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THE BIDDER'S CONFERENCE HELD FOR

RFP 2009-06

PRISONER REENTRY INITIATIVE

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HELD AT:

NYS Department of Parole
97 Central Avenue
Albany, New York

June 16, 2009 at 1:00 p.m.

REPORTER: DURR COURT REPORTING
ANN MARIE NAPIERKOWSKI, Hearing Reporter
(315) 735-7429

1 MR. NESICH: I want to welcome everybody to the
2 New York State Division of Parole, Buffalo and Albany
3 locations.

4 The Bidders Conference for RFP is something that
5 we take very seriously. The intent is to make sure that
6 the providers understand what we are asking them to
7 provide, what we are asking them to outline, what the
8 requirements for the contract would be. It is not to
9 discuss necessarily why we ask X instead of Y, it is
10 rather we need to spend our time answering the questions
11 that you need addressed. Along the way we are going to
12 submit some horror stories with people that have left
13 out one small technical component and not able to accept
14 their proposal. We'll say it again and again check it
15 two times, three times, and that is not to no one's
16 advantage, certainly not to yours.

17 Let's go around the room and maybe, Pat, start
18 with the Parole Buffalo people.

19 MS. FITZMAURICE: We have Gino Russi, he is the
20 Regional Director for Region 5, Elmira, Buffalo,
21 Rochester, and all these surrounding areas.

22 We have Alpina Taylor, she is down here in the
23 peach colored sweater. She is area supervisor for the
24 Elmira District.

25 We have Elizabeth Wilk, she is deputy for

1 Regional Reentry Services. She is responsible for the
2 Regional Services PRI grant, which you are here for
3 today, and grant is area specific responsible for the
4 Buffalo area office and that is the area that this
5 particular contract is going to be with.

6 We have Angelo Ervelino, Parole Reentry Services
7 and he is responsible for the region Elmira and
8 Binghamton area.

9 We have Pedro Hernandez, Parole Officer, who is
10 responsible for those particular areas in this area
11 office as well as Elmira.

12 Lori Dibblo is to my right, she is runs
13 Region 5, she is administrative assistant who will work
14 be closely with you and make sure that the services are
15 provided in appropriate manner.

16 I think we'll start with the folks that are
17 here, if that is okay.

18 MR. NESICH: Do you want me to go ahead?

19 MS. FITZMAURICE: Do your group.

20 MR. NESICH: I want to thank you, Pat and Lori,
21 in this year of budget cuts. Since Lori is running the
22 Area 5, I don't see a need for Gino. No, no. Notice I
23 didn't state anyone runs administration.

24 I am Jeff Nesich, I am the is chief financial
25 officer of parole.

1 To my left is the distinguished Robert Smith
2 looking very presidential. He is one the reentry
3 director for Downstate. He is primarily in charge of
4 ACCESS and referring to drug treatment programs in the
5 city of New York, as well as various other management
6 positions that we put him in.

7 Mike Buckman, Director of Policy Analysis and is
8 involved in all the research, particularly the data
9 provisions of this RFP and what we are looking for, why,
10 and its purpose.

11 Rick Knuth is with operations, he is operation
12 representative here. He is involved in RFP procurement
13 electronic monitoring, as well as working with Mike's
14 office, management of the information and various data
15 bases and reports and things.

16 We have in the corner Roger McMillan who works
17 in the budget unit.

18 We have Amber Steinhilber, she is one of our
19 touch associate budget analyst.

20 We have next to her Mike Oesterman in charge of
21 the audit unit. We met this morning, of course, in
22 preparation of working with this project.

23 Next here we have Melissa Perrotty, she is the
24 Director of Budget and Audit.

25 Next we have Lucretia Bailey, she is in the

1 Contract Unit Management.

2 Next to her we have Mary Ann Blazejewski, she is
3 behind me to the right, she is in the Budget Unit.

4 Next to her we have our newest employee,
5 Ann Marie Napierkowski, who is our reporter.

6 To my right and your left Barbara Farley,
7 Director of Contract Management Unit.

8 Next to her off to the right is Marla Henriques,
9 works in the Contract Management Unit.

10 Last but not least is Kathy Kiley, associate
11 counsel representing counsel's office today.

12 You can do the providers.

13 MS. FITZMAURICE: I think that is great.

14 MS. HEBELER: Hi, my name is Alysa Hebel, I
15 work for Spectrum Human Services, vocational services
16 program that we are developing as well as our peer
17 services program.

18 MR. NESICH: Welcome.

19 MR. WILLIAMS: I am Tim Williams, the Director
20 of the Center for Employment Opportunities.

21 MR. NESICH: Traveled a long way, welcome.

22 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes.

