

NORTHWEST HERALD

Huntley hospital to prep design, financing for new building

By STEPHEN DI BENEDETTO - sdibenedetto@shawmedia.com

December 28, 2012

HUNTLEY – Centegra Health System has a busy agenda for 2013, when officials expect to roll out financing and detailed designs for its \$233 million hospital in Huntley and break ground in the fall.

The dominant medical provider in McHenry County will start the new year with its architect developing detailed drawings by March or April, said Centegra Chief Executive Officer Michael Easley.

Centegra also will look to secure bonds in the first half of the year to finance 80 percent of the new \$233 million hospital.

Centegra's foundation soon will start developing a fundraising campaign to cover the remaining costs.

"We are moving forward at a pretty good pace," Easley said.

The swift start means Centegra could have its third full-service hospital fully operational by winter 2016.

The medical group, which has hospitals in McHenry and Woodstock, received a long-sought state certificate of need in July to build a 128-bed hospital at Reed and Haligus roads in the rapidly developing area of Huntley.

The Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board approved the certificate, after failing to do so in late 2011.

Centegra has sought a hospital in Huntley to serve southern McHenry County since 2010. The project is expected to create 1,100 permanent jobs and 800 construction jobs.

In the immediate future, Centegra will consult a bevy of stakeholders, including nurses, doctors, patients and community groups, about the design of the project. It plans an event at Sun City Huntley in the first quarter of 2013 for residents to give feedback on the initial designs, said Susan Milford, Centegra's vice president.

The health system has been working with advisers from JP Morgan on securing tax-exempt bonds to help conserve on borrowing costs, Easley said. The foundation also will develop a fundraising goal in the coming months, seeking the support of the community and philanthropists.

"We are acting as good stewards of the project and making sure it's done right," Easley said. "We want to know exactly what we are building, how it is going to flow and how it will meet the community's needs at the end of the day."

The project represents the single-largest investment in booming Huntley, where a \$69 million full interchange is being built at Interstate 90 and Route 47.

Village Manager Dave Johnson said officials will meet with Centegra before the health system officially presents a building plan to the Plan Commission and, later, the Village Board.

NORTHWEST HERALD

The village must approve building permits and site plans from designs on landscaping to building aesthetics and traffic patterns.

“It’s the single-largest building project that we have ever seen,” Johnson said. “It’s a significant investment into our community, and we want to make sure it fits for our community.”

Copyright © 2012 Northwest Herald. All rights reserved.