

**COMMUNITY BOARD 12, MANHATTAN**  
**Executive Committee Meeting**  
**530 West 166<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, New York**

**February 10, 2015**

**MINUTES**

**ATTENDING:** Fernandez [Chair]; Palanque-North (Treasurer), Lehmann [Secretary], Saneaux (Assistant Secretary), Ally [Public Safety]; Benjamin [Land Use], Glenn [Parks & Cultural Affairs], Florimon [Youth & Education] Miller (Business Development); Simon [Health & Environment]; Vanterpool [Aging]; Allman, (By-Laws Task Force)

**ABSENT - EXCUSED:** Obie Bing, (First Vice- Chair), Aldemar Diaz, (Licensing Committee), Yosef Kalinsky (Traffic & Transportation)

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Arlene Schulman, Kelly Boyd, Elizabeth Lorris - Ritter

**Staff:** Ebenezer Smith [District Manager]

***The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Fernandez at 7:20 pm.***

**Chair's Report:**

Chairman Fernandez reported that there is quorum and held roll call.

**Secretary's Report:**

Betty Lehmann made a motion to take the Executive Committee into Executive Session to discuss attendance. The motion was seconded and all those not on the Executive Committee were excused from the room.

The Executive Session ended and the Executive meeting resumed at 7:45pm.

Liliana Saneaux suggested that the CB 12 meetings should recognize individual's birthdays. The suggestion was taken under advisement.

**Treasurer's Report:**

Pamela Palenque North just received the Krystal Report from OMB and will be reviewing it with Ebenezer. She will have a full report in March.

**District Manager's Report**

District Manager Smith reported the following:

- ~ There were only 1 or 2 complaints regarding a bus stop and one about a street in January. This is a remarkably low number of complaints and we think that snow was a factor.
- ~ The community resident who continues to call the Board office complaining about El Presidente Restaurant remains unsatisfied. It is apparent that this restaurant has complied with the requests made concerning soundproofing. Mr. Smith sent her a report of a meeting he had with the restaurant including himself, the Board Chair and the Chair of the Licensing Committee. She seems to be unsatisfied to

date and it is not certain what her next step might be. It was suggest that Mr. Smith keep a record of her many calls to the Board. He indicated he will do so.

- ~ All subway elevators are working. It was reported by Mr. Fernandez that some of the subway platforms are flooded – and that there was a flood at 168<sup>th</sup> Street. It is recommended that this issue be sent to the Traffic & Transportation Committee so that they can develop a resolution.

The impact of construction on the environment as travelers are entering and leaving the 168<sup>th</sup> St. station was discussed. A question was raised as to the practicality of requesting that work be staggered so that more elevators are available in times of heavy use and that the air be clearer during these time periods.

- ~ Mr. Smith requested that his salary be reviewed.

A motion was made by Richard Lewis and seconded by Betty Lehmann to take the Executive Committee into **Executive Session** to discuss Mr. Smith's request. All those in attendance other than Ebenezer Smith and Executive Committee members were asked to leave the room. A discussion ensued that included the following:

***The Executive Session was drawn to a close and the Executive Committee resumed the meeting.***

***George Fernandez requested that NYC Council Resolution – Intro 585 be discussed at this time***

George Fernandez indicated that NYC Councilmembers Drum, Kalos, Chin, Ferreira et. al. – introduced legislation to amend the City Charter to provide term limits on Community Board membership. This would apply to anyone appointed in the year 2016 and thereafter and would prevent members from serving more than 6 consecutive terms (12 years). Manhattan Borough President Brewer and NYC Councilmember Levine do not support this; Councilman Rodriguez does support this.

Arlene Schulman was asked to record ideas from the Executive Committee about responses to this legislation on a whiteboard. Discussion ensued with the following points by members of the Executive Committee:

- ~ Liz Ritter indicated that only 8 current members of CB 12 were on the Board 12 years ago.
- ~ 4 of those 8 members have been on the Board 15 years or more.
- ~ Long term tenure does not appear to be a problem in this district – but it may be in other districts. Our experience may change in the future however.
- ~ Change avoids complacency.
- ~ There is a natural cycle for approval and disapproval wherein a person's contribution can be evaluated– precluding term limits as a practical remedy. Merit & contribution are important considerations.
- ~ This legislation doesn't appear to be helpful to Community Boards or to the community.
- ~ This legislation didn't pass in 2014 – and should not pass now.
- ~ It's not clear what problem this legislation is intended to resolve.
- ~ George Fernandez recounted some experiences that other Boards have had with “deadwood” and “hangers-on” (He gained this information at Borough Board meetings.)
- ~ If the intent of this bill is to eliminate politics, this bill will not do that.
- ~ We have had a problem with turnover on CB 12 – not a problem with people staying too long.
- ~ Term limits does not solve leadership issues that may affect any Board.

Other community board members were invited to comment and did no as follows:

- ~ This Board does not have a problem and this legislation will fix nothing.
- ~ Some of our long-serving members contribute a lot to the Board.

- ~ Transparent criteria for appointment should be made available to the Board.
- ~ Legislation is not clear on how “grandfather” provision will work.
- ~ Is it possible for someone to be re-appointed after a break? This is not clear.
- ~ Institutional knowledge may be a very good thing especially on certain committees.

The public was invited to comment and did so as follows:

- ~ If the intent is the elimination of “deadwood” from the Board, this legislation will not do this.
- ~ Intro 164 (resolution from 2014 which called for Community Board Reform) was a better piece of legislation.
- ~ There are more important matters facing Community than term limits.
- ~ There is some “good stuff” in the proposed legislation such as filling a vacancy within 30 days.