23 MR. NELSON: I am Richard Nelson from Buffalo
24 Urban League and Reentry Program. Good morning.

25 MS. JEMMOTT: Barbara Jemmott, I am supervisor

1 of the Group Ministries.

2 MR. NESICH: Good afternoon.

3 MS. BOYD: I am Andrea Boyd, Program Evaluator
4 from Group Ministries.

5 MR. NESICH: I am sorry, could you say that
6 again, please?

7 MS. BOYD: Andrea Boyd, from Group Ministries
8 and I am program evaluator.

9 MR. NESICH: Maybe the bidders can move closer.
10 Group Ministries, make sure you get closer so you can
11 hear what is going on and we can hear you as well.

12 MS. HAYES: My name is Louise Hayes from the
13 Buffalo Urban League. I am from the accounting office.

14 MR. NESICH: All right. What we are going to
15 do, I am going to hit on a few important components of
16 the Division's RFP process and where in the RFP some of
17 these highlights are. I am going to ask, then ask Pat
18 or Elizabeth to give you four or five minutes of
19 summation of what we are looking for here.

20 After our discussion with the federal
21 government, they were here this morning talking about
22 their plans and how we should use their funds, being the
23 Division of Parole, takes the procurement very, very,
24 very seriously. We look to define what we are looking
25 for in a very clear informationable way and then we hold

1 these bidder's conferences to make sure that if someone
2 is not completely clear we can explain to them our goal,
3 to give you enough time and enough information that you
4 can submit a very good proposal for our consideration.

5 Once the proposals are submitted we have an
6 independent committee that reviews these proposals and
7 scores them completely, that is the account management
8 committee, in conjunction with working with counsel's
9 office. The proposals come in and are examined that
10 this includes all the required information necessary for
11 them to be passed along to the scoring level two review
12 process.

13 That process consists of a number of Division
14 managers who independently will review the proposals
15 based upon the managed criteria and score them and award
16 is made to the proposal that is considered to be, by the
17 Committee to be in the best interest of the Division of
18 Parole in terms of the best program for the least amount
19 of cost.

20 The cost is fixed, the federal grant is a
21 specific sum of money. Normally someone will ask at a
22 bidder's conference what price are we looking for and I
23 am always able to say to them a dollar and it is like a
24 good joke, except it is not a good joke for them. We
25 want all the proposals to come in at the exact dollar

1 amount, we want to is \$533,000 over the two-year period.

2 Couple things that are really important in terms
3 of the mechanics of submitting your proposal. First
4 thing is it has to be here on time and it has to be in
5 our hands on time. We have had stories of cars breaking
6 down, UPS guaranteeing delivery and Fed Ex and not
7 getting here. We cannot accept it if it is a minute
8 late, if it is a second late. We can't make an
9 extension for the RFP due date unless we publish that
10 extension and give everybody that extension. I suggest
11 get it here before the due date, the day before. If you
12 get it done that morning and you have to rely on someone
13 to drive it, you better make sure that you rely on
14 someone that is dependable.

15 Secondly, make sure that you read the
16 instructions and I suggest independently have someone
17 look at the check list, look at all the documents. We
18 have had to throw out proposals because it was not
19 signed by an authorized signature. We have had to throw
20 out proposals because information that was required was
21 not there, such as a certificate of occupancy, those
22 kinds of things. We cannot consider your proposal if
23 the mandatory information provision is not met. In
24 doubt, call and ask. And questions from you, you can
25 submit questions in writing. If you are curious do you

1 submit background information and all those questions,
2 they can be submitted on the website so the playing
3 field is level.

4 Today we are going to answer all the questions
5 that you have, that is what we are looking to do here,
6 and make sure that you understand our thinking so you
7 are not in a disadvantage in any way.

8 Before I turn it over to Pat to talk about the
9 program, some of the specifics of the program, let me
10 address something that came up in this morning's meeting
11 with the federal authorities. We hope that when you
12 look at this RFP we have done our job. If you have
13 looked at this RFP and said, whoa, this is a little
14 different, this is a better tool, this gives us a shot
15 to do something a little different. The notion of using
16 the subsidies for incentives as employment as a new
17 concept is, it is a new concept for us and feds said
18 financially a new concept for them.

