest.
8 The public hearing is to be held by the Illinois
9 Department of Public Health, pursuant to the
10 Illinois Health Facilities Planning Act. The
11 hearing is open to the public and will afford an
12 opportunity for parties with interest to present
13 written or verbal comment, relevant to the
14 project.

15 All allegations or assertion should be
16 relevant to the need of the proposed project and
17 be supported with two copies of documentation or
18 materials that are printed or typed on paper, size
19 8-and-a-half-by-11 inches. Consideration by the
20 State Board has been tentatively scheduled for the
21 May 9th, 2023, Illinois Health Facilities and
22 Services Review Board meeting.

23 If you have not done so, please sign in
24 using the appropriate registration forms. One

1 forms is for individuals who want to provide
2 testimony in favor of the project. Another form
3 is for people to provide testimony who oppose the
4 project. The last form is for individuals to
5 register their attendance who do not wish to
6 testify.

7 To ensure that the Illinois Health
8 Facilities and Services Review Board public
9 hearings protect the privacy and maintain the
10 confidentiality of an individual's health
11 information, covered entities -- as defined by the
12 Health Insurance Portability Act of 1996 -- such
13 as facilities, hospital providers, health plans,
14 and health care clearinghouses, submitting oral or
15 written testimony that discloses protected health
16 information of the individuals, shall have a
17 valid, written authorization from that individual.
18 The authorization shall allow the covered entity
19 to share the individual's protected health
20 information at the hearing.

21 Those of you who came with prepared
22 text for the presentation may choose to submit
23 that text without giving testimony. However, if
24 you're giving oral testimony, please be as brief

1 as possible. Because we have -- we have a small
2 number of individuals, we can extend the
3 commentary time to five minutes per presentation.

4 As per the legal notice, I would
5 appreciate two copies of your testimony. When you
6 make your presentation, please give the court
7 reporter the spelling of your complete name. If
8 there's a chief spokesperson for the applicant, we
9 would like that individual to make the first
10 presentation. The remaining testimony will be
11 taken in the order of the names on the registers.
12 Please hold your questions until all testimony is
13 presented.

14 Is there somebody from the applicant
15 party who wishes to make the first presentation?

16 MS. ORTH: I would.

17 Hi. I'm Bridget Orth. B-R-I-D-G-E-T;
18 last name, O-R-T-H, and I'm the Director of
19 Regulatory Planning for Northwestern Medicine. We
20 are excited to be moving forward with our proposed
21 expansion project at Lake Forest Hospital. Since
22 opening the replacement facility in March 2018;
23 Lake Forest Hospital has been experiencing
24 extremely high med-surg and ICU occupancy levels.

1 Projections for inpatient days that were included
2 in that CON application were exceeded by almost
3 20 percent. The proposed addition of beds
4 Emergency Department stations, and diagnostic
5 imaging equipment will allow Lake Forest Hospital
6 to return to target occupancy and utilization
7 levels.

8 The proposed project will improve
9 access to care across the Lake Forest Hospital
10 service area. Access to comprehensive quality
11 health care services is important for the
12 achievement of optimal health and improving the
13 quality of life. It impacts overall physical,
14 social, and mental health status, including
15 prevention of disease and disability, detection
16 and treatment of health conditions, preventable
17 death, and life expectancy.

18 Additional beds will allow us to
19 continue our dedication to improve the health of
20 the most medically underserved members of the
21 community. Since the replacement hospital opened,
22 the number of patient days from under-resourced
23 communities has increased at a higher rate than
24 the overall increase in patient days at Lake

1 Forest Hospital. In 2020, Lake Forest Hospital
2 provided more charity care than any other Lake
3 County hospital by a wide margin. Lake Forest
4 Hospital's charity care, as a percentage of net
5 patient revenue, was double that of any other Lake
6 County hospital.

7 Additionally, the rate of increase in
8 inpatient Medicaid volume at Lake Forest Hospital
9 is the highest of all hospitals in the county. We
10 do not take this financial investment lightly, but
11 as highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic,
12 investment in additional bed capacity is needed
13 more than ever. If our project is approved by the
14 Health Facilities and Services Review Board in
15 May, the beds will be ready for use by 27 -- 2027.
16 We look forward to our review by the Health
17 Facilities and Service Review Board on May 9th.
18 Thank you.

