

## HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES – February 5, 2015

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:** Steve Simon (Chair), Elizabeth Lehmann, Juan Mejia, Beatrice Hall (Public Member).

**ABSENT:** Edgard Nau (Asst. Chair), Wanda Garcia, Lorenzo McGougan.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Arlene Schulman.

**GUESTS:** Jessica Schreiber and Carl Wilson, Dept. of Sanitation; Lucas Acosta, Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez; Jim Little, Upper Manhattan Mental Health Center; Mary Anderson; Lester Carpenter; Sara Fisher; Kimberlee Gonzalez; Cheryl Miller; Sandra Harris, Columbia University Medical Center.

---

S. Simon called the meeting to order at 7:19 p.m. The first item on the agenda was a continuation of the joint meeting with the Housing and Human Services Committee in January. Richard Lewis, chair of that committee, asked the members of both committees and the audience to introduce themselves.

1. **Implementation of the city's e-waste recycling program in apartment buildings** – Jessica Schreiber, Senior Program Manager - Apartment Programs and Outreach, Bureau of Recycling & Sustainability, Department of Sanitation (DSNY), gave a Powerpoint presentation:
  - As of January it is illegal to discard electronics such as TVs, monitors, computers, laptops, printers, video game consoles, VCRs/DVD players, cable boxes and keyboards with household trash.
  - 1% of the waste stream is made up of electronics – 28,000 tons per year.
  - It's the largest and fastest growing hazardous waste stream.
  - E-waste recycling program is required by state law: it is now illegal to put electronics at the curb for pick-up
  - Manufacturers are funding the program at no cost to taxpayers. NYC is the only city that provides this service.
  - All the electronics items are handled by Electronics Recyclers International, Inc. (ERI), which has been certified by the EPA as an environmentally responsible company. All processing and recycling work is done domestically in New Jersey and Massachusetts.
  - Mobile phones are accepted, even though not required by law.
  - Appliances are handled by the city's regular recycling program.
  - Buildings are being provided with three voluntary "service options" for disposing of electronics items:
    - Room cleanouts (buildings with 10 or more units) – they store electronics in a secure, enclosed area before they are picked up by DSNY.
    - Storage bins (buildings with 50 or more units) – they store electronics in a locked bin provided by DSNY.
    - Outdoor electronics recycling events (buildings with 250 or more units) – they schedule these events where residents would bring electronics for disposal and pickup by DSNY.
  - Tenants can submit applications to request that their buildings be enrolled in the program and should provide contact info for the building owner or managing agent so DSNY can follow up with them. The owner or agent must sign the service agreement.
  - Have received 4,000 requests over the last two months. Q: how many in WH-I? A: will get back to us
  - Grace period until April before summonses are issued for improper disposal of electronics. Fine: \$100 per offense,
  - R. Lewis: What is being done to enable seniors and people with disabilities to comply with these requirements? A: We're working with DFTA. All senior housing is eligible for the program. "We're trying to provide as much access to as many people as possible."
  - 550 buildings have been enrolled in the first year. Up until recently, when applications increased greatly, it took only two weeks to obtain a bin. Now, there's a six-week wait. Hope to eliminate backlog by April.
  - If building has no room for a bin, it can sign up for a room clean-out, which can be pre-scheduled so tenants can be notified in advance to bring their discarded electronics to the designated space.
  - Working closely with Local 32B-J, the building service workers' union, which signed an agreement with us. Supers are being trained.
  - There are 35,000 eligible apartment buildings in NYC – no cap on the number that can be enrolled.
  - Similar programs available for recycling textiles and related items and for collecting organics (food waste).
  - Q: How do we know someone doesn't reuse computers and gain access to your private information? A: You should wipe your data before discarding computers. Free programs are available. ERI, Best Buy, etc. also have privacy standards