19 The thinking here is that by providing an
20 employer, preferable a business that is out in the
21 community, providing an incentive to hire that parolee,
22 that they will work with that parolee and if that
23 parolee is late for work two days in the first week, but
24 works hard, little longer lunch in the first week, but
25 because they were subsidized they will want those

1 bonuses along the way. A week, three weeks, five weeks
2 that parolee is in sink with that business, that
3 business says that parolee has been a good thing. Jeff
4 has been a good worker, I like Jeff, and when that
5 subsidy goes away, he is late a few times but he has
6 been already trained, knows that machine, I am going to
7 keep that guy.

8 If a month after every parolee has been fired by
9 those employers, then the program failed. I am not
10 saying it is your fault, we just missed something some
11 how. We want to test the concept of giving employers a
12 bonus concept to hire the parolees and give incentives
13 to this. That is what it is about.

14 I am going to ask Pat to talk to you about that
15 just for a few minutes, we want to leave as much time as
16 possible for you guys to ask questions. Also, I have to
17 have a little time so Barbara, the Contract Management
18 Unit Director, she will tell me that I forgot to mention
19 something.

20 MS. FITZMAURICE: Elizabeth will jump in as we
21 go through here. Everybody in this room is probably
22 aware of it, one of the key factors of that incentive is
23 ability to maintain themselves employment, transitional
24 employment and permanent employment at the same time.

25 We in parole, we have an opportunity to look at

1 some fairly sobering employment statistics, particularly
2 when it comes to our population, where in the last
3 year's period in the Upstate area, which is everything
4 outside of New York City, the amount of full-time
5 employment folks on parole have gone from fifteen
6 percent down to eight, that is a sobering, sobering
7 statistic. We are looking for an opportunity here as we
8 have been provided, as Jeff said, through a federal
9 grant that has been made available with the assistance
10 of ACJS and ourselves to put together a substantial
11 program to benefit people in the area, this area.
12 Everybody that lives here certainly is aware that the
13 western part of the State, employment is a massive issue
14 right now.

15 In this proposal, obviously you have all read
16 this, we are trying to do something different from what
17 we have done in the past. We are trying to look to
18 subsidize employers, we are looking for an enhancement
19 at the end of that, we are interested in your ability to
20 inform the advisory group, looking for people to give a
21 amount of incentive as a part of this program and to
22 make things happen.

23 In addition, as you read in the proposal itself,
24 we are looking for a minimum of two-hundred folks to be
25 assessed prerelease to be worked with inside the

1 facility, post-release supervision as well as
2 employment. We are looking for you to look to both male
3 and females from the Orleans Correctional and also
4 females in the Albion Correctional. Orleans is forty
5 minutes from here, forty-five minutes, and Albion is
6 right next to it. We are looking for you to go to those
7 facilities and work with the staff there and parolees
8 coming out of there and working with the correction
9 staff as well.

10 MS. WILK: Many of the features that are in this
11 are dictated to us by the federal government and I want
12 to stress that there has to be a minimum of two-hundred
13 individuals who we provide services to prerelease and
14 that is a minimum and that is something that is
15 non-negotiable. When we come into the community, of
16 course we know that there is going to be a certain
17 degree of drop off, but two-hundred prerelease is
18 minimum.

19 Again you read the RFP, I am just telling you
20 what you already read, but to drive home that the
21 services we want to have is a particular curriculum that
22 is provided in the facility, so there is going to be a
23 lot of work in the facility before they enter parole.
24 The people would be identified by parole so you are not
25 going to be out there by yourself kind of trying to

1 figure out who to contact or who you can contact and we
2 also want to work with community at large. There is an
3 expectation whoever receives the bid, whoever receives
4 the proposal or the contract will have to work with the
5 community and provide some outreach to the community,
6 educate them on all the benefits to go along with this,
7 with hiring a parolee, federal bonding and tax breaks
8 and such.

9 MS. FITZMAURICE: The other comment that I would
10 like to make, obviously you will be going in or your
11 staff will be going in both these facilities, Albion and
12 Orleans Correctional, you will have to go through the
13 Department of Corrections Volunteer Assessment Program,
14 they will be looking at the backgrounds of folks.
15 Clearly you have to have somebody that can go into the
16 correctional facility. I think that is it for us for
17 now.

18 MR. NESICH: Okay. I think we are ready to go
19 to questions and certainly we'll answer all the
20 questions that you have. We have as much time as you
21 have and if you could please identify yourself when you
22 ask your question.

23 MS. FITZMAURICE: We have one.

24 MS. HAYES: Louise Hayes from Buffalo Urban
25 League. Just to clarify that the current certificate of

1 occupancy is equivalent to, what do you expect from
2 that?