19 HEARING OFFICER KNIERY: Thank you.

20 George, do we have anyone else who
21 wishes to present?

22 MR. ROATE: We have --

23 (Simultaneous speech.)

24 MR. ROATE: -- today, she's getting set

1 up.

2 MS. ORTH: Do you want my two copies?

3 MR. ROATE: Yes, please.

4 MR. CONSTANTINO: -- (indiscernible)

5 Kristine we'll get her copies of the testimony.

6 HEARING OFFICER KNIERY: Christina
7 [sic], we will get you copies of the testimony
8 that we're here collecting.

9 MS. IGOE: (Indiscernible.)

10 HEARING OFFICER KNIERY: If you would.

11 MR. ROATE: Ms. Anne Igoe will be
12 speaking.

13 MS. IGOE: Good afternoon. My name is
14 Anne Igoe, and I am here representing SEIU
15 Healthcare Illinois.

16 MR. CONSTANTINO: Can you spell your
17 name?

18 MS. IGOE: Yep.

19 MR. CONSTANTINO: Last name.

20 MS. IGOE: Igoe, I, G as in George,
21 O-E. Okay?

22 HEARING OFFICER KNIERY: Thank you.

23 MS. IGOE: We are a union of 90,000
24 home care, child care, and nursing home and

1 hospital workers, including service and
2 maintenance and technical employees currently at
3 Northwestern Memorial Hospital. Our union is
4 concerned about Northwestern Medicine's plan to
5 spend 380 million to expand and upgrade Lake
6 Forest Hospital. The project under discussion
7 today would double the number of medical,
8 surgical, and intensive care beds at the hospital
9 and relocate and expand the Emergency Department,
10 among other upgrades and additions.

11 SEIU Healthcare questions why
12 Northwestern has chosen to prioritize expanding
13 Lake Forest Hospital over bringing new services to
14 Chicagoland's medically vulnerable, underserved
15 communities, particularly when there is little
16 need for this project. Northwestern Medicine
17 claims the reason for its high occupancy, which
18 tracks during 2020 and 2021 during the pandemic,
19 however, this has yet to be shown that such high
20 occupancy has continued in 2022 and 2023, and they
21 have not been forthcoming with this data.

22 In fact, the Illinois Department of
23 Public Health and Health Facilities and Services
24 Review Board's own metrics considered northern

1 Lake County over-bedded in both categories of
2 service that Northwestern intends to expand. The
3 IDPH's most recent 2021 inventory of health care
4 facilities and services indicates that hospital
5 planning area A-09, which includes Lake Forest
6 Hospital -- along with four other short-term acute
7 care facilities -- currently has 24 excess
8 med-surg beds and two excess ICU beds.

9 On top of that, Lake County, which
10 encompasses Lake Forest primary service area, is
11 among the healthiest in Illinois. The University
12 of Wisconsin Population Health Institute's county
13 health rankings and roadmaps, which evaluates both
14 health outcomes and health factors, ranks Lake
15 County as the fifth healthiest of a 102 counties
16 in Illinois. According to CHRNR's (phonetic)
17 latest analysis, Lake County residents are far
18 less likely to be uninsured and have far greater
19 access to primary care than other Illinoisans and,
20 especially, Cook County residents.

21 Lake County has a longer life
22 expectancy than neighboring Cook: 81 years versus
23 78.6 years, but also as low as 60 in Chicago
24 Southside and Englewood community. Coupled with

1 much lower infant mortality rate of four infant
2 deaths per 1,000 live births as compared to six
3 per 1,000 in Cook County. All told Lake County is
4 statistically much healthier than its neighbor,
5 Cook County, and in the state of Illinois as well.

6 Lake County's comparably excellent
7 health reflects its affluence. The county has a
8 medium -- median household income of more than
9 100,000 compared to 71,200 statewide and 71,600 in
10 Cook County. Nearly three quarters of residents
11 own their homes compared to 57 percent in Cook
12 County.

13 As countless academic studies have
14 shown, poverty is the key social determinant of
15 health. Consequently, people with higher incomes
16 and greater wealth have better health outcomes.
17 Lake County's health statistics belie this
18 relationship. They also suggest that there is no
19 urgent need for Northwestern's proposed expansion
20 of Lake Forest Hospital.

