

**BIBB COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING**

OCTOBER 29, 2007

10:00 A.M.

A Special Called Meeting of the Bibb County Board of Commissioners was held in the Commission Boardroom at 10:00 a.m.

Commissioners in attendance were Chairman Charles W. Bishop, Vice Chairman Bert Bivins, III, Commissioner Elmo A. Richardson, Jr., Commissioner Joe O. Allen and Commissioner Lonzy Edwards.

Staff in attendance was Steve Layson, Chief Administrative Officer; Tommy Brown, Human Resources Director; Shelia Thurmond, Clerk of the Board; Barbara Wood, Public Affairs Officer; Charlene Maynard, Bel Wall and Deborah Booker of Human Resources.

News Media in attendance was Perry Smith and Jaclyn Azstalos of FOX 24.

Chairman Bishop called the meeting to order stating that the purpose of the meeting was to award the Request for Proposals (RFP) for Life Insurance and Long-Term Disability coverage for County employees.

Commissioner Richardson stated that several months ago, the Commission authorized the RFPs for a Third Party Administrator for employee health insurance and then later proposals for life insurance. He stated that the County had the same third party administrator for health insurance for the last five years which was Wausau and now Fiserv. He stated that they received 12 really good proposals; the committee was made up of Tommy Brown, Deborah Booker, Steve Layson, Kim Roberts and Barry Smallwood and Commissioner Richardson. They received all 12 proposals, short listed to three and interviewed those three and then made a recommendation to the Commission to award to Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Georgia (BCBS of GA). He stated that the projected savings is approximately \$1.1 million in 2008 which is a substantial savings to the County and to the taxpayers of Bibb. He stated that the County is self-insured but have a Third Party Administrator to administer that program.

Commissioner Richardson stated that one of the benefits of BCBS of GA is that all of the hospitals in Middle Georgia will be in the Network. Currently the Medical Center is the only hospital in the network. Employees will also have access to the Coliseum Hospital, Coliseum Northside Hospital, Monroe County Hospital, Peach County Hospital and Houston County Hospital. This will provide a lot of options to the employees as well as retirees.

Commissioner Richardson stated that the second component of this was to do a RFP for Life Insurance. He stated that for a substantial period of time the County has been with Jefferson Pilot. He stated that 19 proposals were received and each was evaluated by the same committee, along with Charles Atkinson, the Consultant who works with Human Resources on the insurance programs. He stated that the recommendation of the committee is to award to Hartford for the life insurance. It will be a three-year guaranteed contract at a

savings of \$338,000 a year. And for that three-year period time, the savings will be more than \$1 million to the County.

Commissioner Richardson continued that along with the life insurance, the County is currently with Jefferson Pilot on the Long-Term Disability (LTD). He stated that LTD is paid for by the employees that have the option through payroll deduction. He stated that Hartford will give the County a three-year guarantee at \$.28 per thousand which is the same price that we have now.

Commissioner Richardson stated that they would like to award the contract to Hartford for the Life Insurance as well as the LTD. He stated that some of the advantages for Hartford are the three-year guaranteed contract versus the two-year that we currently have with Jefferson Pilot. He stated that it matches all of the features of the current life insurance coverage.

Commissioner Richardson stated that one of the things the County doesn't have right now is, if an employee decides to leave the County, they don't have the portability of taking that life insurance with them. He stated that Hartford has a provision that an employee can take the life insurance with them and continue the term coverage at the group rates after they leave the County with no medical underwriting. He also stated that a conversion feature allows employees to convert to a whole life policy when they leave with no medical underwriting. He stated that they provide beneficiary assistance, estate guidance, travel assistance, support for emergency needs while traveling, and other advantages.

Chairman Bishop received confirmation that there would be no change in retiree benefits.

Commissioner Allen asked if there was a downside to either the Life Insurance or LTD coverage for the employees.

Commissioner Richardson responded that he doesn't think there's a downside to any of it.

Chief Administrative Officer Steve Layson stated that the employees are actually getting more with this policy. He stated that most insurance companies charge a premium for the portability clause but Hartford is including it in at no additional cost. He reiterated that employees are getting an extra benefit and the County is saving more than \$300,000.00.

HR Director Tommy Brown stated that it's an excellent benefit for the employees because each year, in the past, you had to re-qualify for the LTD and now, it's a benefit that carried over three years and is a guarantee of \$.28 per thousand.

Commissioner Edwards asked a question relative to the health insurance side. Mr. Brown responded that, in the RFP, they asked for a guarantee of two years at the same rate. Commissioner Richardson responded that health insurance is driven by claims and this past year, claims have been down and the County benefited from that.

Commissioner Richardson continued that the County will also benefit, going forward, from BCBS of GA as they have an excellent wellness program and will be working really hard with employees and retirees. He added that the wellness program will, hopefully, reduce our claims.

In response to the wellness aspect, Commissioner Edwards stated that he knows there are certain parts of the Courthouse, even with the smoking booths, where you can smell

cigarette smoke. He stated that he was wondering what would happen if the County had a smoking cessation program.

Commissioner Richardson responded that he thinks that's part of the wellness program with BCBS of GA. Mr. Brown responded that was correct and further stated for employees that are smokers, there is the smoker's cessation that's free through the Medical Center and the same will be available to employees with the health assessment and wellness through BCBS.

ACTION

Commissioner Richardson offered a motion to award the contract for Life Insurance and Long-Term Disability to Hartford Insurance Company. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bivins and carried unanimously.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Richardson thanked HR Director Tommy Brown, Chief Administrative Officer Steve Layson, Deborah Booker of Human Resources, Kim Roberts-Internal Auditor, Barry Smallwood-Purchasing Agent and Charlene Maynard of Human Resources for their work in helping go through all of the proposals.

Chairman Bishop, likewise, expressed his appreciation to Commissioner Richardson and staff for all of the time and effort put into reviewing the voluminous information.

Commissioner Edwards stated that he appreciates Commissioner Richardson's expression of gratitude to the staff who worked toward this effort. He then asked if the County has anything in place that would allow them, in cases with exceptional, beyond the call of duty-type performance, to, maybe, write a note to employee files or something of a more permanent nature that might express the gratitude of the County. He suggested that things like this should be given special consideration during an employee's merit review.

For history sake, Mr. Layson stated that Bibb County changed its form of government a couple of years ago when he was hired as the CAO. He stated that, in the past, department heads, typically, handled their own programs (*i.e. insurance, IT programs, security issues, etc.*) and they bid them out and did their own thing. He stated that this present Board has been very emphatic that anything that is to be bid out, the department heads don't handle that, but rather do all of the required work and then bring it to the Board for recommendation. He stated that the Board will be made aware of every item that meets the \$5000.00 threshold and will have involvement in the process. Commissioner Edwards responded that was very good.

There being no further business, on motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

Shelia Thurmond
Clerk of the Board