3 MR. NESICH: We need to see documentation that
4 the building that you are going to run the program out
5 of meets code and is acceptable to the local government
6 as an acceptable building to have parolees. In that
7 regard as people, twenty, thirty, forty people coming in
8 doing a session. Obviously if somebody was going to try
9 to run this program out of their basement, they wouldn't
10 be approved probably by the local government, they
11 wouldn't be zoned that way to do that.

12 We want to make sure that the proposed site
13 where you are going to run the program is federally
14 licensed and approved by the local government and meets
15 code, which is what it has to do. It is not a fire
16 hazard and insurances that we have to get if the
17 building is approved and certificate of occupancy to
18 work as a public meeting or local.

19 MS. HAYES: Thank you. And also some of these
20 forms that we have to fill out are PDF and I have been
21 trying to get them off the Word. Do you have these in
22 Word, where to bring them down and fill them out, the
23 forms that are required?

24 MS. FARLEY: They are not actually accessible in
25 Word. However, I am going to post, they are not

1 specifically parole forms, Department of Labor forms,
2 Tax and Finance, there are a whole bunch of different
3 websites that you can go to and they may have the actual
4 form to fill out.

5 MS. HAYES: I did get some when I wrote to, I am
6 not sure of the lady.

7 MS. FARLEY: To me, Barbara Farley.

8 MS. HAYES: They were all PDF, I still can't
9 fill them in or can't fill them in and saved them so I
10 am recreating the ones that I can.

11 MS. FARLEY: Even if you actually write on those
12 with pen, that is acceptable, as long as they are signed
13 and notarized, you don't have to specifically type them
14 in there.

15 MS. HAYES: Thank you.

16 MR. NESICH: Write very neatly.

17 MR. WILLIAMS: Related to -- Tim Williams, from
18 the Center of Employment Opportunities. Related to the
19 certificate of occupancy, what if for example the agency
20 or proposal is not the lease holder or not the owner,
21 would an agreement stating the relationship between the
22 lease holder and the agency and their certificate of
23 occupancy be sufficient?

24 MR. NESICH: Yes. That is the key, their
25 certificate of occupancy, yes.

1 MR. WILLIAMS: And one other -- actually I have
2 two other questions. Tim Williams. In the document on
3 Page 5 states, the service states that only two
4 categories of offenses are not eligible for the program,
5 sex offenses and juvenile offenses. The PRI, federal
6 PRI funds employ people who have never been convicted of
7 a violent offense or sex offense. Is the Division of
8 Parole indicating that violent offenses will be accepted
9 into this program?

10 MR. NESICH: Yes, absolutely. Otherwise we
11 would have nowhere near the numbers.

12 MR. WILLIAMS: Again on Page 5 it states, under
13 programs it states the contractor will use an
14 employability assessment instrument approved by the
15 Division of Parole, is there something that you are
16 thinking for this and something that you would expect to
17 develop for us?

18 MR. NESICH: We would expect you to develop it
19 on your own or provide us with something.

20 MR. WILLIAMS: And just one last question. On
21 the scope of services, the statement the provider will
22 run the four-day orientation facility at Orleans or
23 Albion, is it possible for this provider to offer these
24 in the community after release?

25 MR. NESICH: No, it is required that it happens

1 prerelease.

2 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you.

3 MR. NESICH: You are welcome.

4 MS. WILK: Any other questions?

5 MS. FITZMAURICE: Does Barbara want to discuss
6 about her unit, her contract management unit?

7 MS. FARLEY: You pretty much hit everything.

8 MR. NESICH: Anybody else have a question about
9 the proposal which is laid out there? No? This is
10 done, this is independent evaluation based upon
11 subjective analysis based upon the criteria that is laid
12 out in the document.

13 MS. FITZMAURICE: Does anybody have any
14 questions about when this is due and the time frame? I
15 think Jeff is clearly clear about it, when it says
16 specific due date by 5:00 on the particular date, it
17 doesn't mean 5:05.

18 MR. NESICH: The officer at the front desk will
19 write the date and time that it comes in. He is not
20 going to reject it, he is going to write the day and
21 time on it and Barbara working with it will look at the
22 determination and if it is late we have to return it.
23 Also the October 1st start date is extremely firm, we
24 have to make sure that this program is it up and running
25 on the 1st. We can answer other questions that you

1 have, put them in writing, send them to us, we'll answer
2 those and Barbara will make sure those are all available
3 on the website. There is a cut-off date and we can't
4 answer questions after the cut-off date. One of the
5 things that bothers us is when you ask one or two days
6 after the cut-off date, you ask a simple question and we
7 can't answer it. Not that I don't want to but we have
8 to following these rules very being strictly.

