

Robert P. Astorino
County Executive

Office for Women

Camille Failla Murphy
Director

April 23, 2010

To: Board of Acquisition and Contract

From: Camille Failla Murphy
Director, Office for Women

Re: Resolution to exempt from the application of the procedural requirements of the Westchester County Procurement Policy an agreement with My Sisters' Place, Inc., for the provision of state-mandated non-residential domestic violence services, pursuant to Section 3(a)(xxi) of the Westchester County Procurement Policy.

Enclosed is a Resolution which if approved by your Honorable Board would exempt from the application of the procedural requirements of Westchester County Procurement Policy an agreement (the "Agreement") with My Sisters' Place, Inc. ("My Sisters' Place"), whereby My Sisters' Place will provide non-residential domestic violence services to victims of domestic violence.

The proposed Agreement will have a term of one year commencing January 1, 2010 and terminating December 31, 2010 in an amount not-to-exceed Three Hundred Eighty-Seven Thousand Seven Hundred Twenty-One Dollars (\$387,721) to be paid quarterly pursuant to an approved workplan and budget. A resolution seeking your Honorable Board's approval of this agreement is before your Honorable Board.

Since 1992, My Sisters' Place has provided non-residential domestic violence services to the County through contracts administered through the Office for Women pursuant to the Department of Social Services Consolidated Services Plan as updated annually. My Sisters' Place has carried out its contractual responsibilities in a capable and professional manner. The shelter is especially qualified to provide non-residential domestic violence services by reason of its expertise, leadership and longevity in the field, and because of its intimate connection with residential domestic violence services.

The proposed Agreement will promote the public health, safety and general welfare by enhancing the safety and independence of abused women. If abused women 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 empower themselves to be independent and self-sufficient they are not as likely to be dependent on public assistance. In 2009, My Sisters' Place served approximately 400 unduplicated victims of domestic violence; provided crisis intervention, support, information and referrals to 1,540 hotline callers; and handled a caseload of 1,215 cases. During the proposed contract term, they plan to serve over 350 unduplicated victims; assist 1,200 hotline callers; and handle a caseload of 960 cases.

The effectiveness of this program will be determined in two parts, which will enhance My Sisters' Place's ability to assess the efficacy and productivity of the non-residential program. Voluntary client surveys will be given out in both English and Spanish upon the closing of cases. This will serve to assess the client's overall satisfaction of the services rendered as well as recommendations for improvements. For example in 2009, 90 voluntary surveys reported that:

- 97% of clients know more ways to plan for their safety
- 94% of clients know more about community resources
- 89% of clients feel more comfortable asking for help
- 100% of clients were satisfied with the quality of services received

The effectiveness of the substance abuse program will be determined by pre- and post-tests. Outcome results will be measured by participants' increased knowledge in various areas. For example, in 2009 186 post-tests revealed that:

- 93% of participants were able to identify different types of abuse
- 89% of participants showed an understanding of the interconnection between domestic violence and substance abuse
- 92% of participants were able to identify power and control tactics as they relate to domestic violence and substance abuse

If this resolution were not approved, the safety and security of domestic violence victims would be compromised. Without receiving these vital support services, the probability of continued and escalating abuse is substantially increased. Consequently, this may endanger their lives and the lives of their children.

Payments will be made to My Sisters' Place on a quarterly basis for services rendered in accordance with an approved budget. The Westchester County Office for Women will be responsible for monitoring My Sisters' Place's performance under this Agreement by means of site visits, as well as their monthly statistics and quarterly narratives. Separate statistical reports will be kept for the drug and alcohol program and the basic non-residential program.

Further, Sections 3(a)(xvii), (xviii) and (xix) exempt the procurement of social services for those in need of public assistance, those in need of mental health or alcoholism treatment, and for the County's youth and the elderly. While all of the victims of domestic violence do not fall into these exemption categories, many of them do so. The provision of social services to victims of domestic violence is not so substantially different from provision of services to the above

named groups that it should not be similarly exempt, so as to give the County absolute discretion to choose those agencies that it believes are best suited to provide these services. Accordingly, I ask 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 Agreement with My Sisters' Place, whereby My Sisters' Place will provide non-residential domestic violence services.

I recommend approval of the attached proposed Resolution.

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACT - 5-6-2010 - JOMARY VIEIRA, SECRETARY

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 determined that application of the procedural requirements contained therein, including the necessity of soliciting proposals, is neither cost effective nor expedient, and accordingly not in the best interests of the County in connection with the procurement of non-residential domestic violence services from My Sisters' Place, Inc.

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACT - 5-6-2010 - JOMARY VIEIRA, SECRETARY