

ILLINOIS HEALTH FACILITIES
AND SERVICES REVIEW BOARD
PUBLIC HEARING

IN RE: ASCENSION ST. FRANCIS

E-021-24

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS had at the hearing in
the above-entitled cause before the MR. GEORGE ROATE,
Hearing Officer, at Evanston Public Library, 1703
Orrington Avenue, Community Meeting Room 107, Evanston,
Illinois, on September 12, 2024, commencing at 1:00 p.m.

1

2 MR. ROATE: Good afternoon. My name is George
3 Roate. I am accompanied by Ms. Blanca Dominguez, Board
4 Legal Counsel, and Sharie Ryan, Board Executive
5 Assistant. We are from the Illinois Department of
6 Public Health and represent the Illinois Health
7 Facilities and Services Review Board.

8 We are here to conduct a public hearing on the
9 proposed project known as Ascension E-021-24, Ascension
10 St. Francis Hospital, Evanston. As per the rules of the
11 Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board, I
12 would like to read the following legal notice into the
13 record.

14 Prime Healthcare Services, Inc. is purchasing
15 Ascension St. Francis Hospital located at 355 Ridge
16 Avenue, Evanston, at a cost of \$40,134,620.

17 This transaction is germane with Prime
18 Healthcare, Inc's proposal to purchase nine hospitals
19 and two ambulatory surgery centers located throughout
20 the Metropolitan Chicago area at a total cost of
21 approximately \$375 million.

22 A public hearing will take place pursuant to
23 Illinois Code 3960. The hearing is scheduled for
24 Thursday, September 12, 2024 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

1 at the Evanston Public Library, 1703 Orrington Avenue,
2 Evanston.

3 The public hearing is to be held by the
4 Illinois Department of Public Health pursuant to the
5 Illinois Health Facilities Planning Act. The hearing is
6 open to the public and will afford an opportunity for
7 parties with interest to present written and/or verbal
8 comment relevant to the project.

9 All allegations or assertions should be
10 relevant to the need for the proposed project and be
11 supported with two copies of documentation or materials
12 that are printed or typed on paper size 8 1/2 by 11
13 inches.

14 Consideration by the State Board has been
15 tentatively scheduled for the October 29, 2024 Illinois
16 Health Facilities and Services Review Board meeting.

17 If you have not done so, please sign in using
18 the appropriate registration forms. One form is for
19 individuals who want to provide testimony in favor or
20 opposition to the project.

21 The last one is for individuals to register
22 their attendance who do not wish to testify.

23 To ensure that the Illinois Health Facilities
24 and Services Review Board public hearing protect the

1 privacy and maintain the confidentiality of an
2 individual's health information, covered entities as
3 defined by the Health Insurance Portability Act of 1996
4 such as facilities, hospital providers, health plans,
5 and health care clearinghouses submitting oral or
6 written testimony that discloses protected health
7 information of individuals shall have a valid written
8 authorization from that individual.

9 The authorization shall allow the covered
10 entity to share the individual's protected health
11 information at this hearing.

12 Those of you who came with prepared text for
13 your presentation may choose to submit that text without
14 giving testimony. However, if you're giving oral
15 testimony, please be as brief as possible.

16 As per the legal notice, I would appreciate
17 two copies of your testimony. When you make your
18 presentation, please give the court reporter the
19 spelling of your complete name, and please speak
20 clearly for her to hear since we have no microphones
21 today.

22 We will hear first from the parties associated
23 with the certificate of need permit. The remaining
24 testimony will be taken in the order of the names on the

1 registers. Please hold all questions until the
2 testimony is presented.

3 And we will call up our first speaker.

4 (Discussion held off the record.)

5 MR. ROATE: Okay. First, the Board would like to
6 call Ms. Polly Davenport.

7 MS. DAVENPORT: Hello. Can you hear me?

8 Good afternoon. I'm Polly Davenport,
9 P-o-l-l-y, D-a-v-e-n-p-o-r-t, Chief Executive Officer
10 for Ascension, Illinois.

11 I'd like to first thank the Illinois Health
12 Facilities and Services Review Board for the
13 opportunity to speak on behalf of our Ascension Illinois
14 hospitals.

15 I'm happy to share with you how we came to the
16 decision to transfer ownership of 14 -- or nine of our
17 14 hospitals to Prime Healthcare.

18 In order to ensure our mission of serving
19 those most vulnerable continues to flourish, we
20 continually explore new options to best serve our
21 communities as we adapt to the rapidly changing
22 healthcare environment.

23 After thorough due diligence, a values
24 compatibility assessment, and an ethics discernment

1 process, Ascension selected Prime Healthcare as the best
2 steward of these facilities for the future.

3 Prime Healthcare is well-positioned to serve
4 our communities through an integrated care delivery
5 system to ensure that the greater Chicago area has
6 sustainable, quality healthcare access for generations
7 to come. Thank you.