9 MS. FITZMAURICE: Jeff. How many copies are we
10 asking folks to supply?

11 MS. FARLEY: Twelve plus an original.

12 MR. NESICH: That is the key. We also had
13 horror stories of eleven plus original, get somebody in
14 your organization and have them triple check every page
15 and every copy, the original is signed, does it contain
16 all the forms.

17 MS. FITZMAURICE: We also asked for double
18 space, right?

19 MS. FARLEY: Yes.

20 MS. FITZMAURICE: Only ten pages, which is a lot
21 of information to cram in.

22 MR. NESICH: You can go short on the production,
23 stick to the facts. We have a lot of, in the past you
24 get a proposal where we run a great program that does
25 fantastic as opposed to our program does this, our

1 program has this success rate. Try to use your words to
2 get the information across that you want us to read
3 because the actual characterization of how good the
4 program is going to be reviewed by the evaluation
5 committee.

6 MS. HEBELER: Excuse me, this is Alysa Hebel,
7 Spectrum Human Services. Will they be working with
8 reentry care programmer as well or we kind of take that
9 role as care coordinator?

10 MS. FARLEY: I see them being part of that team.
11 So there is a lot of information that is exchanged
12 prerelease, a lot of activity that occurs prerelease.
13 It is targeted -- not solely targeted but focusing
14 heavily on that unit incorporating this piece into the
15 whole process.

16 MS. FITZMAURICE: That being said, Elizabeth,
17 person coming out of Orleans may not have any substance
18 abuse issue at all.

19 MS. HEBELER: Will they need assistance with
20 housing at all or will we be able to help them with
21 that?

22 MS. WILK: There is many services wrapped around
23 the chair coordinator. I see their project can help
24 with employment and mainly that is really the primary
25 focus.

1 MR. NESICH: And you raised an excellent
2 question and let me use that question to make a very
3 important point. If we have two proposals that are
4 identical, one is a little better than the other one
5 based upon employment of the RFP, but the other proposal
6 is going to get free housing to everybody, we can't
7 consider the free housing, it is irrelevant to the
8 evaluation process because we didn't ask for housing,
9 that would be unfair. If you looking for a Chevy
10 Impala, we can't buy the Mercedes even if it comes in at
11 the same cost. Put your resources in the employment
12 area.

13 Another thing is Elizabeth is point person for
14 the program and Pat and Elizabeth will be working at
15 voucher review and she is the first place that you go
16 and Elizabeth reaches out to the budget people, or
17 Barbara, whoever it will be, but you will have
18 individuals to be your point person who will approve who
19 you hire and work with you in developing a program. Our
20 goal is work with you to make this a success.

21 MS. WILK: Can I add one thing, this is federal
22 requirement, we are subsidiary to those requirements.
23 It has to be a faith based or community based
24 organization. There is a provision in here where you
25 are allowed to partner with someone but the applicant

1 has to fall under that category. If you are profit
2 organization or some other type of format, whatever that
3 may be, you might not be eligible.

4 MR. NESICH: Essentially if you are
5 not-for-profit organization, we were looking basically
6 to reimburse not-for-profit organizations for working
7 with us and not in effect to use the federal money in
8 effect to pay a profit to an organization. Particularly
9 when you are dealing with parolees/inmates and dealing
10 with wage subsidies, we are not going in effect make a
11 profit to be made off of reduced wage for a parolee.

12 So, I think everyone here is not-for-profit
13 organization. If you are not sure, I think your
14 incorporation certificate, charity registration number,
15 there is some things that clearly indicates your tax
16 status, which is what we are really saying.

17 MS. FITZMAURICE: Anybody else have any other
18 questions, concerns? Okay, Jeff, I think we are good
19 here. Anything else that also you folks would like to
20 bring up?

21 MR. NESICH: No. Anything critical I left out?
22 No? I want to thank you all very much. We very much
23 hope that you all submit a proposal, we look forward to
24 getting as many different ideas from different proposals
25 based on the specs here. Please make sure you get it

1 here on time and please make sure what is required on
2 that check list is provided.

3 Questions can be put in writing per the RFP,
4 we'll try to answer those questions very quickly. It
5 will come to Barbara's unit and she'll reach out to
6 counsel and reach out to Mike or Rick and get that
7 answer, whatever you need and get it to you very
8 quickly. Thank you very much.

9 (Whereupon the proceeding concluded.)

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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

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I, ANN MARIE NAPIERKOWSKI, Court Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of New York, do hereby certify that the foregoing record taken by me at the place and date noted in the heading hereof is a true and accurate transcript of same to the best of my ability and belief.

Ann Marie Napierkowski

DATED: _____