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Howard College Moves Forward With Dorm Renovations

BIG SPRING - Howard College Board of Trustees met today for a special meeting giving the administration authority to proceed with negotiations to finalize a proposal and construction costs for the planned dorm renovations on the Big Spring campus.

RBR Construction's proposal out of Weatherford, Texas was selected in the competitive sealed proposal format.

"We have a sound proposal that was put forth by RBR and are confident they will be able to complete the scope of work within the established schedule," said Dr. Cheryl T. Sparks, President of Howard College.

The dorm renovation project will be primarily funded through the \$3.5 million revenue bond approved by the board on October 26, 2009, and will require no costs to tax payers since student fees provide the revenue for the bond.

The college's fund balance for student housing services will be a source for a small portion of the project as well.

"The total scope of the project, as originally designed, came in a little higher than expected," said Terry Hansen, Executive Vice President.

"But it is going to be more cost effective and efficient in the long run if we pull a small amount from fund balance and complete the entire project now rather than pulling out portions of the contract and waiting, at minimum, another year to complete them at a higher cost."

The scope of work for the project includes extensive work in the 1959 constructed wings of the men's and women's residence halls to include complete remodeling and associated plumbing of the bathrooms; electrical upgrades; heating, ventilation and air conditioning; millwork; complete asbestos abatement; new windows for the women's wing; and doors, windows and door frames for the men's wing.

In the new wings the project will cover shower renovation and heating, ventilation and air conditioning upgrades. Fire sprinkler systems will be installed in the entire men's and women's residence halls.

"Once the mill work is completed in the old wings of both dorms, those rooms will look completely brand new from the inside," said Sparks.

"They will include new built in furniture, flooring, paint, ceilings and windows in the old wings."

College officials will be meeting with representatives of RBR Construction on Monday to finalize negotiations so that construction can begin as soon as the dorms are empty following the spring semester.

"We have a short window of opportunity to get this project completed this summer while the dorms are empty," said Hansen. "Time is of the essence so we will be moving forward right away with the contractor to get the project started."

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