



Robert P. Astorino
County Executive

Department of Social Services

Kevin M. McGuire
Commissioner

50191

Date: December 23, 2015

To: Board of Acquisition and Contract

From: Kevin M. McGuire
Commissioner

Subject: Authority for the County of Westchester to enter into an agreement with Friendship Unified Freewill Baptist Church of Mount Vernon pursuant to which Friendship Unified Freewill Baptist Church of Mount Vernon, through its Friendship Visitation Center program, will provide a safe and neutral environment for families to reconnect as a family unit and to work towards permanent reunification or alternative arrangements for children residing outside of their homes or communities for the period January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2016 in an amount not to exceed \$57,000 to be paid monthly pursuant to an approved budget and subject to appropriation

Authority is requested to enter into an agreement with Friendship Unified Freewill Baptist Church of Mount Vernon pursuant to which Friendship Unified Freewill Baptist Church of Mount Vernon, through its Friendship Visitation Center program, will provide a safe and neutral environment for families to reconnect as a family unit to work towards reunification or alternative arrangements for children residing or potentially residing outside of their homes or communities for the period from January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2016 in amount not to exceed \$57,000 to be paid monthly pursuant to an approved budget and subject to appropriation.

This contract serves a **public purpose** because it allows faith based local institutions to partner with the Department in order to promote family stability, safety of children and improved parent-child interactions. Furthermore, it assists the Department in achieving its goal of keeping families intact and within the communities.

The **goals and objectives** of this contract are to provide a safe and nurturing environment that will promote reunification of families. In order to achieve its goals and objectives, Friendship Visitation Center program will:

- Provide a neutral person (visitation specialist) who will supervise and coach the family visit;
- Establish short and long term behaviorally specific and measurable goals for the visits;
- Ensure children's safety during visits;
- Report immediately any incidents or major concerns regarding the visits;
- Observe and document family progress or lack of progress during visits.

The **goals and objectives are in the best interest of the County in terms of public health and public safety** as the program is aimed at promoting the safety and health of the children of Westchester County by providing a safe and neutral environment for parents, grandparents, siblings and prospective discharge resources to visit with the children in foster care.

The **goals and objectives are in the best interest of the County in terms of fiscal responsibility** as this program may help reduce the number of children placed outside of the home or community resulting in cost savings for the department. Having children return or remain in their home and community may reduce the costs associated with out-of-home placements.

The Performance Measurement Indicator reports and statistics submitted monthly will be tracked and monitored by the program office. Based on the Performance Measurement Indicators submitted by vendor from January 2015 through November 2015, the Department is able to report:

- 100% of the referrals received a response within 48 hours
- 100% of referrals picked up for visitation within 5-7 business days
- 100% of critical incidents reported to DSS on same day

This agreement is exempt from the Westchester County Procurement Policy pursuant to Section 3a (xiv) as the agreement is with a not for profit organization to provide aid and care to persons in need of public assistance in Westchester County. This agreement falls under the Social Services Block Grant and therefore is exempt from the requirements of the Federal Common Grant Rules.

Accordingly, the County of Westchester is hereby requesting authorization to enter into an agreement with Friendship Unified Freewill Baptist Church of Mount Vernon for the aforesaid purpose.

A resolution requesting the same is attached for your Honorable Board's approval.

RESOLUTION

Upon a communication from the Commissioner of the Department of Social Services, be it hereby

RESOLVED, that the County of Westchester is hereby authorized to enter into an agreement with Friendship Unified Freewill Baptist Church of Mount Vernon pursuant to which Friendship Unified Freewill Baptist Church of Mount Vernon, through its Friendship Visitation Center program, will provide a safe and neutral environment for families to reconnect as a family unit to work towards reunification or alternative arrangements for children residing or potentially residing outside of their homes or communities for the period from January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2016 in an amount not to exceed \$57,000 to be paid monthly pursuant to an approved budget and be it further

RESOLVED, that this contract is subject to County Appropriation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this agreement is also subject to further financial analysis of the impact of any New York State Budget (the "State Budget") proposed and adopted during the term of this Agreement. The County shall retain the right, upon the occurrence of any release by the Governor of a proposed State Budget and/or the adoption of a State Budget or any amendments thereto, and for a reasonable period of time after such release(s) or adoption(s), to conduct an analysis of the impacts of any such State Budget on County finances. After such analysis, the County shall retain the right to either terminate this agreement or to renegotiate the amounts and rates approved herein. If the County subsequently offers to pay a reduced amount to the Contractor, then the Contractor shall have the right to terminate this agreement upon reasonable prior written notice; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the County Executive or his duly authorized designee is empowered to take such actions and execute such documents as may be necessary and appropriate to effectuate the purposes hereof.

Account to be
Charged/Credited

Fund	Dept.	Major Program, Program & Phase Or Unit	Object/ Sub- Object	Trust Account	Dollars	
2016	101	22	8900	5960	-	\$57,000

Budget Funding Year(s): 2016 Start Date: 1/1/16 End Date: 12/31/16
(must match resolution)

Funding Source Tax Dollars: 27%
State Aid: 43%
Federal Aid: 30%
Other:

\$57,000
(must match resolution)

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACT - 01/21/2016 - LISA M. P. J. SECRETARY