

Agenda Item 1.4.2

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS BRIEFING PAPER

Topic: Recommended Purchasing Policy Update

Presented by: Vera Braeckman, Purchasing Operations Manager, Mary O'Neil, Director, Grants & Procurement, Dan Conway, Chief Financial Officer

Date: 5/13/2025

For Information For Discussion/Board Direction Consent to Place on Business /Hearing Agenda

Issue: Amendments to the Purchasing Policy to implement efficiencies and to align those changes to our current Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, Workday, and an amendment to the Contract and Delegation Authority Policy to compliment a change to the Purchasing Policy.

Background: A Policy and Procedure Team was established and has been working diligently over the past two years to update and recommend improvements to the County's Purchasing Policy. Under the leadership of Vera Braeckman and Chandra Hardwick, the team undertook an extensive outreach effort to engage stakeholders at all levels - including internal customers and key decision-makers. This collaborative approach helped ensure that the proposed changes reflect operational needs, promote efficiency, and align with current best practices.

The Strategy, Innovation and Finance Policy and Procedure Team is comprised of:

- **Vera Braeckman**, Purchasing Operations Manager
- **Chandra Hardwick**, Senior Purchasing Agent and Project Lead
- **Christine Perry**, Senior Purchasing Agent
- **Eric Garcia**, ERP Senior Systems Analyst
- **Mary O'Neil**, Purchasing & Grants Director

This group engaged stakeholders across the County through a series of targeted outreach meetings, including:

1. Finance Leadership
2. Executive Leadership
3. Department Procurement Stakeholders (five meetings over an 18-month period)
4. County Management Leadership Team (CMLT)

Our goals were twofold:

- To ensure that all impacted parties had a voice in the process
- To streamline and improve procurement workflows wherever possible

Importantly, the Purchasing Policy had not been updated since 2019, despite a stated intent at that time to revisit within one year. Since then, the County transitioned from JD Edwards to Workday (early 2021), yet the policy and procedures still reference outdated JD Edwards processes. This misalignment has led to confusion, errors, and rework.

The recommended updates presented today address these critical gaps and modernize the policy to reflect our current systems and practices.

While the current recommendations are critical and ready for implementation, we recognize that further efficiencies are possible. A future phase of updates could reduce processing times for purchase requisitions by 4 to 10 weeks, potentially saving \$300,000+ in staff time annually. The team plans to begin working on these potential changes in early 2026.

Discussion: The following revisions to the Purchasing Policy are being recommended to reflect operational updates, system transitions, and improvements to clarify roles and responsibilities:

1. **Naming Update**

- Changed references from "Purchasing Operations" to "SIF-Procurement" to align with current organizational structure.
- Changed the policy's name from Purchasing Policy to Procurement Policy.

2. Policy Simplifications and Clarifications

- Removed the definition of "best value" to streamline terminology.
- Updated the Special Notification and Review Requirements chart.
- Clarified that the Purchasing Operations Manager is authorized to sign purchase order, change orders, and terminations.
- Updated the roles and responsibilities for receiving supplier protests, including a clear process and timelines.

3. Approval Processes and Thresholds

- Updated contract and purchase order approval threshold charts to reflect implementation of Workday, with supporting details moved to a new Appendix C of the Purchasing Procedures.
- Revised policy for Special Authority Change Orders: capped at ≤10% of the original value and removed the dedicated chart, with further details provided in Appendix C of the Purchasing Procedures.

4. Disaster Response Authority

- Added a reference to the Declaration of Disaster or Emergency Policy which delegates contract signature authority to the Sheriff or the Emergency Management Manager during a declared disaster or emergency.

5. Administrative Responsibilities and Ethics

- Noted that the Procurement Card (p-card) program will now be administered by Finance instead of Procurement.
- Added language stating that individuals may be excluded from procurement activities due to conflicts of interest.
- Enhanced code of ethics to clarify expectations around financial interests.

6. Contract Termination Authority

- Delegated authority to terminate contracts to the Purchasing Operations Manager.
- This delegation required an amendment in the Contract and Delegation Authority Policy, which delegates termination authority to Division Directors. The proposed amendment for the Contract and Delegation Authority Policy specifies the Division Director has authority to terminate non-purchasing contracts.

Fiscal Impact: yes no

SPA Review: SPA supports; no concerns. Sherry Wilger, 5/5/25

County Attorney Review: Approved. Carey Markel, 4/30/25

Facilities Review: No fiscal impact. Mark Danner, 5/5/25

BIT Review: No impact. Andy Corbett, 5/6/25

Fleet Review: No fiscal impact. Janice Mayer, 5/5/25

Recommendations: Direct staff to bring the amended policies to a future hearing for consideration.

Originator: Mary O'Neil, Director, 303-271-8570

Contacts for Additional Information:

Vera Braeckman, Purchasing Operations Manager, 303-271-8591

Kate Newman, Deputy County Manager, 303-271-8567