21 So why does Northwestern want to spend
22 nearly 400 million to double the size of a
23 hospital in an over-bedded region, serving some of
24 the healthiest and wealthiest communities in

1 Chicagoland? Well, their application states that
2 patient preference is the reason, meaning that the
3 motivation is not one of need, but rather one of
4 greed. The proposed expansion of Lake County
5 Hospital would give Northwestern much greater
6 access to Lake County's disproportionately
7 affluent and privately insured population.

8 It would also position the hospital to
9 better compete with Advocate and NorthShore for
10 these patients. Northwestern Medicine is a
11 mission-driven, north -- nonprofit organization
12 that receives substantial annual public support,
13 including valuable tax exemptions. Shouldn't such
14 an entity prioritize expanding access to care in
15 vulnerable communities over trying to compete with
16 other large health systems for the same
17 vanishingly small pool of wealthy patients? Or at
18 least, at the very least, shouldn't Northwestern
19 match each dollar spent on expanding services to
20 healthy and wealthy communities with an equal
21 investment toward expanded access to health care
22 in vulnerable communities? Our members believe
23 so.

24 Northwestern medicine has finally taken

1 steps to open its first facility on the Chicago
2 Southside: 163 million outpatient center in
3 Bronzeville. While we welcome this necessarily,
4 and long overdue, development, we're dismayed that
5 the financial outlays only a fraction of what
6 Northwestern plans to spend expanding and
7 retooling Lake Forest. And while the proposed
8 Bronzeville outpatient facility is a step in the
9 right direction, Southsiders, including many of
10 our members who work at Northwestern and return to
11 communities where they cannot access necessarily
12 [sic] medical services, both require and deserve
13 more.

14 Therefore, SEIU Healthcare opposes
15 application 22-047, unless Northwestern Medicine
16 commits to make an equal investment in
17 Chicagoland's truly medical vulnerable
18 communities. Thank you.

19 HEARING OFFICER KNIERY: Thank you.

20 MS. IGOE: I have one copy, but we also
21 e-mailed it.

22 HEARING OFFICER KNIERY: Perfect.

23 Thank you.

24 And looks like we have one more

1 participant on the WebEx. McGrath is the last
2 name. Could you introduce yourself?

3 And they jumped off.

4 Anyone else willing -- wishing to make
5 a comment?

6 So that, then, concludes our public
7 hearing.

8 MR. ROATE: This does? If you want --
9 (indiscernible) I'll read the closing statement.

10 Okay. Is there anyone who wishes to
11 testify who has not had an opportunity?

12 Seeing none. Is there anyone who has
13 testified who wishes to provide additional
14 testimony?

15 I would remind everyone to submit your
16 written comments to us so that we have this
17 information for the record. Also this project is
18 scheduled for consideration by the Illinois Health
19 Facilities and Services Review Board at its
20 May 9th, 2023, meeting. This meeting will be held
21 at Bolingbrook Golf Club, 2001 Rodeo Drive,
22 Bolingbrook, Illinois.

23 The public has until April 19th, 2023,
24 to submit written comments. These comments can be

1 sent to my attention at the Illinois Health
2 Facilities and Services Review Board, care of the
3 Illinois Department of Public Health, 525 West
4 Jefferson Street, Second Floor, Springfield,
5 Illinois, 62761. If you prefer, you may fax your
6 comments. Our fax number is area code
7 (217)785-4111.

8 Are there any questions? Seeing that
9 there are no additional questions or comments, I
10 deem this public hearing adjourned.

11 Thank you.

12 (Off the record at 1:26 p.m.)
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24

Transcript of Public Hearing
February 15, 2023

1 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER - NOTARY PUBLIC

2

3 I, Kristine Wesner, CVR, the officer before
4 whom the foregoing proceeding was taken, do hereby
5 certify that the foregoing transcript is a true
6 and correct record of the testimony given; that
7 said testimony was taken by me and thereafter
8 reduced to typewriting under my direction; that
9 reading and signing was not requested; and that I
10 am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed
11 by any of the parties to this proceeding and have
12 no interest, financial or otherwise, in its
13 outcome.

14 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my
15 hand and affixed my notarial seal this 24th day of
16 February, 2023.

17

18

Kt h 

19

20 My Commission Expires: July 02, 2025

21

22

23

24