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Cyd V. Grimes, C.P.M.  
Purchasing Agent

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**TRAVIS COUNTY**

**PURCHASING QUARTERLY**

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# Travis County *Purchasing Quarterly*

## In the Spotlight Oralia "Lolly" Jones

*By Jorge Talavera*

Stop by Oralia "Lolly" Jones' office and you are likely to catch a smile. Although Lolly deals with some of the stickiest procurements that the county handles, she is notoriously friendly.

Getting along with all of her co-workers is the best part of her job she says. After 27½ years as a purchasing professional, things have become pretty straightforward. "Come and do your job the best you can everyday," she says, "If you put your best foot forward everyday, it's going to get manageable."

Lolly's approach to purchasing is your classic service with a smile. "Buyers are service oriented...and good service starts with the will to want to dedicate yourself to providing good customer service. But you

have to have the will," says Lolly. "If you come into work with a good attitude, it reflects on how you do your job and treat your customers ...you treat them right then they're happy even when the answer is no."



As Purchasing's unofficial insurance specialist, Lolly's procurements can become fairly thorny, "because you are trying to satisfy everybody, employees, taxpayers, and the Court...and there are four to five thousand employees alone."

"In my 10 and a half years here, I've learned a lot about all types of insurances...dental, health, life, excess workers' compensation." Lolly is currently procuring Aviation Insurance Coverage for the two county Emergency Medical Services helicopters. "It's a big contract in the sense that it costs a lot of money and we must have our helicopters insured. It's going well

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## Newly Passed Legislation to Affect County Processes

*By Jorge Talavera*

The 78<sup>th</sup> State of Texas Legislative Session yielded much legislation that could change how counties perform some aspects of their purchasing functions, effective September 1, 2003.

**SB 705**, Jackson/Truitt, permits the donation by a county of salvage and surplus property to a civic or charitable organization; companion bill HB 970. Counties now have the option of donating property before trying to sell. Travis County will continue to try and sell its property, but may on occasion, use this new authority to help out civic or charitable organizations.

**SB 850**, Lindsay, allows local governments and school districts to prohibit contracts with delinquent taxpayers. Currently, outstanding taxes are deducted from any payments made by Travis County to delinquent taxpayers awarded a contract. Travis County Purchasing Agent Cyd Grimes believes we should continue to try and collect taxes through our contractual terms and conditions. Cyd believes this law is not in the best interest of taxpayers.

**SB 1229**, Wentworth, relating to competitive purchasing procedures for certain counties, drops the population bracket for all counties to use

*See New on Page 2*

## Buyer INSIGHT by David Moreno

Job Order Contracts. What are they? Job Order Contracts (JOCs) are a new means by which the County is accomplishing minor construction, repair, rehabilitation, and alteration of the various County-owned buildings located throughout Travis County.

Passed by the 77th Legislature under Senate Bill 510, Job Order Contracting gives the County one more tool with which it can accomplish the goal of wisely spending taxpayers' hard-earned dollars. Under JOCs the County contracts with one or more construction firms to provide minor construction and renovation services for work that is of a recurring nature but with unknown delivery times and quantities. Pre-priced are tasks such as installing a wood door or making drywall repairs.

These unit prices are obtained by soliciting prices from construction firms that provide these types of services. The use of

JOCs also allows the County to consider more than just price in selecting a contractor for award of a contract. Through JOCs, the County can consider factors such as the quality of a contractor's services, the reputation of the vendor, and other factors as listed in the solicitation document. The County then has the option to award contracts to more than one vendor. These contracts are awarded for a period of 2 years with renewable option periods as specified by the County.

The use of JOCs saves County taxpayer dollars by reducing the amount of time that is used obtaining pricing from contractors.

Once the user department prepares specifications, a proposal is requested from one of the contractors under contract. Since tasks are pre-priced, Purchasing and the user department will only negotiate with the contractor as to actual quantities that will be needed to complete the project. Depending on

the complexity of the project, the time between a request for proposal and a notice to proceed to the contractor can be as short as one week. However, projects priced at \$25,000 and above still require the approval of the Commissioners Court. Under JOCs, HUB participation is still tracked and encouraged as much as possible on a project-to-project basis.

