



Travis County



Purchasing Newsletter

Winter/Spring 2015, Volume 15, Issue 1
A Publication of the Travis County Purchasing Office
Cyd V. Grimes, C.P.M., CPPO, Purchasing Agent

Welcome New County Judge and Commissioner

By Jerome T. Guerrero

January 2, 2015 ended Judge Samuel Biscoes' term as Travis County's first elected African-American County Judge to begin another first. Judge Biscoe swore in Travis County's first elected woman Judge Sarah Eckhardt and former City of Austin Council member Bridget Shea and County Commissioner of Precinct 2.

In a very well attended swearing in ceremony, witnesses, which included many local elected and former elected officials, watched as Judge Biscoe administered the Oath of Office to Judge Eckhardt and Commissioner Shea.



Former Judge Biscoe administers the Oath of Office to Commissioner Brigid Shea, Precinct 2

Judge Eckhardt previously served as Travis County Commissioner, Precinct 2 and also worked in the County Attorney's Office.

Commissioner Shea moved to Austin in 1988 to start a Clean Water Action Chapter and served as a Council Member at the City of Austin.



Former Judge Biscoe administers the Oath of Office to County Judge Sarah Eckhardt

The Purchasing Office welcomes both elected officials and looks forward to working with them and the rest of the County Commissioners Court. Ω

Purchasing Welcomes Officials from Botswana

By HUB Staff

On December 12, 2014, the Purchasing Office welcomed public officials from the Republic of Botswana. The delegation spent the day visiting offices with the State of Texas, City of Austin and ended with County procurement staff.

The delegation was part of an exchange program hosted by the United States Trade and Development Agency (USTDA), an independent U.S. Government foreign assistance agency that is funded by the U.S. Congress. The program is designed to help public officials in emerging

See "Botswana Delegation page 2

"How To Do Business With Travis County" Spring Vendor Conference



When: April 23, 2015, 9 a.m. - 12:30 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

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

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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Purchasing Cooperative Rebate

Staff Contribution

The Purchasing Office has multiple methodologies to procure the commodities and services the County needs to provide services. One of those methods is the use of Purchasing Cooperatives.

Purchasing Cooperatives solicit for contracts for goods or services for use by other agencies such as state, city or other local government entities. Each contract has been competitively bid and comes with supporting documentation on the recommended method.

These contracts offer the County an alternative way to deliver goods and services faster and more

cost-effectively in many instances. Buyers will evaluate each contract to determine if it is in the “best interest” of the County to utilize the cooperative contract. If not, the buyer will proceed to advertise the bid through typical bidding process.

Another benefit to using the cooperative, is the rebate the County receives from one of the cooperatives. Buyboard® sent a \$21,013 rebate check to the County for the purchases it made last fiscal year. This rebate check is not funded through taxpayers but by fees that the vendors pay to participate in the cooperative program. Ω

“Botswana Delegation cont’d from page 1



economies better understand the total cost of ownership for the purchase of goods and services related to infrastructure projects.

Cyd V. Grimes, C.P.M., CPPO, welcomed the delegation by presenting an overview of

County purchasing procedures and best practices. The discourse was very truthful, specifically relating the County’s bidding process and contract award to administration of multiple small projects such as Job Order Contracting (JOC). Ω

Purchasing Policies

Staff Contribution

As the County continues to grow in population, the County government will grow with it. As public employees, we are all responsible for handling taxpayer money in a prudent and transparent manner.

It may seem easier and quicker to contact a vendor for a quick estimate for a commodity or service; however, the Purchasing Office is obligated to review and determine the best method to purchase a commodity or service.

There are multiple processes that Purchasing must follow by law to procure. Depending on the purchase

(and availability of funding), many purchases can be procured through existing contracts or cooperatives. There are procedures even for the most complex and high dollar purchases (such as helicopters) that must be followed due to State law.

Purchasing understands that there are “surprises” that no one can anticipate, but Purchasing can be your ally for those “surprises.”

