



Robert P. Astorino
County Executive

Department of Social Services

Kevin M. McGuire
Commissioner

35779

To: Board of Acquisition and Contract

From: Kevin M. McGuire
Commissioner of Social Services

Date: August 23, 2013

Re: **Authority for the County to enter into an agreement with Westhab, Inc. to operate the Rental Assistance Program (“RAP”) for the term September 1, 2013 through August 31, 2018 in the total amount not to exceed \$5,045,000 to be paid pursuant to an approved budget and subject to appropriations**

On June 3, 2013, the Westchester County Department of Social Services (“Department”) issued a Request for Proposals for “Preventive Respite Services” (the “RFP”). The Department received proposals from two agencies: Community Housing Innovations, Inc (CHI) and Westhab, Inc. After an evaluation of the proposals by a panel of five Department staff, the Department has determined that the proposal submitted by Westhab, Inc. was most advantageous to the Department for the following reasons:

1. CHI’s proposal emulates a continuation of Section 8 while Westhab’s proposal outlines a plan to transition participants off “RAP” through better paying jobs.
2. CHI’s proposal mentions participants’ ability to pay rent without assistance (self-pay) as a favorable outcome with no further indication of additional outcomes to measure program success. Westhab’s proposal identified several benchmarks with each related to securing a good job as the best way to transition off “RAP”.

Overall, Westhab presented the strongest proposal with the greatest chance for effective use of limited tax levy.

In addition, Westhab has contracted with the Department for over a decade to deliver effective solutions for homelessness, including the operation of “RAP” since 2001. Westhab

continues to work with the Department in the development of creative pathways to permanent housing for the homeless. Westhab is involved in innovative programs such as the Emergency Housing Assistance Program (EHAP), Shelter Plus Care, and "RAP." Westhab has placed more than 6,000 homeless households into permanent housing. In recent years, Westhab has adopted a comprehensive Housing First approach, including a focus on Rapid Re-Housing, aimed to reduce the length of stay in the homeless system and prevent recidivism.

It is therefore recommended that your Honorable Board authorize the County of Westchester to enter into an agreement with Westhab, Inc. to operate the Rental Assistance Program ("RAP") for the term September 1, 2013 through August 31, 2018 in the annual amount of \$1,009,000 for a total not to exceed amount of \$5,045,000 for the term of the agreement (the "Agreement"), to be paid pursuant to an approved budget and subject to appropriations.

Westchester County DSS developed "RAP" in 2000 to address the ongoing problem of increasing homelessness and lack of affordable housing in Westchester County. "RAP" was initially developed as a transition from homelessness to Section 8. In recent years, Section 8 has ceased to accept new applications and has frozen waiting lists. As a result, this program has had to continue to provide shelter subsidies long beyond the original intent of the program. As of January 31, 2013, the program began providing subsidies to a total of 32 families and 33 singles.

There are three basic types of subsidies that Westchester "RAP" provides. "RAP" for families is designed to assist where the head of household is actively employed and earning enough to be over-income for ongoing Temporary Assistance from DSS. Single adults, homeless individuals and childless couples may also be referred to "RAP". This aspect of the program is to assist disabled, chronically homeless individuals and childless couples leave the shelter system and find and maintain permanent housing. The third and newer section of "RAP" provides partial rent subsidies (generally \$224 per month) to small families who are currently part of the county's shelter system.

The proposed Agreement will operate the "RAP" program for 32 families and 33 singles in the Department "RAP" program, as well as 15 additional two person households. The Westhab "RAP" program customizes resident support to the three identified subpopulations:

1. Disabled and/or chronically homeless individuals
2. Working families who are over-income to receive Temporary Assistance benefits from the County, but cannot afford to pay rent with their own income
3. Two-person families currently enrolled in the County shelter system

The Agreement will serve the public purpose in that the "RAP" program reduces the exorbitant cost of shelter stays by moving participants to permanent housing. Reducing County cost can lower the local tax burden. In addition, the "RAP" program stabilizes families and enables participants to live independent self-sufficient lives and contribute to the County economy.

A resolution is annexed hereto, which I recommend for your favorable consideration.

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 Westhab, Inc., to operate the Rental Assistance Program (“RAP”) for the term September 1, 2013 through August 31, 2018 in the annual amount of \$1,009,000 for a total not to exceed amount of \$5,045,000 to be paid pursuant to an approved budget; and be it further

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

RESOLVED, that this Agreement is also subject to further financial analysis of the impact of any New York State Budget (“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 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 impact of any such budget(s) 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 the agreement upon reasonable prior written notice; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the County Executive or his authorized designee is empowered to execute any and all documents necessary to effectuate the purposes hereof.

Account to be Charged/credited	Fund	Dept	Major Program, Program & Phase Or Unit	Object/ Sub Object	Trust Account	Dollars
2013	101	22	8900	5960	----	\$ 336,333
2014	101	22	8900	5960	----	\$1,009,000
2015	101	22	8900	5960	-----	\$1,009,000
2016	101	22	8900	5960	-----	\$1,009,000
2017	101	22	8900	5960	-----	\$1,009,000
2018	101	22	8900	5960	-----	\$ 672,667

Budget Funding Year(s) 2013 – 2018 Start Date: 9/1/13 End Date: 08/31/18
(must match resolution)

Funding Source Tax Dollars: 100%

State Aid:

\$5,045,000 Federal Aid:

(must match resolution)

Other:

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACT - 09/26/2013 - JOMAR VIEIRA, SECRETARY