The availability of Job Order Contracts has definitely helped the County complete many projects within the desired time and within approved budgets. Since the award of our two current JOCs, the Purchasing Office has been exploring new ways by which they can improve the process and look forward to the next set of JOCs. Job Order Contracting could be considered a work-in-progress process. As always, the Purchasing Office strives to take full advantage of the limitations of the law so that the customer (County) can be best served. ☺

## Link up...to helpful purchasing information on the Web.

[www.capitol.state.tx.us/tlo/reports/daily/78R/daily.htm](http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/tlo/reports/daily/78R/daily.htm) – access up-to-date information from current and past legislative sessions

[www.co.travis.tx.us/purchasing/solicitation.asp](http://www.co.travis.tx.us/purchasing/solicitation.asp) – view Travis County's current formal procurements and download bid documents

[tcnet/depts/purch/comsub.pdf](http://tcnet/depts/purch/comsub.pdf) – current listing of commodity and subcommodity codes on the County's Intranet

[www.cityofaustin.org/sbdp](http://www.cityofaustin.org/sbdp) – directs small businesses to resources to help become better equipped and more competitive

### New Laws · Continued from Page 1

mandatory pre-bid meetings; companion bill HB 3089. In Travis County all mandatory pre-bid meetings must be pre-approved by the County Purchasing Agent, who believes that mandatory pre-bids should only be used in limited solicitations.

**HB 2242**, Wayne Smith, relates to notices sent by local government after a mandatory pre-bid conference. Any additional required notice for the proposed purchase may be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, only to prospective bidders who attended the conference.

"This is another bill that only adds cost to the taxpayers," says Cyd, who feels that the added costs are unnecessary. "Certified mail is expensive, and with e-mail and

faxing capabilities, is not necessary for this purpose."

**HB 2397**, Corte, relating to a vendor or subcontractor's remedy for nonpayment of certain contracts, allows vendors to suspend performance with a government for not paying promptly. A vendor does not have to continue work until arrears are paid. It also allows a subcontractor to suspend performance for same as above and prohibits a governmental entity from waiving these provisions; companion bill SB 1720.

**HB 3089**, Dukes, allows counties to use the RFP process for the purchase of insurance, high technology items or any other item the county deems in the best interest of the county. ☺



Photo by Sylvia Lopez

Cyd Grimes, Purchasing Agent, was guest speaker at the National Association of Purchasing Management (NAPM), Lone Star Chapter's February Monthly Meeting. Cyd presented "The Role of the Purchasing Agent in County Government." A "HUB Program" Presentation was also distributed in informational packets. The HUB Office is available to make this presentation to your group or association to shed light on the County's HUB program. Contact the HUB Office for more information. Also, visit NAPM online at [www.napm-austin.org](http://www.napm-austin.org).

# Frequently Asked Questions

**Q:** Am I automatically a registered vendor/Certified Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) with the county when I become registered/certified with the city or state?

**A:** Because Travis County maintains an independent internal database, you must go through a separate registration process with the county. Getting on the database will make you an accessible vendor to buyers and enhances your opportunity to receive invitations to bid. Although HUB certifications from Capital Metro, the City of Austin, and the State of Texas are recognized, a copy of your HUB or Minority/Woman Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) certificate must be provided to the Purchasing Office to be recognized as a Certified HUB.

**Q:** How can I as a vendor stay aware of current informal, or less than \$25,000, procurement opportunities?

**A:** "Staying in the loop" means staying aware of the small dollar purchases as they arise. Since only formal procurements are advertised in the newspaper and on the Internet, making

contact with the buyer who purchases your products or services is a good first step. Call or email the buyer or set up an appointment to introduce yourself, then maintain contact to periodically get updated on current and future needs. This will increase your visibility which may help when the buyer solicits vendors for the many informal purchases the county makes.

**Q:** With construction and professional services contracts, are HUB vendors bidding/proposing as Primes also required to make a good faith effort to subcontract with HUBs?

**A:** Because the intent of the program is to provide maximum opportunity to HUBs, all vendors are expected to make a good faith effort to subcontract a minimum of 30 percent of a total contract to Certified HUBs. In addition to contacting HUBs via fax, telephone, email, and through newspaper advertisements, attending contractor associations' monthly meetings in search of potential new partners and subcontractors is another form of "good faith" outreach that can sometimes be more fruitful than traditional approaches. ☺

