



Travis County



Purchasing Newsletter

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A Publication of the Travis County Purchasing Office
Cyd V. Grimes, C.P.M., CPPO, Purchasing Agent

The contents of this newsletter are a collaborative effort by the staff of the Purchasing Office.

Commissioners Court Received Disparity Study Presentation

On February 2, 2016, the Travis County Commissioners Court received the results of its first Disparity Study. The study, completed by the National Economic Research Association (NERA) via an inter-local contract with the City of Austin, and lead by Dr. Jon Wainwright, Senior Vice-President, PhD, was the culmination of over 20 years of efforts of the past and current Commissioners Courts. The HUB Program was established in 1994 with one part-time staff member and has now grown to four full-time employees.

Dr. Wainwright presented before the Commissioners Court and stated, "Absent continued remedial action, the



County will likely be a passive participant in a discriminatory market area." Discrimination was revealed in lending practices (banking, surety), wages, workplace environment, and in payment to minority subcontractors (to include all ethnicities and non-minority women).

The complete Disparity Study is available to be viewed on the Purchasing website. The Study includes nineteen recommendations that provide the County with suggested strategies to assist with narrowly tailoring its M/WBE policies to be consistent with the study's findings. In Summer, 2016, HUB staff will present to the Commissioners Court its next steps to implement the recommendations of the study. Please refer to page 4 for details on the recommendations. Ω

Purchasing Procedures Reminders!

Coordination among the many County departments and offices is necessary for the purchasing process to work smoothly. To avoid delays and comply with County policy and state law, user departments should read the Purchasing Policies and Procedures manuals or contact the Purchasing Office website.

Any person who knowingly violates or authorizes the violation of the Purchasing Act and any County or precinct person who fails to use the Purchasing Agent for purchases, including an agent or employee of the County or of a department of the County, commits a criminal offense which is a Class B misdemeanor. Each act in violation of the law is a separate offense. Anyone obligating an expenditure of funds for goods or services before securing a purchase order may be held personally responsible for the payment, and may also face criminal charges.

See "Purchasing Procedures" page 2

"How To Do Business With Travis County"

Spring Vendor Conference

When: April 28, 2016, 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Where: 700 Lavaca Bldg., 1st Floor in the multi-function rooms A-B-C
 Exhibitors in the Hall of Government
What: The Travis County Purchasing Office will be hosting a free conference to educate vendors on the steps to do business with the County.

Meet Travis County Buyers and Department Personnel

Light refreshments and prizes!!

Call to RVSP 512-854-9700

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Travis County

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Commissioners Court

County Judge Sarah Eckhardt
Pct. 1 Commissioner Ron Davis
Pct. 2 Commissioner Brigid Shea
Pct. 3 Commissioner Gerald Daugherty
Pct. 4 Commissioner Margaret Gómez

Purchasing Board

390th District Ct. Judge Julie Kocurek
Presiding Chair

250th District Ct. Judge Karin Crump

200th District Ct. Judge Gisela Triana

County Judge Sarah Eckhardt

Commissioner Gerald Daugherty

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Cycle Times for Shopping Carts

“Cycle Time - The time between when a purchase requisition is received in the Purchasing Office and issuance of a purchase order to a vendor. Cycle time does not include the time required for delivery or the time it takes for the Purchasing Office to obtain corrections to line items accounts, commodity codes (product categories), and other necessary information.”

Planning purchases for your respective department is the most important task affecting cycle time. When you are assigned the duty as a Purchasing Liaison, there are many resources and purchasing personnel to assist you with your day-to-day purchases as well as your major expenditures.

“Purchasing Procedures” cont'd from page 1

Your office cannot buy goods and/or services and then ask for reimbursement. You must call the Purchasing Office first! Only get quotes from vendors for budgetary purposes. When you get multiple quotes, it only delays the process. The Purchasing Office is required by law to obtain quotes again. We need a detailed set of specifications and/or statement of work, in turn, the Purchasing Office will solicit quotes and ensure compliance with the Purchasing Act.

We have emergency procedures for “work stoppages” and “after hour” emergencies. We have hundreds of annual term contracts for the County’s on going requirements. We will work with offices that have special needs or special circumstances to ensure that their requirements are met, but the law must be followed!

Planning with clear and precise communication is the key!



Refer to the Purchasing Manual to learn about the time needed to place your order (Chapter 8). Most of the ordinary items, such as pens, paper and office furniture are on contract. Some of those contracts have conditions that stipulate quick and timely delivery of certain items.

Acquaint yourself with a purchaser and ask about the time needed to place orders. The Purchasing Staff is here to assist you and make the process as efficient and cost-effective as possible! Ω

Purchasing Manual

On January 28, 2016, Cyd V. Grimes, C.P.M., CPPO, and Purchasing Staff presented several updates to the Purchasing Manual during a Commissioners Court Work



Session. Many of these changes and updates will affect current and past elected and appointed officials as well as County employees.

With so many changes, always consult with the Purchasing Office with any questions or concerns! Ω

New Medical Examiner's Office Building

On January 2016, the County released its first Request for Competitive Sealed Proposals (CSP) for the New Medical Examiner's Building. The proposed \$29,000,000 project is using an "Alternative Delivery Method" approved by the State Legislature in 1995 which has since been updated and revised several times. The latest revision in 2001 allows other government entities to use alternate delivery methods originally designed for "institutions of higher learning."

