

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

**MINUTES OF THE HEALTH, HOSPITALS & SOCIAL SERVICES
COMMITTEE MEETING, October 19, 2015**

PRESENT

Steven Froot
Karen Pesce
Lenora Croft
Noah Friedman
Omar Murray
Julia Gomez
Ian Christener
Wendell Alexis

AFFILIATION

Committee Chair
CB 8 - Committee member
Community Committee member
Bon Secours New York Health System
Montefiore

ABSENT: A. Moore, M. Heller.

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m. at the Board Office.

The Chair welcomed new members to the Committee and introduced the speaker.

Minutes: The minutes of the September 21, 2015 HHSS public hearing and meeting were unanimously approved with no abstentions by the members present.

Presentation: Ian Christener, Healthy Communities Liaison
Bon Secours New York Health System

Mr. Christener explained that Bon Secours is a Baltimore-based, non-profit health care provider run by the Sisters of Bon Secours that in the past has funded "Healthy Communities" initiatives in communities it serves, including Community District 8, where Schervier Nursing Care Center is located. He stated that Bon Secours is now in talks with various potential for-profit entities that may acquire Bon Secours, in which event the Healthy Communities initiative may no longer be funded. Mr. Christener stated that he is running the program in a normal fashion until he is notified otherwise, and has requested \$100,000 of funding from Bon Secours for activities in our community.

Bon Secours has engaged in the following Healthy Communities activities:

- served as a fiscal sponsor of Grow NYC (including the Youth Market on West 225th Street)
- sponsored healthy cooking activities ("Teen Battle Chef")
- lobbied the MTA to ban alcohol advertising on trains and buses
- participated in the Healthy Food Retail Networking Group to encourage small stores in the community to carry fresh fruits and vegetables, as well as the "Shop Healthy" program at Montefiore that focused on bodegas
- funded experienced gardeners who assisted in the establishment of community gardens at Kingsbridge Heights Community Center, Marble Hill Senior Center and Church of the Mediator

- made grants to the Enchanted Garden on the Kennedy High School campus for construction of a rain-catching system, and provided stipends for summer interns at the Kennedy campus
- funded a nutritionist to do outreach in Bronx communities
- established a cooking course for seniors at St. Stephen's Church in Marble Hill, focusing on chronic disease prevention and provided vouchers redeemable for healthy food purchases
- funded a new mental health outreach worker to focus on the population of men of color aged 16-30 in the neighborhood below West 230th Street

Mr. Christener has been in discussions with BOEDC to work with Upstate farms to deliver produce directly to particular locations in the Bronx, and would like to replicate a weight loss program in CB 8 that centered around exercise and the provision of vouchers for healthy food choices. Bon Secours has also been active outside the United States on the issues of human trafficking and access to clean water.

The Chair suggested that Healthy Communities might seek grants from the Fund for Public Health in New York, which is acting on behalf of DOHMH to identify neighborhood partners to participate in "Take Care New York," the City's strategic health agenda. Mr. Froot pointed out that Bon Secours, and some of the organizations with which it works, may be eligible for grants to conduct outreach and raise resident awareness of the community consultations that will take place starting this fall in communities around NYC, including Riverdale.

Chair's Report

- Mr. Froot reviewed the resolution adopted by the full Board to approve Synergia, Inc.'s proposed IRA at 3016 Corlear Avenue, the subject of the public hearing held by the Committee on September 21, 2015.
- For the benefit of new members, the Chair discussed the Community Board budget priority process, and noted the Expense item relating to the Riverdale Mental Health Association's geriatric program that HHSS had put forward in recent years.
- Mr. Froot handed out copies of press clips and other materials relating to underage drinking, the Legionnaires' Disease outbreak in the South Bronx, Bronx bodegas offering healthy choices, NYC anti-smoking efforts, and illegal drug use by students in our community, and also discussed the work of the Committee in previous years relating to forums on the Affordable Care Act and underage drinking, work with Riverdale Manor leading to the establishment of a community advisory board and public hearings concerning the proposed establishment of group homes.
- The Chair asked members to propose speakers for future meetings, and noted that he had requested a representative of the Department of Homeless Services to address the Committee and had reached out to Councilman Cohen's office about holding a forum on the use of opiates and K2 in local schools and the community.
- Mr. Froot discussed the need to appoint a Vice Chair for HHSS.

Old Business

Julia Gomez reported on her work putting together a resource directory that would include health and social service organizations. Karen Pesce mentioned that the Aging Committee is working on a directory of resources for the elderly.

New Business

Noah Friedman proposed that the Committee develop a questionnaire to be distributed to religious, ethnic and political leaders in order to elicit what they believe to be important community health needs that are not being met.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

The Committee will hold its next meeting at 7:30 PM on Monday, November 16 at the Kingsbridge Heights Community Center, Early Childhood Services building conference room (two doors down from the KHCC main building), located at 3101 Kingsbridge Terrace, Bronx, NY 10463.

Prepared by Steven Froot and Karen Pesce
Approved by Steven Froot, Chair
Health, Hospitals & Social Services Committee