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Richardson Co Commission Awards Bid for Jail Project

(KLZA)-- After many years of discussion, threats from Jail Standards and the State Fire Marshall to try and force the closure of the current Richardson County Jail, County Commissioners voted unanimously Tuesday morning to move forward with a new law enforcement center and jail.

The first step was approval of a company to sell bonds to pay for the project, which comes with an estimated price tag of \$3.7 million. Five companies submitted proposals. Commissioners voted to go with D.A. Davidson out of Omaha to sell the bonds, to be repaid in 15 years. The anticipated interest rate will be 2.34 percent. The total payback with interest by Richardson County is expected to be \$4.4 million. There is an option for early payoff.

Commissioners looked at information prepared by County Treasurer Austin Duerfeldt in determining to go with a 10 year, 15 year or 20 year payback. By going with the 15 year plan versus the 20 year payback the savings is nearly \$375,000.

Following the bonding decision, Commissioners awarded the bid to remodel the former National Guard Armory building on the west edge of Falls City and build an addition to A.H.R.S. Construction of Bern, Kansas. Earlier this month A.H.R.S. submitted a base bid of nearly \$3.4 million for the project plus alternates including renovation office space and other alternates bringing the total bid to \$3.7 million.

Board Chairman David Sickel said Commissioners felt doing the entire project at once was the best plan. He said the office renovation is a big ticket, but having to go back and do it later would just cause another big mess.

The first item of business will be removal of floor tile containing asbestos. A.H.R.S. estimated 455 days to complete the project. It is anticipated the new jail will be ready to open in 2016.

Prochaska and Associates of Omaha will serve as the architects for the project.

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