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POPLAR BLUFF MISSOURI

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PBRMC plans \$270M facility

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Poplar Bluff Regional Medical Center is moving ahead with its plans to build a new hospital in the Eight Points Development at the junction of Highways 60 and 67.

PBRMC has submitted a letter of intent to file an application for a certificate of need with the Missouri Health Facilities Review Committee. This is the first step in gaining state approval to build a state-of-the-art health care facility to serve Poplar Bluff and the entire Southeast Missouri region.

"We plan to spend up to \$270 million in construction costs to build a multi-level hospital," PBRMC chief executive officer Greg Carda announced Monday.

The new hospital will feature all private rooms for patients, new state-of-the-art equipment, and allow for growth and the addition of new physician specialists, improving specialty care closer to home.

"PBRMC is committed to providing the very best health care to this community and the entire region, and this letter of intent identifies our specific intent to build a new hospital of up to 300 beds at the Eight Points development site," Carda said. "Our commitment to the Eight Points site further reinforces our commitment to the overall success, growth and prosperity of Poplar Bluff and the region. The new hospital will be a positive addition for our physicians

See **PBRMC/2A**



DAR/Corey Matthews

Reviewing the site for a new Poplar Bluff Regional Medical Center in the Eight Points Development are (from left) Steve Halter, president of the Greater Poplar Bluff Area Chamber of Commerce; Butler County Presiding Commissioner Ed Strenfel; Greg Carda, PBRMC chief executive officer; Ryan Kiser and Steve Zang, K2 Commercial Group partners who are developing Eight Points.

PBRMC

FROM PAGE 1A

and most importantly our patients.”

PBRMC must wait 30 days before taking the next step. The deadline for filing the application for a certificate of need is Dec. 31.

“There is still much work to be done, including the application for the certificate of need to receive final approval from the state,” Carda said. “While the state has a very specific process to follow, we are committed to doing what is necessary to meet all their requirements. There is no doubt this community is deserving of new medical care facilities and while nothing can be taken for granted, we do know the state has approved all 32 of the requests in the past four years for relocation and expansions. This gives us a level of confidence.”

The current schedule calls for state approval of the certificate of need in the first quarter of 2011 and for the hospital to be open by early 2014.

Carda praised city, chamber, county and state officials, along with the developers, for their tremendous level of support for this project.

“This announcement today should eliminate any questions the hospital is going to build,” said Steve Halter, president of the Greater Poplar Bluff Area Chamber of Commerce. “A lot of hurdles have already been crossed.”

Halter anticipates more than 250 direct and more than 250 indirect new jobs for the community with the new hospital.

“PBRMC’s commitment has a far reaching affect on our community and our future. First and foremost,

it’s the commitment to providing and expanding the quality health care our community deserves,” Halter said. “But as a recognized community and business leader in Poplar Bluff, their decision to relocate to Eight Points illustrates their commitment to support the growth and plans of our community, in addition to our goals of serving as the cultural and economic center for the region. This commitment will help propel Poplar Bluff to a much more competitive destination within the region, and support our recruitment and expansion plans for the city.”

City Manager Doug Bagby and Butler County Presiding Commissioner Ed Strenfel were happy to hear “the really good news.” They said a new hospital will be “great” for the city, county and entire area. Bagby could not be present due to being involved in labor negotiations.

Ryan Kiser, a partner in the K2 Commercial Group that is developing Eight Points, is impressed with the hospital’s commitment to the community and to Eight Points.

“We have been working with PBRMC for the better part of two years so their commitment to Eight Points is something we’re very proud of,” Kiser said. “Obviously final state approval is the key milestone, but this allows us to finalize all the specifics and details to ensure everything is ready once the state gives its final approval.”

Kiser also praised the community for its efforts to plan for growth.

“At a time when most communities, businesses and governments are trying to cope with the economic

conditions, it is quite impressive that Poplar Bluff is taking the necessary steps to support growth and plan for the future.”

Kiser cited the Highway 67 expansion, the partnership with MoDOT to build the new roads and interchanges, the dedication of the city to support new development, and now the hospital’s commitment to a new facility.

“I don’t know of many other communities that have this much going for it,” Kiser said. “It’s why we are committed to making Eight Points a first class destination. And now we can all look to PBRMC for their commitment as well.”

Kiser continues to work daily on attracting new businesses to Poplar Bluff and expects to make announcements following state approval for the new hospital. The commercial section of Eight Points will be between Bypass 67, Oak Grove Road and Business 67.

Carda said the new hospital will be located on the south side of Oak Grove Road between Bypass 67 and Shelby Road.

In July, the Missouri Department of Transportation approved a cost share agreement with the city of Poplar Bluff for the construction of a new interchange at Bypass 67 and Oak Grove Road and for improvements to the intersection of North Westwood Boulevard and Oak Grove Road. The new interchange will provide the quickest access to a new hospital.

In early August, the city advanced \$100,000 and the hospital donated \$40,000 so MoDOT could begin preliminary design work on the new interchange sooner.