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September 19, 2011

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BELEN STEPS FORWARD TO SAVE THE HOSPITAL

Belen – The City of Belen today announced a new collaboration with a hospital developer for the completion of a hospital feasibility study, the next step toward building a hospital in Valencia County.

The city has tasked Ameris Health Systems with completing the study. A final report is expected around the first of the year.

“We’re stepping forward to save the hospital. First, we need to make sure it’s feasible,” Belen Mayor Rudy Jaramillo said. “We’re giving Ameris the opportunity to finish its feasibility study.”

The study will assess the feasibility of the publicly-owned site along Christopher Road near I-25, the site the city proposed in June 2010. The site is ready with infrastructure and located among other health care facilities.

Ameris presented a draft of its feasibility study to the Belen City Council three months ago. At the time, Ameris determined a hospital is feasible in Valencia County, but the hospital developer needed more time to confirm the results and issue a final report.

The completion of the feasibility study is being funded by the City of Belen and will cost approximately \$45,000.

“Belen is moving in the right direction,” Jaramillo said. “I encourage this effort, and I look forward to seeing the results and working more closely with Valencia County.”

Once the feasibility study is finished, it will be presented to the county commission and may be verified by an independent third party chosen by the county commission. The details of the independent verification will be determined at that time.

Construction of the hospital is estimated to take up to 18 months.

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