

Brown Co Commission Approves Health Insurance Change

(KNZA)--It was standing room only as the Brown County Commissioners Monday made a final decision on county employee benefits for 2013.

After information was presented by the county's health insurance broker, the commission unanimously approved a proposal by Commissioner Warren Ploeger to pay \$100 a month toward the additional health insurance tiers above the employee's health insurance coverage for 2013.

As part of the proposal, the county would only pay an employee's gap plan. In addition, if an employee's spouse is working elsewhere that offers health insurance they would have to take insurance through their employer not through the county.

The county will keep the four insurance tiers, keep the 50 cent an hour pay raise for county employees for 2013 and continue to pay dental coverage for employees and their families.

The action reverses a previous commission decision to only pay for an employee's health insurance coverage for 2013 and not to fund any additional tiers—including family coverage.

Sheriff John Merchant and County Attorney Kevin Hill had urged the commission to reconsider their decision, saying the county will lose employees if the county declines to pay part of the employee's family insurance.

Facing an 18 ½ premium increase from its health insurance provider for 2013, the commission was faced with the difficult task of making up the increased costs.

Ploeger said the county budgeted a half-million dollars for employee benefits for next year and only had about \$16,000 in wiggle room available.

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