

Robert P. Astorino
County Executive

Department of Social Services

Kevin P. Mahon
Commissioner

DATE January 25, 2010

TO: Board of Acquisition and Contract

FROM: Kevin P. Mahon, Commissioner
Department of Social Services

RE: Authority to enter into Agreements with the two (2) agencies listed below in the aggregate amount not-to-exceed \$50,000 for the purpose of promoting and coordinating the County's 2010 Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program for a term commencing on January 1, 2010 and continuing through May 31, 2010 to be paid pursuant to an approved budget and subject to appropriation.

Authority is sought for the County of Westchester, acting by and through its Department of Social Services, Office of Workforce Investment ("DSS"), to enter into Agreements with Westchester Community Opportunity Program, Inc. ("WestCOP") and Interfaith Council for Action, Inc. (the "IFCA") pursuant to which these agencies will render services to promote and coordinate the County's 2010 Earned Income Tax Credit ("EITC") program.

For the past several years, DSS has been managing a group of volunteers who help prepare taxes for Westchester County residents to take advantage of the Earned Income Tax Credit ("EITC"). The EITC is a refundable Federal/State tax credit for eligible individuals and families who work and have income that falls below a specified level. The EITC reduces the amount of tax one owes and may result in significant tax refunds for those most in need. In addition to EITC, the program helps qualified families apply for other tax credits such as the Child Tax credit, Education credits, Elderly credits and Dependent Child Care credits. This program is regulated under the guidelines established by the IRS. In order to meet the quality standards the IRS requires that a Tax Coordinator be on site during operating hours. In past years, the program has far outstripped the staffing resources of DSS to manage, promote and coordinate the sites and provide mobile service. As such, beginning in 2007, DSS started contracting out these services. The Tax Coordinator manages the tax site and supervises the volunteers throughout the tax filing season.

Under the terms of the proposed Agreements, WestCOP will provide Tax Coordinators for seven (7) communities located in: Yonkers, White Plains, Peekskill, Mt. Vernon, Brewster, Eastchester, and New Rochelle. Similarly, the Interfaith Council for Action, Inc., (IFCA) will supply Tax Coordinators for two (2) communities located in: Ossining and Peekskill. Tax coordinator services will include, but shall not be limited to, recruitment, staffing, training, customer service, marketing & promotion, site management and tax preparation.

The term of the Agreements will commence on January 1, 2010 and continue through May 31, 2010. In consideration for the services to be rendered, the agencies shall be paid in the individual amounts set forth below.

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
Westchester Community Opportunity Program, Inc. ("WestCOP")	\$43,000
Interfaith Council for Action, Inc. ("IFCA")	\$7,000

The provisions of Section 5 of the Westchester County Procurement Policy were followed. On or about November 12, 2009, the Department solicited written price quotes from various vendors providing tax coordinator services. Several means were used to distribute the RFP to potential responders. These included: a public notice in the Journal News, postings on the Westchester County and the Westchester One Stop Employment Center websites and email distributions to a list of over one hundred (100) potential respondents. Recipients of this notice were also encouraged to help in distributing the RFP to other interested parties. The Department received the following three (3) responses to its solicitation:

Respondent's Names	Price Quote	Proposed Communities
Westchester Community Opportunity Program, Inc. ("WestCOP")	\$50,000	Yonkers, White Plains, Peekskill Mt. Vernon Brewster, Eastchester, and New Rochelle
Interfaith Council for Action, Inc. ("IFCA")	\$20,000	Ossining and Peekskill
Lisa Alexander, CPA	\$25,335	Peekskill

A review team comprised of representatives from the IRS, the United Way and the New York State Department of Labor, reviewed the written quotations and rated them in accordance with the following established evaluation criteria; project management and organization capacity (5 points); prior performance (10 points); quality control process (10 points); strength of the program (40 points); program measures indicators (15 points); budget (15 points) and client references (5 points). WestCOP and IFCA were selected to provide the aforesaid services based on the tabulated scores and the number of communities they proposed to serve. The following is a summary of the scores for each respondent:

Reviewer	WestCOP	Interfaith (IFCA)	Lisa Alexander
Sunnie Casimiro, IRS	92	93	36
Daryl Weingarten, IRS	80	90	61
Pat Anderson, United Way 211	100	90	57
Angela Pauling, NYSDOL	88	91	87
Average Score	90	91	60

These agreements serve a **public purpose** by assisting eligible individuals and families in the County of Westchester who work and have income that falls below the specified level to prepare their annual tax returns for free and to take advantage of Federal and State Earned Income Tax Credits.

The goals and objectives of these Agreements are to prepare approximately 1500 returns proportionately distributed throughout the county at the aforesaid sites and at remote locations.

The goals and objectives are in the **best interests of the County in terms of fiscal responsibility**. EITC dollars have a significant impact on the lives of low and moderate income families as this is supplemental income for qualifying families who have a hard time making ends meet. Further, this additional income helps in breaking the cycle of poverty and improving their economic situation.

The Department is pleased to report that under the above said program in 2009, Westchester Community Opportunity Program, Inc. completed 542 returns against its goal of 500 and the Interfaith Community Action Program, Inc. completed 384 returns against its goal of 300.

If this Resolution were not approved, it would mean that at least 1500 low to moderate income county residents may not benefit from the free services and may compromise their tax credit benefits.

The goals and objectives will be tracked and monitored through reports to be prepared by the selected agencies. The agencies will report on the number of returns filed, the amount of tax refunds and the amount of EITC and other tax credits.

An appropriate resolution is herewith attached for your Honorable Board's consideration.

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACT - 11-18-2010 - JIMMIE WEAVER, SECRETARY

RESOLUTION

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

RESOLVED, that the County of Westchester, acting by and through its Department of Social Services, Office of Workforce Investment, is hereby authorized to enter into agreements with the two (2) agencies listed below for the purpose of providing services to promote and coordinate the County's 2010 Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program for a term commencing on January 1, 2010 and continuing through May 31, 2010 for an aggregate amount not to exceed \$50,000 to be paid pursuant to an approved budget in the individual amounts as set forth below;

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding amount</u>
Westchester Community Opportunity Program, Inc.	\$43,000.00
Interfaith Council for Action, Inc.	\$ 7,000.00

and be it further

RESOLVED, that these Contracts are subject to Appropriation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that these Agreements are 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 these Agreements. 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 authorized designee is hereby authorized to execute all documents, 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
	275	22	896J	4531	T896	\$50,000

Budget Funding Year(s): 2009 (Grant Year) Start Date: 01/01/10 End Date: 05/31/10
(must match resolution)

Funding Source Tax Dollars: 26%
 State Aid: 35%
\$50,000 Federal Aid: 39%

(must match resolution) Other:

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACT - 2-18-2010 - JOMARY VIEIRA, SECRETARY