

# Wild Bidding Session For Hospital Contract

One of the wooliest bidding sessions ever to take place on a county project came last week as county supervisors opened bids on the new \$2.5-million hospital addition.

Ralph Larsen & Son of San Francisco finally came out on top as the apparent low bidder at \$2,199,913. All eight bids were held for checking, with the bid award set for Tuesday.

The bids are on a three-story, 65-bed hospital building that will serve as County General's central core for operating rooms, kitchen and laundry facilities.

Contractors used a two-week delay to good advantage to jockey bids on the structure with the result that some contractors are unhappy, but the county got a bid within \$200,000 of the architect's estimate.

All but two of the bids were from San Francisco firms. The only local bidder that stuck

through two bidding sessions was Werner Jasper of Santa Cruz.

Jasper had complained bitterly when a county error in advertising caused supervisors to delay the bid opening April 13.

"This meant all our figures were exposed," he said Friday. "The other contractors had two weeks to shop around and do better. All they had to do was call our subcontractors and they had our bid."

"It was great for the county, but not for us," he declared.

Jasper and B & R Construction of San Francisco, whose bids were fourth and seventh high, respectively, also were unhappy about another county practice. The county had set 2 p.m. for submitting bids on construction alternates and 4 p.m. for opening all the bids.

This resulted in a wild scramble among some contractors to see if they could not get lower prices from subcontractors between 2 and 4 o'clock.

"Every minute counts on these bids, and you have to make use of the time," one contractor said.

"You can't imagine the scramble to make telephone calls in those two hours," Jasper added.

The time was critical because an unethical contractor could call new subcontractors and obtain lower prices for himself in the two-hour period, some contractors admitted.

Both Jasper and B. & R Construction indicated they will bring the matter up before the Association of General Contractors in hopes of having it outlawed.

Architects Stone, Marracini & Patterson of San Francisco had estimated the actual construction cost at slightly below \$2 million. They said that architect's fees, legal fees and other costs will raise the total cost to about \$2.5 million.

In addition to the low bidder, Ralph Larsen & Son, other bidders were Barrett Construction at \$2,287,000; Dickman Construction, Inc. at \$2,305,000; Jasper Construction at \$2,313,313; Continental Construction at \$2,315,000; B & R Construction at \$2,385,000; M & K Corporation at \$2,397,000, and MacDonald & Nelson at \$2,333,000.

## Mobile Home Show Scheduled

The Northern California Mobile Home and Travel Trailer show, featuring more than 100 units and 300 individual rooms, will be held at the San Francisco Cow Palace, May 18-22.

Sponsor representative Lou Bell said some exhibits will overflow into an area just east of the Cow Palace because more space is needed than the two main halls. Bell said more than 40,000 persons attended the show last year.

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