

42451

TO: Honorable Members of the Board of Acquisition and Contract

FROM: Robin Schlaff
Director, Office for Women

DATE: October 22, 2014

SUBJECT: Authority to exempt from the Westchester County Procurement Policy an agreement with Westchester Community Opportunity Program, Inc. to provide crisis intervention, advocacy, accompaniment, information and facilitated referrals, counseling and trauma therapy services to victims of crime, for a term commencing January 1, 2014 and continuing through December 31, 2014, for an amount not-to-exceed \$50,000

The attached Resolution, if approved by your Honorable Board, would authorize the County of Westchester, acting by and through its Office for Women, (the "County") to exempt from the Westchester County Procurement Policy an agreement (the "Agreement") with Westchester Community Opportunity Program, Inc. ("WestCOP"), pursuant to which WestCOP will provide, through its Victims Assistance Services Program ("VAS"), crisis intervention, advocacy, accompaniment, information and facilitated referrals, counseling and trauma therapy services to victims of domestic and sexual violence, child and elder abuse, labor and sex trafficking, physical assault, robbery, burglary, stalking, identity theft and cybercrimes, and other serious crimes throughout the larger Westchester community, with special emphasis on victims served at WestCOP's Peekskill location, for a term commencing January 1, 2014 and continuing through December 31, 2014, for an amount not-to-exceed Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00), payable quarterly, pursuant to an approved budget.

WestCOP has been providing free, confidential assistance to victims of crime, their families, friends and survivors throughout Westchester County through VAS for over 30 years. As a comprehensive crime victim's services program with extensive experience serving and advocating for victims/survivors of sexual assault and intimate partner violence, it provides quality victim-centered and trauma-informed support services and follows best practices, including the use of enhanced confidentiality protections, to ensure client safety.

The proposed Agreement will serve a public purpose by enhancing the safety and independence of victims of crime. If victims, particularly those inflicted by interpersonal

violence, are empowered to learn how to develop and maintain their own safety, they are not as likely to return to dependence on their abusers, thereby reducing public safety costs and medical costs. If they are helped to become independent and self-sufficient they are not as likely to be dependent on public assistance.

The goals and objectives of the proposed Agreement are for WestCOP to provide crisis intervention, advocacy, accompaniment, information and facilitated referrals, counseling and trauma therapy services to victims of domestic and sexual violence, child and elder abuse, labor and sex trafficking, physical assault, robbery, burglary, stalking, identity theft and cybercrimes, and other serious crimes throughout the larger Westchester community, with special emphasis on victims served at WestCOP's Peekskill location.

The goals and objectives of the proposed Agreement are in the best interests of the County in terms of the public health, safety and general welfare, as providing these services may help alter the cultural context that allows interpersonal violence to thrive, reduce the shame-inducing stigma of victimization, and provide former victims the opportunity to regain a sense of dignity and self-worth.

The goals and objectives of the proposed Agreement will be tracked and monitored by the Office for Women, which will be responsible for monitoring WestCOP's performance by means of quarterly statistics and narratives.

Under the Westchester County Procurement Policy Section 3(a)(xxi), your Honorable Board may determine "by resolution passed prior to commencing procurement that compliance with the Procurement Policy would not be in the best interests of the County." Due to the fact that WestCOP has the necessary experience and expertise to provide these services to crime victims in Westchester, and for the reasons set forth above, it is requested that your Honorable Board make the determination that it is in the best interests of the County to exempt from the application of the procedural requirements of the Westchester County Procurement Policy the proposed Agreement with WestCOP.

Attached for your consideration is a proposed Resolution.

RESOLUTION

Upon a communication from the Director of the Office for Women, be it hereby

RESOLVED, that pursuant to Section 3(a)(xxi) of the Westchester County Procurement Policy, it is hereby determined that application of the procedural requirements contained therein, including the necessity of soliciting written price quotations, is neither cost effective nor expedient, and accordingly, not in the best interests of the County in connection with the procurement of an agreement with Westchester Community Opportunity Program, Inc. ("WestCOP") pursuant to which WestCOP will provide, through its Victims Assistance Services Program, crisis intervention, advocacy, accompaniment, information and facilitated referrals, counseling and trauma therapy services to victims of domestic and sexual violence, child and elder abuse, labor and sex trafficking, physical assault, robbery, burglary, stalking, identity theft and cybercrimes, and other serious crimes throughout the larger Westchester community, with special emphasis on victims served at WestCOP's Peekskill location.