8 MR. ROATE: Thank you. Next, the Board would like
9 to call Mr. Fred Ortega.

10 MR. ORTEGA: Thank you. Fred Ortega, F-r-e-d,
11 O-r-t-e-g-a, and I'm speaking in my capacity as Senior
12 Director of Government Relations for the Prime
13 Healthcare Foundation today.

14 I want to start by thanking the Board, the
15 dedicated Board members, and Board staff for organizing
16 these important meetings and for allowing us to hear
17 from the public today.

18 I would like to start by sharing that the
19 Prime Healthcare Foundation considers it an honor and
20 tremendous responsibility to have been selected by
21 Ascension Health as a steward of Ascension St. Francis
22 in Evanston, its employees, and patients, and its legacy
23 of service to the community.

24 The Prime Healthcare Foundation is a 501(c)(3)

1 not-for-profit public charity dedicated to quality,
2 compassionate healthcare for all. With 14 hospitals in
3 six states, the Foundation has more than \$1.3 billion in
4 assets and has provided more than \$3 billion in charity
5 care, sponsoring local and global initiatives to forward
6 its mission of improving the lives of others.

7 Most recently, the foundation founded one of
8 the nation's newest medical schools, the California
9 University of Science and Medicine, dedicated to
10 addressing our nation's physician shortage, healthcare
11 disparities, and advancing medicine in underserved
12 communities.

13 Prime Healthcare Foundation is affiliated with
14 Prime Healthcare, an integrated delivery system
15 including 44 hospitals in 14 states, more than 300
16 outpatient locations, and nearly 45,000 employees and
17 physicians.

18 We are excited to welcome the Ascension
19 facilities into our Prime Healthcare family and Prime
20 Healthcare Foundation family.

21 And we strongly believe we are uniquely
22 positioned to serve these hospitals and their
23 communities to ensure that the greater Chicago area
24 continues to have sustainable, quality healthcare access

1 far into the future.

2 We have done this for communities across the
3 nation and are confident that we can deliver for the
4 residents of Chicagoland.

5 It is Prime Healthcare's unwavering dedication
6 to providing compassionate, quality care, building
7 value, preserving access, and improving health outcomes
8 that allows us to consistently be nationally ranked
9 among the best hospital systems in the nation.

10 Eight of the Prime Healthcare Foundation
11 hospitals received A grades from the Leapfrog Group in
12 2024. The 14 Prime Healthcare Foundation hospitals also
13 have been recognized with more than 50 achievements in
14 clinical excellence in the past year alone from
15 organizations such as Becker's Healthcare and
16 Healthgrades.

17 And most of the Prime Healthcare Foundation
18 hospitals have been recognized by the Lown Institute
19 with A grades in various areas, including Health Equity,
20 Social Responsibility, Patient and Clinical Outcomes,
21 and Inclusivity.

22 Prime Healthcare is not only bringing this
23 commitment to quality and health equity to the Ascension
24 Illinois Facilities. We have also committed to

1 investing \$250 million in the facilities to fund capital
2 improvements, including substantial technology
3 investments and system upgrades, as well as hiring all
4 of the acquired facilities' workforce, subject to our
5 standard hiring practice, policies, and titles.

6 The Prime Healthcare Foundation has also
7 committed to continuing all services at St. Francis, and
8 pending our internal review, hope to expand services
9 based on community needs. We have also committed to
10 maintaining levels of charity care and continuing
11 existing charity care and community benefit programs,
12 preserving these facilities' roles as valued community
13 partners. This is not an exceptional commitment; it is
14 what we do for the communities we serve.

15 Since 2001, Prime Healthcare and the Prime
16 Healthcare Foundation have also rescued various Catholic
17 hospitals, respecting the traditions of these historic
18 facilities while promoting the spiritual care and
19 well-being of all members of the community, including
20 the most vulnerable on the margins of society.

21 I want to close with the words of our founder.
22 If you can see the potential for good, feel the impact
23 of kindness on others, touch the spirit of a generous
24 cause just a bit every day, then you have embarked on a

1 noble path.

2 This perfectly encapsulates to dedication to
3 compassionate care and social responsibility at the
4 heart of the Prime Healthcare Foundations. And we look
5 forward to sharing that dedication to caring and
6 improving our communities with all the patients who
7 depend on these hospitals and facilities for generations
8 to come. Thank you.

9 MR. ROATE: Thank you. Next the Board would like
10 to call Kendall Johnson.

11 Mr. Johnson, would you like to speak from your
12 chair, sir?

13 MR. JOHNSON: No.

14 MR. ROATE: Are you sure?

15 MR. JOHNSON: Yes. Thank you.

16 MR. ROATE: You are welcome.

17 MR. JOHNSON: Good afternoon. My name is Kendall
18 Johnson, K-e-n-d-a-l-l, J-o-h-n-s-o-n. I'm the interim
19 president for Ascension St. Francis here in Evanston.
20 We thank the Board for providing us the opportunity to
21 hear from our community today during this public hearing
22 and look forward to appearing before the Board.

