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TO: Honorable Members of the Board of Acquisition and Contract

FROM: Honorable Robert P. Astorino
Westchester County Executive

Hon. Michael B. Kaplowitz, Chairman
Westchester County Board of Legislators

Robin Schlaff
Director, Office for Women

DATE: September 23, 2015

SUBJECT: Authority to exempt from the Westchester County Procurement Policy an agreement with The Women's Enterprise Development Center, Inc. to provide a microenterprise training program, for a term commencing January 1, 2015 and continuing through December 31, 2015, for an amount not-to-exceed \$20,000

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 The Women's Enterprise Development Center, Inc. ("WEDC") pursuant to which WEDC will provide microenterprise training and assistance to poor and minority women to assist them in reaching economic self-sufficiency, for a term commencing January 1, 2015 and continuing through December 31, 2015, for an amount not-to-exceed \$20,000, payable quarterly pursuant to an approved budget.

WEDC is uniquely qualified to provide this type of service. While there are other microenterprise programs in the County, no other entrepreneurial training program focuses specifically on women, although needs assessment research has shown that women face greater obstacles in setting up and maintaining businesses.

The need for this training for women is great. Self-employment through entrepreneurship provides low-income women with the opportunity to step out of poverty, to supplement low wages earned in the job market, to capitalize on talents and experience, to remove themselves from the welfare rolls, and to become self-sufficient.

The proposed Agreement will serve a public purpose by providing women with the training necessary to become economically self-sufficient. The skills learned by participants enable them to depend less on government entitlements or not at all. Some graduates augment their low incomes with entrepreneurship, while others are able to support themselves entirely. Some even hire staff, creating new avenues for employment for Westchester residents.

The goals and objectives of the proposed Agreement are for WEDC to provide five "Path to Entrepreneurship" workshops for 30-45 women and one to two "Personal Financial Literacy" workshops for 15-20 women.

The goals and objectives of the proposed Agreement will be tracked and monitored by the Office for Women.

WEDC has successfully performed these services under additional contracts with the County since 2001. Women that have graduated from the program have included socially and economically disadvantaged women, displaced homemakers, Latina women, and child care providers. Approximately two-thirds of the total graduates have since successfully started businesses.

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 WEDC has the necessary experience and expertise to provide these services, 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 WEDC.

Attached for your consideration is a proposed Resolution.

RESOLUTION

Upon a communication from the Westchester County Executive, the Chairman of the Westchester County Board of Legislators, and 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 The Women's Enterprise Development Center, Inc. pursuant to which The Women's Enterprise Development Center, Inc. will provide microenterprise training and assistance to poor and minority women to assist them in reaching economic self-sufficiency.

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACT - 10/22/2015 JOHN COCCIARDI, SECRETARY