- .S. Simon: You should work with the Rent Stabilization Assn., the Real Estate Board of NY, etc. to reach out to landlords to let them know about the program. He thanked Ms. Schreiber for her presentation and then stated that the H&E Committee would be moving to the CB 12 office down the hall to continue its meeting.
2. **Discussion on Int. 617: in relation to prohibiting the sale of shisha to be smoked in a hookah or water pipe –** Lucas Acosta, Legislative Director, Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez, explained that the Council Member introduced this bill because large water pipes or hookahs can be seen all over the community in bodegas and other stores, leaving the impression on youth that smoking a hookah is OK when in fact it's not healthy. 40 minutes of smoking a hookah is the equivalent of smoking 100-200 cigarettes, according to the World Health Organization. Establishments that make less than 50% of their revenue from selling shisha ("any product made primarily of tobacco or other leaf") or hookahs or water pipes would be prohibited from selling or renting them. Free hookah would be exempt; if included in a package where there is an exchange of money, the law would apply. Int. 139, sponsored by Council Member Gentile, differs from this bill by expanding the no-smoking law to ban smoking herbal cigarettes or shisha in regular bars and business establishments. Int. 617 is supported by the Bodega Assn. of the U.S., NYC Coalition for a Smoke-Free City and the American Cancer Society. It was suggested that the two bills should be combined to deal with both facets of the problem: the sales and rentals of these products and smoking them in bars and restaurants. Acosta said it was too late to do so and that both bills might be scheduled for a hearing together by the Council's Committee on Health.
  3. **Upper Manhattan Mental Health Center –** Jim Little, Special Projects Coordinator, requested CB 12's support of its application for a \$1.6 million grant from the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to provide integrated primary and behavioral health services to residents of upper Manhattan, including Washington Heights-Inwood. The grant would allow "cross-fertilization of key staff" with Heritage Health & Housing, with which it shares a building at 1727 Amsterdam Ave. (W. 145<sup>th</sup> St.), and would provide "an opportunity to address an underserved population." He said UMMHC serves over 1,000 WH-I residents with either out-patient mental health or substance abuse services and another 1,000 WH-I residents who use its food pantry. There are 400-500 teens and about 80 elderly in these programs. UMMHC and HHH are the only organizations in upper Manhattan that have both primary and behavioral health care in the same location, which is a prerequisite for this grant. UMMHC gets "a lot of referrals" from NYPH, Mt. Sinai/St. Luke's and Harlem Hospital. Lehmann/Mejia: The committee should endorse UMMHC's application for a \$1.6 million grant from SAMHSA. The motion was passed by the following vote:  
Committee Members 4-0-0-0 Other Board Members 1-0-0-0 Members of the Public 3-0-0-0
  4. **Resolution on Intro. 209: reducing the use of carry-out bags by charging a 10-cent fee for plastic and paper bags –** This bill was discussed at the last meeting, when it was agreed that the committee supported the bill as it applied to plastic bags but not to paper ones and that a resolution reflecting that position should be drafted and presented at this meeting. After some additional discussion, Lehmann/Mejia moved the resolution. It was passed by the following vote:  
Committee Members 3-1-0-0 Other Board Members 0-0-1-0 Members of the Public 2-0-1-0
  5. **NY-Presbyterian Hospital Report --** Juan Mejia, VP-Facilities, Morgan-Stanley Children's Hospital of NY (CHONY), reported that the hospital is conducting a blood drive in response to the huge shortage because of the snowstorm. Construction has been completed on the 14-bed pediatric ICU at CHONY, which should open in May. There will now be 23 beds in the pediatric ICU.
  6. **Isabella Geriatric Center Report --** Betty Lehmann, Director of Marketing & Communications, reported that 200 people attended the ribbon cutting for the new rehab center this evening. 54 rehab professionals will be working there throughout the week; 150 patients per day will be served. High school students who live in the community, have at least a B average and perform community service are invited to apply for the annual McFadden scholarships. Renovation of the recreation hall as the WH-I Assembly and Telecommunications Hub should begin in April or May. Community meetings held there could be streamed over the Internet. Religious services could be seen by patients in their rooms. Funded by a \$750K allocation by Council Member Rodriguez. Now applying for funds to purchase technology.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Steve Simon