

**LABQUEST Minutes for
Wednesday, January 14, 2026
At WOMC**

Announcement: It was decided that we would continue meeting on the second Wednesday of each month, but meet at WeArchive at 10501 New Hampshire Ave. Thus, the next meeting is February 11, 2026.

We thank WOMC for allowing us to use their facility. We also thank WeAchieve, Daphne Pallozzi, for inviting us to use their facility.

Meeting: Everyone introduced themselves. Rob Richardson facilitated the meeting. We welcomed Amy Shaw, WOMC, as a first-time attendee. She is director of Public Relations and Marketing.

Viva White Oak (VWO)

Seven speakers spoke at the January 13 hearing concerning the resolution to approve the creation of a Viva White Oak Development District, which includes Tax Incremental Financing (TIF). Others submitted written communications, including WOMC. To our knowledge, everyone supported the legislation and indicated that approval of Phase 1 TIF is a high priority. At least three speakers (Friends of White Oak, GCCA, and ECCAB) also indicated that nearby BRT infrastructure must be built and that three intersections must be designed to satisfy the needs of the entire community. Those needs should not affect the approval of Phase 1 funding. The joint ECON/GO Council Committees will consider the resolution on January 28 starting at 1:30.

White Oak Medical Center (WOMC)

Amy Shaw indicated WOMC will be having two community events in the spring:

- National Day of Prayer – Prayer & Sticker Stop on May 7
- Health Fair on June 26

WeAchieve

Daphne Pallozzi reported that they are doing well. They added Delegate Bernice Mireku-North to the Board. They have multiple tenants using the building over and above their needs. The county has installed refrigerators to store food for community food banks. They are reaching out for donations to replace the roof to the building and several roof-top HVAC units. They need \$1.1M just for the roof. The county owns the building.

Science Report

Charles Warr highlighted several items from his Jan 9 report, including the following:

- FDA approved Oral GLP-1 as the first oral medication for obesity.
- FDA approved an oral antibiotic from Innoviva Specialty Therapeutics for gonorrhea. This is the first new treatment in two decades of this increasingly *antibiotic resistant* condition.

- A recently published study at Stanford University concluded that the current Shingles vaccine (Shingrix) can reduce the risk of dementia by 20%. A second study concluded that it can also slow progression *after* onset.
- Moderna (Cambridge MA) has received a \$54 million grant to *continue* the Phase 3 human trial of its promising candidate vaccine mRNA-1018 for bird flu. That grant came from the International Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) in Oslo, Norway. It replaced the US federal grant that was abruptly canceled. At some point bird flu will migrate to humans so this research is critical.
- Researchers at Osaka Metropolitan University found that stem cells from fat tissue can be used to repair spinal fractures like those caused by osteoporosis.
- Iodine deficiency leads to hypothyroidism (low thyroid function), which is on the rise. Off-the-shelf salt with iodine added is one source of it. However, we also need to limit the amount of salt consumed. There are other ways to get the needed iodine.
- The US EPA has approved isocycloseram as an active ingredient in pesticides used on golf courses, lawns and food crops such as oranges, tomatoes, almonds, peas, and oats. Isocycloseram is moderately persistent, and breaks down into 40 or more smaller PFAS chemicals, some highly persistent. Among the concerning harms are reduced testicle size, lower sperm count, liver toxicity, health risks to young children, and high toxicity to bees and other pollinators. Action on safety is now left to individual states.
- The US EPA has recently proposed doubling the amount of formaldehyde considered safe to breath. Formaldehyde is a known carcinogen.
- The defense company, MDBK UK, will provide the first high-powered laser system entering service from a European country - 5 years ahead of schedule! The pulses travel at the speed-of-light, and require no ammunition.

GSA

Rob Richardson and Dan Wilhelm made contact with the attorney representing the organization planning to locate on 120 acres of the Federal Research Center, east of the Paint Branch toward Cherry Hill Rd and next to Viva White Oak. They only plan to locate in Montgomery County. They are not ready to present anything until later. We invited them to the March meeting. She indicated they expect only 100-250 employees.

FDA

Andrew Dempter indicated that the number of people now working on campus is in the high 4000's. FDA is also planning to hire 1000 reviewers. FDA is still looking to consolidate people over the next year or two at the campus to avoid the cost of leased facilities.

Montgomery County

Jewru Bandeh reported that the Executive's proposed CIP for FY27-32 will be released tomorrow, Jan 15.

Submitted by Dan Wilhelm