

77125

TO: Honorable Members of the Board of Acquisition and Contract

FROM: Honorable George Latimer
Westchester County Executive

Robin Schlaff
Director, Office for Women

DATE: May 27, 2020

SUBJECT: Resolution to exempt the procurement of an agreement with My Sisters' Place, Inc., pursuant to which it will provide legal services as well as crisis intervention and individual counseling for victims of domestic violence at the County's Mount Vernon District Office, pursuant to Section 3(a)(xxi) of the Westchester County Procurement Policy.

Authority is hereby requested from your Honorable Board to exempt the procurement of an agreement (the "Agreement") between the County of Westchester, acting by and through its Office for Women, (the "County"), and My Sisters' Place, Inc. ("My Sisters' Place"), pursuant to Section 3(a)(xxi) of the Westchester County Procurement Policy. My Sisters' Place will provide legal services as well as crisis intervention and individual counseling for victims of domestic violence at the County's Mount Vernon District Office, which is a more convenient location for those living in southern Westchester County, for a term commencing on January 1, 2020 and continuing through December 31, 2020, for a not to exceed amount of \$136,121.00.

Ordinarily under Section 6 of the Westchester County Procurement Policy, the County is required to solicit competitive proposals for a procurement expected to cost \$75,000.00 or more for these type of services, through a request for proposals ("RFP"). However, soliciting competitive proposals through the issuance of an RFP is not in the best interest of the County as My Sisters' Place is uniquely qualified to provide these types of services. For almost thirty years, My Sisters' Place has represented tens of thousands of clients in Westchester with high-quality, competent, accessible attorneys and paralegals.

The County believes that the requested exemption is justified because My Sisters' Place has successfully provided these services under contracts administered through the Office for Women since 1992, offering a full array of services to low-income individuals and families requiring legal assistance in meeting their essential needs and to preserve the stability of their households.

The goals and objectives of the proposed agreement are for My Sisters' Place to provide legal services as well as crisis intervention and individual counseling for victims of domestic violence at the County's Mount Vernon District Office.

The proposed agreement will serve a public purpose of promoting the public health, safety and general welfare by enhancing the safety and independence of victims of abuse. If victims 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 the years that My Sisters' Place has been funded through contracts administered by the Office for Women, your Board has determined that it was in the best interests of the County to exempt those contracts from the Westchester County Procurement Policy requirements because of its unique focus. Based on the foregoing, it is proposed that the best interests of the County would be served by again exempting the procurement of the proposed Agreement from the Westchester County Procurement Policy and Procedures, pursuant to Section 3(a)(xxi) thereof. Accordingly, a resolution to exempt this procurement is hereby submitted for your consideration.

We respectfully recommend the adoption of the attached resolution.

GL/SB/CMC

RESOLUTION

Upon a communication from the Westchester County Executive and 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 hereby 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 of Westchester in connection with the procurement of an agreement with My Sisters' Place, Inc. ("My Sisters' Place"), for a term commencing on January 1, 2020 and continuing through December 31, 2020, pursuant to which My Sisters' Place will provide legal services as well as crisis intervention and individual counseling for victims of domestic violence at the County's Mount Vernon District Office.

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACTS - 361041020 - USA MBIJAJ, SECRETARY