

## Firm hired to construct doctor clinic

Written by Elizabeth Barrett  
Thursday, 08 April 2010 13:42 -

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### **GMH board okays estimated \$2.5 million project.**

A contractor has been selected to design and build a new physician's clinic.

At a special planning meeting Friday afternoon, Gothenburg Memorial Hospital board members voted to hire Sampson Construction Company, headquartered in Lincoln, to design and construct an approximate 17,000 square-foot building.

The action starts the wheels rolling on an estimated \$2.5 million clinic which would accommodate up to at least seven practitioners.

Hospital administrator John Johnson has said Gothenburg Family Practice—made up of doctors that now lease space attached to GMH—is too small for the three doctors and two physician's assistants who work there.

Johnson and board members also want the ability to attract doctors in the future by having adequate space.

Because the building will be part of the hospital, physicians will lease the space.

Sampson submitted the lowest bid at \$163 per square foot.

Paulsen Inc. of Cozad offered \$180 per foot as did Lacy Construction Company of Grand Island.

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During discussion, members decided to direct the successful bidder to work with the board in designing the building although all three firms submitted conceptual designs in their bids.

Johnson had earlier estimated the new space at 10,000 square feet. However a partial basement for storage was added.

Board members also talked about the danger of under building.

Carol Shackleton, who is a board member and physician, said having enough space for file storage is important since information must be stored for 10 years.

Whether the new space will be freestanding or attached to the hospital is still under consideration.

Bacon, a board member, said it makes more sense to him to utilize the wing where the clinic is now located or flatten it and build.

Several board members said they liked the idea of construction management where a contractor plans, coordinates and controls a project from beginning to the end and meets a client's requirements such as bidding out subcontract work.

Sampson offers construction management and, according to GMH administration, probably has built the most medical facilities.

Having a close building superintendent on site was also a consideration.

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Sampson has an office in Kearney.

Members talked at length about funding.

Johnson said United States Department of Agriculture officials have indicated that loan funds are available. He said the board is also seeking potential grant funds.

Unlike the last USDA loan for a remodel and addition to the hospital which was direct, Johnson said this loan would cover an approximate 70% of the project with 30% coming from a private bank.

However those percentages are negotiable, he said.

Whether or not to pay off about \$650,000 debt from the last building project before entering into the new contract was questioned.

Because interest on the first loan is included in the hospital's cost report, Johnson said it has a significant effect on Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement.

Kurt Moural, who works for the accounting firm that performs GMH audits, said he would investigate what would be in the best interest of the hospital.

Whatever is done needs to be in the best interest of the community, Johnson said.

Bacon was the lone member not to vote for Sampson, having earlier expressed his desire to hire a local firm.

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Besides Bacon and Shackleton, board members are Brent Block, Monty Bowman and Larry Gill.

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