Please visit the link to the Purchasing Policies and Procedures Manual at https://www.traviscountytexas.gov/images/purchasing/Doc/tcpo_ppm.pdf for more detailed information. Ω

Black History Month

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

John R. Fox, (May 18, 1915 - December 26, 1944) was a soldier killed in action



(KIA) when he radioed in an artillery strike on his position to fend off a German attack near Sommocolonia, Italy during World War II.

Fox, a native Ohioan, attended Wilberforce University and ROTC, and graduated with a commission of 2nd Lieutenant rank in 1940.

Lt. Fox and a small party positioned themselves in a forward

observation post to radio in the positions of the advancing Germans. He was only 29 years when he called for an artillery barrage on his own position. He and a small observing party of eight Italian soldiers were KIA from the resulting barrage. Because of his heroic action, the allied forces were able to organize a counterattack to regain control of the area.

In the early 1990s, it was determined that African-American soldiers were denied consideration for the Medal of Honor (MOH) due to their race. Fox, along with seven other African-American soldiers had their medals upgraded to Medal of Honor in January 1997. Ω

Economic Opportunity Forums

07/29/15 - Austin

“Save The Date”

2015 Procurement Connection Seminar & EXPO Address: Renaissance Austin Hotel 9721 Arboretum Boulevard Austin, TX 78759. Hosted by the Statewide HUB Program, Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts There will be exhibit booths where purchasers from state, county and local government entities will showcase contract opportunities and provide vendors with insight in regards to their agencies procurement process. This all day event will include a breakfast, luncheon with a keynote speaker, exhibit hall, and workshops. More details are coming soon!

Contact: Keisha Gash 512-463-5894 Texas4HUBs@cpa.texas.gov



Purchasing Appreciation Month

March was Purchasing Appreciation Month and professional purchasers were honored for the work they do. This was the month that Travis County officials, and the public recognized the valuable, hard work of the Purchasing Office.

Minority Contractor Development

By Renae F. Richard, JE Dunn and County HUB Staff

In December 2014, JE Dunn graduated its second Minority Contractor Business Development (MCBD) class in Austin, Texas. Seven participants (representing five companies) completed the course requirements. Three of the five companies (Mid-State Insulation, R.M. Mechanical, Efficient Air Conditioning) have or had subcontracting work on several Travis County projects.

Congratulations “Class of



2014”! The 3rd MCBD class in Austin will launch March 26, 2015.

Travis County does not endorse any company or individual identified in this article.

County Recognized as Collaborative Partner

In honor of Black History Month, on February 26, 2015, the Austin Black Contractor’s Association (ABCA) recognized the Travis County Purchasing Office as one of its Collaborative Partners assisting the local minority business community.



Sylvia Lopez, HUB Program Coordinator accepts Austin Black Contractors Association recognition of the County’s efforts with local minority and women-owned businesses.

Save the Date for the Next Purchasing Liaison Workshop



Purchasing Liaison Workshop

August 27, 2015

Save the date for the next Purchasing Liaison Workshop on Thursday, August 27, 2015 on the 1st floor of the 700 Lavaca Building!

This coming year’s agenda



is going to be an exciting one with updates on what is happening in Purchasing and the Auditor’s Office. 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 27, 2015.

Look for more details in your email box!

Benefits of HUB Utilization

Staff Contribution

There are many benefits for minority and women-owned businesses to become certified as Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUB.) They gain access to the opportunities in subcontracting as well as direct contracts with government entities.

Are there reasons prime contractors should consider utilizing HUBs? According to one vendor, “HUB firms are generally smaller and can pay more attention to the projects. HUB firms are trying to become successful and larger and therefore there is more incentive on them to perform better.”

For some vendors, it



makes sense to have multiple subcontractors since one or more may be obligated with another project.

A representative from a large construction firm states, “From our perspective, using HUB firms is a good business practice. Providing contracting opportunities allows HUB firms to grow and allows work to be spread to multiple firms, so that some firms don’t get over-committed in this busy market. It’s also important to match the work opportunities with the HUB firms’ capabilities, and to not over-commit them on a project that may be too large. We want to set HUB firms up for success.”