George Fernandez indicated that other CB 12 members would like this proposed legislation discussed at the General Meeting. Following more discussion, the Executive Committee decided to draft a resolution that does not support Intro 585 but does seek to improve the appointment process on a city-wide basis and calls on the City Council to come up with a system that includes performance, contribution, attendance, and other pertinent factors, etc.

### **Committee Reports:**

#### ***Business Development Committee – Jason Miller***

Chair Jason Miller reported on the Small Business Forum which will take place on March 3 at Isabella from 10am to 2pm. There will be a 3 part forum including a focus on government involvement, financial literacy and individual success stories. Fliers should be distributed within the next few days.

#### ***Committee for the Concerns of the Aging – Gloria Vanterpool***

Chair Gloria Vanterpool presented a report concerning older prisoners who are being released into the community. The report is sponsored by the NYC Dept. for the Aging. The committee is considering a resolution for support of the DFTA recommendations.

#### ***Housing & Human Services Committee - Richard Lewis:***

Richard Lewis indicated that the Health & Housing and Health & Environment Committees held a joint meeting concerning e-cycling initiatives in the community and the possible penalties that may ensue.

There is a \$400 million settlement from the banks that should be set aside for NYCHA improvements. Mr. Lewis serves on the NYC Committee to Preserve Public Housing and has learned that Scott Stringer has proposed setting aside some of the money from Battery Park City (\$40 million over 10 years) for improvements in city housing.

The offering of City ID's is a problem in that there are serious delays in the processing. Steve Simon indicated that the city has put some money into the immediate expansion of services.

Housing & Human Services has a resolution that is under discussion concerning illegal hotels.

#### ***Land Use Committee - Wayne Benjamin:***

The Land Use Committee pulled together a package of resolutions over the years and presented them to Ken Knuckles who is Vice Chair of the NYC Planning Commission. This included rezoning matters from 2008 to the present including pertinent resolutions. Land Use will draft a cover letter for Board approval. We will ask Ken Knuckles to assist CB12 in its rezoning efforts.

### ***Parks & Cultural Affairs – Mitchell Glenn:***

Mitchell Glenn reported that Lucas Acosta of NYC Councilman Rodriguez presented information on legislation that the Councilman is proposing regarding hookah sales in the community. There is also other legislation that bans hookah smoking. These two bills need to be reconciled.

Amy Slattery from NYC Councilman Levine's office came and spoke about transparency concerning how city money is being used. Mike Fitelson, Executive Director of the United Palace of Cultural Arts (UPCA) provided an update on the Palace Theater. Jennifer Hoppa, Northern Manhattan Parks Administrator, provided an update on parks.

### ***Public Safety - Shahabudden Ally:***

Mr. Ally spoke about the December 2014 forum and plans to hold (2) forums a year- June & December. The committee is also recommending a system of alerts for residents and small businesses of impending burglaries and what can be done to prevent them.

The 33<sup>rd</sup> Precinct attended Public Safety meeting and indicated that they are not aware of resolutions passed by CB 12 and therefore are not able to enforce what has been agreed to. The 34<sup>th</sup> Precinct is aware of our resolutions. George Fernandez indicated that the Precincts are not responsible for enforcing our resolutions – but should know about them. The 34<sup>th</sup> & 33<sup>rd</sup> Precincts are invited to our meetings.

Liz Ritter and George Fernandez reported that \$7.3 million has been appropriated to replace 13,000 police vests.

### ***Youth & Education – Fe Florimon:***

This past Saturday, February 7, the Youth & Education Committee held a meeting at Isabella regarding scholarships that are available in the community for high school seniors. There were 34 students in attendance.

In the meeting of Monday, February 9<sup>th</sup>, David Gracia spoke about a new charter school he wants to open in the community. He was interested in learning about how the community feels about this prospect.

Youth & Education will join Health & Education in holding a joint meeting concerning youth mental health. A follow up planning meeting with Health & Environment will take place. The joint meeting is planned for March 7<sup>th</sup>.

### ***Health & Environment - Steve Simon:***

Health & Environment Committee discussed hookah use as well the proposed legislation encapsulated in both NYC Council bills. The Committee recommends that both bills be combined.

Health & Environment had two resolutions that were reviewed, voted on and approved. One has to do with a possible ten-cent tax on the distribution of plastic bags by certain establishments and the other has to do with supporting an application being made by the Emma Bowen Center for funding from the Federal Government to expand mental health services in the community.

### ***Licensing Committee – Aldemar Diaz – not present***

George Fernandez indicated that there are only (3) resolutions for February.

### ***By-laws Task Force – Richard Allman***

He appreciated the hard work of the task force members: Anita Barberis, Obie Bing, Aldemar Diaz, Richard Lewis and Richard Allman.

***Chair's Report - George Fernandez:***

He will not be at the next Executive Committee meeting on March 12<sup>th</sup>.

He will distribute the budget responses and requests that the Board members compose appropriate responses to the statements made by the City and that the responses be succinct. Come prepared for a special meeting to be held on February 18<sup>th</sup>. We need to clean up the registry. There are too many duplications, errors and they need to be corrected.

Some of the committees need to focus on other matters such as environment, education, immigration, infrastructure and waterfront development, etc. The licensing committee will be revamped and new public members will be added.

***The meeting was ended at 10:46pm***

Respectfully submitted: Elizabeth (Betty) Lehmann, Secretary  
February 23, 2015