The CSP will allow the County to use "best value" instead of the "lowest bid" as the



basis of award. The County will consider other factors such as team experience, past performance and total cost. Additionally, the CSP allows the County to negotiate with the selected consultant before the contract is signed. This allows the County to get the "best value" for the taxpayers of Travis County. Ω

Black History Month

Every February brings the observance of Black History Month to honor the sacrifice and contributions by citizens of African-American heritage.

Dr. Mae Jemison was a physician and NASA astronaut. She was the first African-American woman to travel in space on the Space Shuttle Endeavour's mission from September 12-20, 1992.

Born in Decatur, Alabama, on October 17, 1956, she was the youngest child of Charlie and Dorothy Jemison. At 3 years of age, her family moved to Chicago. Her mother, an elementary school teacher, encouraged her natural scientific curiosity.

Inspired by Dr. Martin Luther King, Dr. Jemison is quoted,

"The best way to make dreams come true is to wake up."



Dr. Jemison graduated from Stanford with a degree in Chemical Engineering. She earned her medical degree

from Cornell Medical College. Additionally, she learned dance and even choreographed and produced several shows of modern jazz and African dance.

Although she retired from the space program, she is still an active speaker and advocate for public health issues. Ω

Economic Opportunity Forums

04/12/16 - Austin

SBA 8 (a) Business Development Program

Address: Entrepreneur Center of Austin - Training Room, 4029 South Capital of Texas Highway #110, Austin, TX 78704

Information: **MUST REGISTER!** Time: 12:00 AM - 1:30 PM Fee: Free For Registration Information: Call 512-974-7800 or go online to <http://www.austintexas.gov/smallbiz>

Contact: Small Business Program smallbiz@austintexas.gov (512) 974-7800 <http://www.austintexas.gov/smallbiz>

05/11/16 - Austin

Small Business Insurance 101: Address: Entrepreneur Center of Austin - Training Room, 4029 South Capital of Texas Highway #110, Austin, TX 78704

Information: **MUST REGISTER!** This class will include tips on how to properly protect your business, whether you are just getting started or have been in business for many years. It will help you understand the two primary costs to insurance and why you, as a small business, need insurance. Time: 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM Fee: \$30.00 includes light refreshments For Registration Information: Call 512-974-7800 or go online to <http://www.austintexas.gov/smallbiz> (512) 974-7800

Disparity Study Recommendations

The Disparity Study provided the County with information that can assist it to narrowly tailor its M/WBE policies to be consistent with the finding of the study. Based on the findings by the National Economic Research Association, (NERA), the Disparity Study made recommendations that include race- and gender-neutral efforts and race- and gender-conscious efforts.



For a detailed explanation of these recommendations, please refer to pages 249 - 257 of the Disparity Study.

The complete study is available online at, https://www.traviscountytexas.gov/images/purchasing/Doc/NERA_TRAVIS_Disparity.pdf

Race- and Gender-Neutral Recommendations:	Race- and Gender-Conscious Recommendations:
1. Continue efforts to ensure prompt payment.	1. Adopt a formal M/WBE Program and accompanying program regulations.
2. Ensure bidder non-discrimination.	2. Review certification eligibility standards in effect at accepted certifying agencies.
3. Review surety bonding, insurance and experience requirements.	3. Enhance "Good Faith Effort" requirements and related policies.
4. Increase contract unbundling.	4. Adopt overall County-wide aspirational M/WBE goals.
5. Enhance access to information about upcoming contract opportunities, especially for smaller contracts.	5. Count lower tier M/WBE participation toward meeting goals.
6. Facilitate increased access to capital.	6. Set contract-specific goals.
7. Adopt a Mentor-Protégé Program.	7. Ensure sufficient operational resources.
8. Expand supportive services for M/WBE firms.	8. Waive retainage for small contractors or release it as early as feasible.
9. Implement a small local business reserve program.	9. Ensure the M/WBE Program and Good Faith Efforts are enforceable and sanctions for non-compliance.
	10. Adopt a M/WBE Program Sunset review process.

Save the Date for the Next Purchasing Liaison Workshop and Mini-Vendor Fair



Save the date for the next **Purchasing Liaison Workshop** on **Thursday, August 18, 2016** on the 1st floor of the 700 Lavaca Building!

This coming year's agenda is going to be an exciting one. If you have been a Liaison for several years, or if you are new to this duty, there will be something for you to learn. Mark your calendar and save the date, Thursday, August 18, 2016

Look for more details in your email box!

Purchasing Web Site Updates

The Purchasing Office web site is a continuous work in progress. Purchasing adds new and important information not only for County departments but for the general public as well.

Due to the increased workload of construction projects the County is releasing, this has increased concerns about the payment process to prime contractors and their subcontractors or sub-consultants (subs).

Purchasing staff, working with the County Attorney's Office, developed two Power Point presentations that briefly review the

payment process for both "primes" and "subs" on the web site.

These presentations provide a glimpse of what the County requires of "primes." Additionally, "subs" can gather important tips on how the payment process works between them and the "prime."

A key point for "subs" is that the County is contracted with the "prime" and not the "sub." There is a process that can assist "subs" with getting timely and complete payment from the "primes." Read both presentations to learn more!

<https://www.traviscountytexas.gov/purchasing/powerpoint-presentations>