23 Their support of this transfer of ownership
24 preserves jobs and ensure needed healthcare across

1 Chicagoland, as well as investment in Illinois for the
2 future. Thank you.

3 MR. ROATE: Thank you, sir.

4 Is there anyone who wishes to testify who has
5 not had an opportunity?

6 Seeing none, is there anyone who has testified
7 who wishes to provide additional testimony?

8 I would remind everyone to submit your written
9 comments to us so that we have this information for the
10 record.

11 Also, the project is scheduled for
12 consideration by the Illinois Health Facilities and
13 Services Review Board at its October 29th, 2024 meeting
14 which will be held at the Bolingbrook Golf Club, 2001
15 Rodeo Drive, Bolingbrook, Illinois.

16 The public has until October 9th, 2024, to
17 submit written comments. These comments can be sent to
18 my attention at the Illinois Health Facilities and
19 Services Review Board, care of the Illinois Department
20 of Public Health, 525 West Jefferson Street, 2nd floor,
21 Springfield, Illinois, 62761.

22 If you prefer, you may e-mail your comments.
23 Our e-mail address is dph.hfsrb@illinois.gov.

24 Are there any questions?

1 Seeing that there are no additional questions
2 or comments, I deem this public hearing adjourned.
3 Thank you.

4 (Which were all the proceedings
5 had in the above-entitled cause
6 on this date.)

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1 STATE OF ILLINOIS)

) SS:

2 COUNTY OF C O O K)

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5 I, GINA M. TOMASONE, a Certified Shorthand
6 Reporter of the State of Illinois and Notary Public of
7 the County of Cook, do hereby certify that I caused the
8 proceedings in the above-captioned cause to be reported
9 in shorthand and that the foregoing is a true, complete,
10 and correct transcript of said proceedings as appears
11 from my stenographic notes so taken and transcribed
12 under my personal direction.

13 IN WITNESS WHEREOF I do hereunto set my hand and
14 affix my notarial seal at Chicago, Illinois, this
15 day of , 20 .

16

17

18 Gina M Tomasone

19 GINA M. TOMASONE, CSR

C.S.R. License No. 084-003763

20 Notary Public, Cook County, Illinois

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A above-captioned 13:8 above-entitled 1:13 12:5 access 6:6 7:24 8:7 accompanied 2:3 achievements 8:13 acquired 9:4 Act 3:5 4:3 adapt 5:21 additional 11:7 12:1 address 11:23 addressing 7:10 adjourned 12:2 advancing 7:11 affiliated 7:13 affix 13:14 afford 3:6 afternoon 2:2 5:8 10:17 allegations 3:9 allow 4:9 allowing 6:16 allows 8:8 ambulatory 2:19	and/or 3:7 appearing 10:22 appears 13:10 appreciate 4:16 appropriate 3:18 approximately 2:21 area 2:20 6:5 7:23 areas 8:19 Ascension 1:6 2:9,9,15 5:10,13 6:1,21,21 7:18 8:23 10:19 assertions 3:9 assessment 5:24 assets 7:4 Assistant 2:5 associated 4:22 attendance 3:22 attention 11:18 authorization 4:8,9 Avenue 1:15 2:16 3:1 B based 9:9 Becker's 8:15 behalf 5:13	believe 7:21 benefit 9:11 best 5:20 6:1 8:9 billion 7:3,4 bit 9:24 Blanca 2:3 Board 1:2 2:3,4,7,11 3:14 3:16,24 5:5,12 6:8 6:14,15,15 10:9,20 10:22 11:13,19 Bolingbrook 11:14,15 brief 4:15 bringing 8:22 building 8:6 C C 13:2 C.S.R 13:19 California 7:8 call 5:3,6 6:9 10:10 capacity 6:11 capital 9:1 care 4:5 6:4 7:5 8:6 9:10 9:11,18 10:3 11:19 caring 10:5 Catholic 9:16	cause 1:13 9:24 12:5 13:8 caused 13:7 centers 2:19 certificate 4:23 Certified 13:5 certify 13:7 chair 10:12 changing 5:21 charity 7:1,4 9:10,11 Chicago 2:20 6:5 7:23 13:14 Chicagoland 8:4 11:1 Chief 5:9 choose 4:13 clearinghouses 4:5 clearly 4:20 clinical 8:14,20 close 9:21 Club 11:14 Code 2:23 come 6:7 10:8 commencing 1:16 comment 3:8 comments 11:9,17,17,22 12:2
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