

Hospital reluctant to take loan

By **KEN THORBOURNE**
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

The Jersey City City Council voted on Wednesday to give the financially ailing Greenville Hospital \$1.5 million — but it isn't clear if the hospital will accept it.

The vote followed a promise by Mayor Jerramiah Healy during a public hearing last month on the decision by Greenville's parent company to close the hospital.

According to the language of the resolution, passed by an 8-0 vote, the money could either be a loan — to be paid back if the building is sold within five years — or an outright gift.

But Brett Harwood, chairman of the board of LibertyHealth Systems Inc., Greenville's parent company, gave the city a letter Wednesday stating Greenville was not in a position to take on added debt, so therefore could not accept a loan.

Brian O'Reilly, the city's business administrator, said yester-

day the city's preference is for the money to be a loan and that the city would work toward that goal.

LibertyHealth filed an application with the state in June to close the 100-bed facility on the grounds it's losing between \$3 million and \$4 million a year and 85 percent of residents in the hospital's zip code already use other hospitals, such as the Jersey City Medical Center — LibertyHealth's flagship institution — which is roughly two miles away.