

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

**MINUTES OF THE HEALTH, HOSPITALS & SOCIAL SERVICES
COMMITTEE MEETING, May 20, 2013**

PRESENT

Steven Froot
Michael Heller
Sylvia Alexander
Beverly Fettman
Dana Lennon
Joyce Pilsner
Phil Friedman
Lawrence Heller
Denise Hudson
Roger Montesano
Phillip Chindelas

AFFILIATION

Committee Chair
Committee Vice Chair
CB8 – Committee member
CB8 – Committee member
CB8 – Committee member
CB8 – Committee member
CB8
HRA
FDNY
EMS

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 p.m.

Minutes: The minutes of the March 18, 2013 meeting were accepted as submitted.

Presentation: **Denise Hudson, Bronx Borough Coordinator
Human Resources Administration (HRA)**

Ms. Hudson described the principal areas in which HRA delivers services: cash assistance, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP) (formerly known as Food Stamps), Medicaid, services for victims of domestic violence, services for those with HIV/AIDS, home energy bills assistance (HEAP), and child support/enforcement. The closest HRA location to CB 8 for cash assistance, SNAP and Medicaid is Job Center #44, Fordham Center, Bainbridge Avenue. It is also possible to apply for SNAP at certain community based organizations or on-line, and Medicaid offices are located at several Bronx hospitals. Ms. Hudson provided a wealth of printed materials covering HRA's work, including population figures for utilization of cash assistance, SNAP and Medicaid by census tract. In response to questions from the Committee, Ms. Hudson explained that she was not aware of any problems that CB 8 residents were experiencing in reaching existing HRA office locations.

Presentation: **Roger Montesano & Phillip Chindelas, FDNY-EMS**

Messrs. Montesano and Chindelas reviewed responsibilities and statistics for life threatening health emergencies (cardiac arrest, breathing difficulty, violent traumas) and

non-life threatening emergencies, broken down by responses by fire companies and by EMS ambulances. He emphasized that firefighters are often dispatched as the first on the scene in the event of a medical emergency or accident, and that all firefighters are certified first responders. He also explained that EMTs provide basic life support, while paramedics are authorized to administer medication. Mr. Montesano explained the changes accompanying the move to electronic patient care recordkeeping, and the trend to sending patients to designated hospitals with expertise and equipment in the areas of heart disease, spinal injury and burns. He and Mr. Chindelas responded to questions from Vice Chair Heller about patients' ability to select the facility to which they are transported, and policies regarding diversions from certain ER locations that are over capacity, as well as imbalances in utilization among different Bronx hospitals. Although certain dispatching changes were implemented in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, EMS is reverting to previous protocols that better allocate patients among emergency room locations. Mr. Montesano reported that revenue to FDNY would increase slightly in the next fiscal year, and that FDNY was scheduled to purchase 200 new ambulances over the next two years. In response to the Committee's continuing concern about the absence of a restocking/decontamination station in CB 8, the presenters stated that the FDNY believes that the neighborhood is being well served by the Woodlawn station. In response to Phil Friedman's request for response time statistics for CB 8, Mr. Montesano stated that breakdowns by community board typically are not released, but added that 2012 response times are at historic lows city-wide.

Chair's Report

The Chair reminded the Committee that Riverdale-based **Services for the Developmentally Challenged**, which had sought to open and operate a **group home** at 3001 Independence Avenue, adjacent to the Schervier campus, for six young adults who suffer from Prader-Willi Syndrome, had informed the Board in early April that the property had been purchased by another buyer, and that establishment of the group home would not proceed at this time.

In preparation for next fall's **Under-Age Drinking Forum** to be organized by the Committee, the Chair attended an event on April 5 at CUNY's Macaulay Honors College to screen a youth-produced documentary (which could be shown at the CB 8 forum) and met with potential panelists from the New York Center for Alcohol Policy Solutions, the Partnership for a Healthier NYC, the DOHMH Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Use Prevention, Bronx Health Reach and the Throgs Neck Community Action Partnership.

The Chair distributed color copies of a power point presentation describing the NYC **HANES (Health and Nutrition Examination Survey)**, which surveys a random sample of the population of the City every 10 years, and includes a free checkup and \$100 honorarium for each participant. The last HANES revealed that New Yorkers were breathing more second-hand smoke than elsewhere in the U.S., which helped persuade lawmakers to make parks, beaches and hospital entrances smoke-free. It also revealed high levels of mercury in New Yorkers who ate certain types of fish, which led to greater oversight of fish markets and an education campaign. Other findings from the previous HANES led to laws banning trans fats in restaurant food, the establishment of a diabetes registry, and restrictions on the use of certain pesticides. CB 8 has joined other

community groups in endorsing the HANES in an effort to encourage those who are randomly selected to be willing to participate in the survey.

Committee members should continue to reach out to community-based health and social service agencies to determine needs for city funding for potential new and existing programs. Final **budget requests** are due in June, and that will be the subject of the Committee's June meeting.

The next meeting will be held at 7:30 pm on Monday, June 17, 2013, at Horace Mann School's Fisher Hall, in the Faculty Dining Room.

Meeting adjourned 9:25pm.

Prepared by Steven Froot, Chair
Approved by Michael Heller, Vice Chair
Health, Hospitals & Social Services Committee