

38106

DATE: January 23, 2014

TO: Board of Acquisition and Contract

FROM: Edward Buroughs
Commissioner of Planning

SUBJECT: Resolution authorizing an Agreement between the County of Westchester and Westchester Residential Opportunities, Inc., for Fair Housing Education and Asset Building Programs

The attached resolution authorizes the County of Westchester to enter into an agreement with Westchester Residential Opportunities, Inc. (WRO) for a program to provide Fair Housing Education and Asset Building/Individual Development Account programs in Westchester County. The amount of the agreement shall not exceed \$30,000.00, pursuant to an approved budget, and the term of the agreement is January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2014.

The agreement will provide for two programs. One program will be an education program on fair housing and discrimination aimed specifically to realtors, and condominium and cooperative boards. WRO is a HUD certified housing counseling agency that provides education on equal housing opportunities in Westchester County. It is anticipated that WRO will try to provide comprehensive affirmative training to at least 20 condominium and cooperative boards during this contract period. The second program will be the implementation of an Asset Building and Co-op Fair Housing Education Program. WRO will assist families with incomes between 45% and 80% of median income through their Individual Development Account programs. They will also provide a first time home buying counseling program and homebuyers workshops and refer all appropriate households who are seeking apartment listings or home-ownership opportunities to the County's "Home Seekers" link. They will assist in organizing the annual Affordable Housing Expo to be held in March at the County Center. WRO will conduct one-on-one home buyer's education and counseling, provide fair housing information, establish a regular saving plan for potential home buyers, and conduct a financial literacy workshop. It is anticipated that WRO will reach over 200 households/individuals with homeownership counseling and education during this contract period.

WRO was able to meet or exceed most of their goals in 2013. They were unable to reach their goal of meeting with Co-op/Condominium boards to train them on fair housing issues. The boards that they outreached to, were mostly non-responsive. WRO's outreach efforts to provide one-on-one education to first time homebuyers were unsuccessful as a number of households declined this counseling service. We anticipate WRO will successfully accomplish all service goals established this year.

Westchester Residential Opportunities, Inc., is a HUD-certified housing counseling agency. They are a not-for-profit organization, offering extensive housing programs in Westchester County that satisfy the needs of low to moderate income families in the area. For a number of years, WRO has assisted the

County in its effort to secure decent affordable housing for residents. WRO has expanded housing choices for all minority groups, promoted integration for all client groups served by the organization, provided housing counseling services to the most fragile and needy population including, but not limited to, senior citizens, psychiatrically and physically disabled persons and homeless families and individuals, and assisted low and moderate-income persons to reside in decent, safe and sanitary housing. WRO has been deemed to possess the requisite skills and experiences to meet the needs of those in our community who require these services.

The unique services provided by WRO are necessary to fulfill the County's housing goals. The program will be monitored by Department of Planning staff, who will review all payment requests to make sure all contractual requirements are met.

Authority to exempt this Agreement from the requirements of the Westchester County Procurement Policy and Procedures pursuant to Section 3(a) xxi thereof, has been requested by your Honorable Board in accordance with a separate resolution of even date herewith.

I recommend approval of this Agreement.

EB/cp
Attachment

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACTS 03/20/2014 - HONORARY VERA SECRETARY

RESOLUTION

UPON A COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSIONER OF PLANNING, BE IT HEREBY

RESOLVED, that the County of Westchester is hereby authorized to enter into an agreement with Westchester Residential Opportunities, Inc., for Fair Housing Education and Asset Building Programs, in an amount not to exceed \$30,000.00, to be paid pursuant to an approved budget, for the term January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2014, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the County Executive or his duly authorized designee is authorized to execute any documents and take any actions necessary to effectuate purposes hereof.

Account to be Charged/Credited

| | | Major Program, Program & Phase | Object/ | Trust | |
|------|------|--------------------------------|------------|---------|-------------|
| Fund | Dept | Or Unit | Sub Object | Account | Dollars |
| 101 | 19 | 0100 | 4420 | N/A | \$30,000.00 |

Budget Funding Year(s) FY 2014 Start Date January 1, 2014 End Date December 31, 2014
 (must match resolution)

Funding Source Tax Dollars \$30,000.00
 State Aid _____
\$30,000.00 Federal Aid _____
 (must match resolution) Other _____

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APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACTS 02/20/2014 - NOMAR VERA, SECRETARY