

Robert P. Astorino
County Executive

Department of Social Services

Kevin P. Mahon
Commissioner

12402

Date: June 22, 2010

To: Board of Acquisition and Contract

From: Kevin P. Mahon
Commissioner

Subject: Resolution authorizing 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 family reunification or alternative arrangements for children residing or potentially residing outside of their homes or communities for the period August 1, 2010 through July 31, 2011 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 family reunification or alternative arrangements for children residing or potentially residing outside of their homes or communities for the period August 1, 2010 through July 31, 2011 in an amount not to exceed \$57,000 to be paid monthly pursuant to an approved budget and subject to appropriation.

It is to be noted that this program is in line with the cost savings plan of the Department as it is aimed at increasing the number of children going home more expeditiously by increasing the visits and services. Additionally, this contract meets one of the goals of the Department in that it allows for faith-based local institutions to participate in the mediation and reunification process of children and families of the communities.

This contract serves a **public purpose** because it promotes family stability, safety of children and improved parent-child interactions. Furthermore, it assists the Department in achieving its goal of reunifying families and promoting permanency.

The **goals and objectives** of this contract are to facilitate permanency for youth in foster care. Friendship Visitation Center program will accomplish this goal by providing a safe and neutral environment for family reunification, establish and maintain connections between children, their families and communities. In order to achieve its goals and objectives, Friendship Visitation Center program will:

- Provide support for parents during visits through redirection and coaching to include parenting skills training, modeling age appropriate expectations
- Ensure children's safety during 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 for the children of Westchester County through the reunification of children with their families.

Additionally, the **goals and objectives are in the best interest of the County** in terms of **fiscal responsibility** as the services provided by Friendship Visitation Center program help to reduce the need for foster care placements and the cost associated with such placements by promoting the reunification of children with their families.

The cost of foster care in a family foster setting can range from \$19.26 to \$57.76 per day per child depending on the age and level of care provided. That translates into an annualized foster care cost from \$7,029.90 to \$21,082.40 per child per year.

The negative consequence for not approving this agreement will be that the Department may show a decrease in its ability to facilitate court ordered visitation services, thereby a less expeditious reunification process. Allowing for increased and consistent visitation would promote the preservation and strengthening of parent-child relationships; reduce the negative effects of separation for the child and the parent and serve as a strategy for reunifying families and achieving permanency.

The **goals and objectives as stated in the resolution will be tracked and monitored** to evaluate success using the performance measurement indicators developed by the Department and approved by the County Budget Office. They include, but are not limited to, submission of periodic reports by the vendor and making onsite visits.

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.

Therefore, 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.

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACT - 7-15-2010 - JOMARY VIEIRA, SECRETARY

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 family reunification or alternative arrangements for children residing or potentially residing outside of their homes or communities for the period August 1, 2010 through July 31, 2011 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

2010
2011

Fund	Dept	Major Program, Program & Phase Or Unit	Object/ Sub-Object	Trust Account	Dollars
101	22	8900	5960	-----	\$23,750
101	22	8900	5960	-----	\$33,250

Budget Funding Year(s): 2010-2011
(must match resolution)

Start Date: 8/1/10 End Date: 7/31/11

Funding Source

Tax Dollars: 41%
State Aid: 36%
Federal Aid: 23%
Other _____

\$57,000
(must match resolution)