

**95658**

To: Honorable Members of the Board of Acquisition and Contract

From: Robin Schlaff  
Director, Office for Women

Date: August 15, 2022

Subject: Resolution to exempt the procurement of an agreement with MJW Consultants LLC, pursuant to which Michelle Walker will continue to serve as Director of the Westchester County Family Justice Center pursuant to Section 3(a)(xxi) of the Westchester County Procurement Policy.

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By a resolution approved on August 25, 2022, your Honorable Board authorized the County of Westchester (the "County"), acting by and through its Office for Women, to enter into a grant agreement with the New York State Office of Victim Services ("OVS") pursuant to which the County will accept a grant awarded to it by OVS under OVS' Victim and Witness Assistance Grant Program ("Grant"), in the amount of \$377,617.32, with a County contribution of 25% in matching funds in an amount not to exceed \$94,404.33, in order to operate the Westchester County Family Justice Center ("FJC") for the period from October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2025 ("Grant Agreement").

Authority is now hereby requested from your Honorable Board to exempt the procurement of an agreement (the "Agreement") between the County and MJW Consultants LLC ("MJW"), pursuant to Section 3(a)(xxi) of the Westchester County Procurement Policy. Michelle Walker of MJW will continue to serve as Director of the FJC, for a term from October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2025.

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, Ms. Walker of MJW has extensive experience providing services for victims of crime and has managerial experience including supervising staff at the FJC. Her familiarity with OVS grant implementation is also very beneficial for Grant compliance.

The County believes that the requested exemption is justified because MJW has successfully provided these services under contracts administered through the Office for Women since 2018 under which Ms. Walker has served as Director of the FJC. In addition to her supervisory and managerial duties, she has been providing services for crime victims and their families for the past 20 years. Such services have included filing compensation claims, advocacy within the court systems, training rape crisis helpline

volunteers on the effects of crime in our community and how to navigate the criminal justice system, collaboration on programs for victims, and conducting community presentations. She has also coordinated and managed data collection for various work sites and services, as well as monthly, quarterly, and semi-annual reports for funders, including OVS.

The proposed agreement will serve a public purpose by providing a director to supervise the daily operations of the FJC, which enhances the safety and independence of victims of abuse. If victims are empowered at the FJC 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 by the FJC to become independent and self-sufficient they are not as likely to be dependent on public assistance.

The goal and objective of the proposed agreement is to provide a director for the FJC and thereby ensure the overall sustainability of the FJC and ensure that the FJC provides services to victims.

The goal and objective of the proposed agreement is in the best interests of the County in terms of the public health, safety and general welfare, as providing a director the FJC and thereby ensuring the overall sustainability of the FJC and ensuring that the FJC provides services will ultimately enhance the safety and independence of victims of abuse.

The goal and objective of the proposed agreement will be tracked and monitored by the Office for Women.

Pursuant to Section 3(a)(xxi), the Westchester County Procurement Policy are not applicable to any procurement for which this Honorable Board determines, by resolution passed prior to commencing such procurement, that compliance with the policy would not be in the best interests of the County. For the reasons set forth above, it is proposed the best interests of the County would be served by exempting the procurement of the Agreement from the County Procurement Policy.

I respectfully recommend the adoption of the attached resolution.

## 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 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 MJW Consultants LLC ("MJW"), for a term commencing on October 1, 2022 and continuing through September 30, 2025, pursuant to which Michelle Walker of MJW will continue to serve as Director of the Westchester County Family Justice Center

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACT - 09/23/2022 - RAYMOND SCUMACI, SECRETARY