## Purchasing Staff Phone List

Main Number (512) 854-9700

Purchasing Agent	Cyd Grimes	854-9761
P.A.'s Executive Assistant	Lana Boling	854-9766
Purchasing Clerk IV	Melissa Hanson	854-9915
Purchasing Clerk III	Juan Gonzalez	854-9916
Purchasing Clerk III	Elsa Uresti	854-9917
Purchasing Clerk II	Betty Chapa	854-9918
Asst. Purchasing Agent	Frank Holder	854-9451
Business Sys. Consultant	Scott Worthington	854-4851
Fixed Asset Manager	Ron Dube	854-6458
Warehouse Supervisor	Dan Rollie	854-6459
Fixed Asset Associate	Matt Phillips	854-6459
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Lou Britt	854-4852
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Jason Walker	854-4562
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Eric Francois	854-9853
Purchasing Agent Asst. IV	David Moreno	854-4850
Purchasing Agent Asst. IV	Jerry Raisch	854-9724
Purchasing Agent Asst. IV	Marvin Brice	854-9765
Purchasing Agent Asst. IV	Sylvia Gonzalez	854-5860
Asst. Purchasing Agent	Bonnie Floyd	854-4173
HUB Program Coordinator	Sylvia Lopez	854-4561
HUB Program Specialist	Jorge Talavera	854-9914
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Lolly Jones	854-4204
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Lori Clyde	854-4205
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Rose Garcia	854-9763
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Loren Breland	854-4854
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Steve Parks	854-9764
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Richard Villareal	854-4881
Purchasing Agent Asst. II	Donald Rollack	854-4853

## Quarterly Quote

“I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.”

-Confucius

## Special Events Calendar

Austin

July 17 - 19, 2003

Texas Association of Mexican American Chambers of Commerce's (TAMACC's) 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention and Expo

Hosted by:  
TAMACC

Location & Time:  
Radisson Plaza Hotel and Conference Center

For more information contact:  
Carlos Mendoza at 512-444-5727 or carlosm@tamacc.org

Austin

July 22, 2003

U.S. Green Building Council Intermediate Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Workshop

Sponsored By:  
City of Austin Small Business Development Program (SBDP)  
Austin Energy Green Building Program

Location & Time:  
Small Business Assistance Center  
4100 Ed Bluestein Blvd.

For more information contact:  
SBDP at 512-974-7800 or visit  
www.ci.austin.tx.us/sbdp/

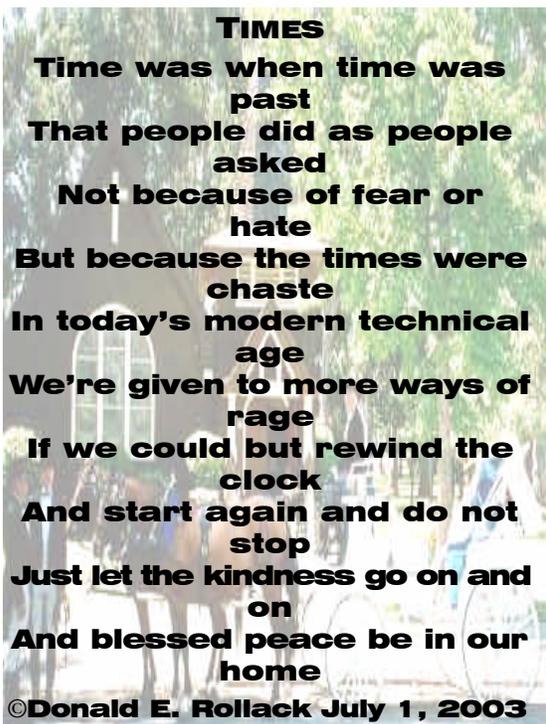
Austin

July 29, 2003

2<sup>nd</sup> Annual OS1 Users Group Symposium

Sponsored by:  
University of Texas at Austin Physical Plant Department

Location & Time:  
Thompson Conference Center  
For more information contact:  
512-471-4110 or visit  
www.utexas.edu/physicalplant/OS1Symposium



**TIMES**  
Time was when time was past  
That people did as people asked  
Not because of fear or hate  
But because the times were chaste  
In today's modern technical age  
We're given to more ways of rage  
If we could but rewind the clock  
And start again and do not stop  
Just let the kindness go on and on  
And blessed peace be in our home

©Donald E. Rollack July 1, 2003

Spotlight · Continued from Page 1

so far,” Lolly continues, “...they all go well if you know how to deal with them.”

“Perseverance, personality, and dedication,” are the qualities that Lolly values most. A Certified Professional Public Buyer (CPPB), 17 years as an Air Force contract administrator and 10 and a half years with the county have given Lolly ample opportunity to refine her recipe for success.

In the Air Force, she served three years as Chief of Contract Administration in Panama. She then served two years as Chief of Supplies Branch and four years as Assistant Chief of Contract Administration at Bergstrom Air Force Base.

Along with the sweltering temperatures in Panama, she remembers the confidence she gained during her service just north of the equator. “The two officers in charge both believed in me, giving me the position of Chief of Contract Administration,” in which Lolly supervised both military personnel and Panamanian civilians and was tasked with conducting conferences in both Spanish and English.

