

## **Purchasing in Dutchess County Municipalities**

### **Fact Sheet prepared by the League of Women Voters of the Mid-Hudson Region**

#### **Issues:**

- Responsibility for the purchasing function varies among municipalities: some use the town clerk, others a designated purchasing agent, others have department heads make purchases with signoffs from the supervisor and comptroller.
- Some towns have written procurement procedures, including requests for proposals and bid reviews; others do not.
- For large items like vehicles and fuel, most towns use the state bid system, unless they find cheaper items by going to bid; for smaller items, most towns shop independently.
- Few municipalities are aware of the Hudson Valley Municipal Purchasing Group which has a Regional Bid Notification System to notify businesses of bid and contract opportunities. Only Dutchess County, the City of Poughkeepsie and Town of Clinton are participating agencies.
- School Districts use BOCES and the state for most purchases, including workman's compensation, supplies, fuel oil, etc. No such centralized system exists for municipalities.
- Some towns and villages do share expenses in some categories such as fuel oil sand and salt (Red Hook/Tivoli)

#### **Proposals for change to increase efficiency and cut costs:**

- Dutchess County Executive Marc Molinaro is looking for the county to provide more centralized purchasing for towns in the printing of forms, large ticket items like fuel oil, reminding town officials of the Regional Bid Notification System and looking into the possibility for a health insurance consortium.
- Municipalities have written procurement policies and procedures, including seeking competitive bids for professional services or contracts over a certain dollar figure and written contracts with vendors.
- More municipalities participate in the Regional Bid Notification System.
- More municipalities share in cooperative purchasing agreements with each other or with other counties, e.g. the City of Poughkeepsie buys bottled water with Ulster and Dutchess Counties, the City of Poughkeepsie buys paper with Rockland County.