She says the experience of dealing with a foreign government helps her to this day. Remaining neutral and controlling her emotions despite the situation is how she approaches the most difficult part of her job: dealing with the different personalities of vendors, departments, and elected and appointed officials.

Lolly has a son, Bobby Jr., 24, a graduate of Southwest Texas University (SWT) and a daughter Roslyn, 32, a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin. Roslyn also

received a master’s degree from SWT. Lolly also recently returned to higher education and was a student alongside her children during their college years. She graduated from Park University in 2001 with her bachelor’s degree.

“I had the GI Bill that paid for my education and I knew I had to use it or lose it, so I used it.” To other veterans with the GI Bill, she says, “Get in there...and take advantage of that benefit.”

As a working mom and student Lolly admits she occasionally felt overwhelmed. “It was fun, it was challenging...but it also got very hard at times. I guess with the help of my husband..I was able to do it. Because he took care of dinner every night,” she says with a laugh.

Higher education is not the only family affair. Lolly’s identical twin sister, Hortensia, also chose purchasing as her career path and now works in contracting with the civil service at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio. “What can I say? We’re twins,” Lolly explains.

At this point in her life, the only short or long-term goal Lolly has yet to accomplish is retirement. “I like to have a good time with life. I like vacations. I’m pushing for moving to Lake Tahoe when I retire, but it’s pretty expensive...it’ll depend on our future circumstances.”

Any retirement job “will have to be something enjoyable, something for me...something fun.” Then the smiling veteran says, “I say that...now watch me stay here another 10 years.”

### City of Austin’s Small Business Development Program Announces Launching of Web Site



The newly launched site aims to “direct small business owners and potential business owners to resources that could help them become better equipped and more competitive in the business environment.” Through counseling and assistance SBDP strives to “develop and empower small businesses in order to strengthen their business capability and survivability.”

The SBDP web site offers a variety of tools and resources including a special events calendar, Small Business Assistance Center training

schedule, and “Library” area, which provides a forum for business owners to share their own experiences with potential business owners, as well as those currently running a small business. The “Library” also provides “how to” information for developing documents required to start a business of your own.

In the “News” area, visitors can download bid documents, annual reports and quarterly newsletters. Stop by and visit them at [www.cityofaustin.org/sbdp](http://www.cityofaustin.org/sbdp).



When visiting the Purchasing Office, to ensure that you are serviced efficiently, please stop at the front desk. All documents will be logged in, date stamped and distributed appropriately. If you need to speak with a staff member, someone in the Purchasing Office will be happy to assist you.

## NOTEWORTHY...

*Travis County celebrated the Mexican holiday Cinco de Mayo, May 5, with food and festivities at Wooldridge Park.*

*The celebration commemorates Mexico’s victory over the French army at The Battle Of Puebla in 1862. Led by Mexican General Ignacio Zaragoza Seguín, a small, poorly armed militia of about 4,500 were able to stop and defeat a well outfitted French army of 6,500 soldiers, which halted the French invasion of Mexico. The victory was a glorious moment for Mexican patriots and is the cause for the historical date’s celebration.*

*Another significant holiday was celebrated at Wooldridge Park, on June 19<sup>th</sup>, with a festival celebrating Juneteenth. It marks June 19, 1865, the date when most slaves in the state of Texas learned that they had been freed. Union Major General Gordon Granger read General Order #3 to the people of Galveston stating, “in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free.” Pct. 1 Commissioner Ron Davis made opening remarks thanking the Juneteenth Committee for organizing the successful “celebration of freedom.”*

*The HUB Office would like to extend a very special thanks to active supporters of the HUB program who continue to include HUBs in the solicitation process. Striving to award contracts to a business community reflective of the diverse makeup of the county is not only County policy, it is good business.*

**THE TRAVIS COUNTY PURCHASING QUARTERLY IS A WORK IN PROGRESS THAT WILL CONTINUE TO GROW AND IMPROVE. WE ARE ALWAYS OPEN TO YOUR SUGGESTIONS SO PLEASE FEEL FREE TO EMAIL YOUR IDEAS TO [JORGE.TALAVERA@CO.TRAVIS.TX.US](mailto:JORGE.TALAVERA@CO.TRAVIS.TX.US). WE AT THE TRAVIS COUNTY PURCHASING OFFICE ARE STRIVING TO IMPROVE OUR SERVICE TO YOU. PLEASE LET US KNOW HOW WE CAN BETTER SERVE YOU.**