

## HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES – January 9, 2020

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:** Steve Simon (Chair), Tanya Bonner, Daryl Cochrane, Katherine Diaz, Sara Fisher, Elizabeth Lehmann, Jay Mazur.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:** Francisco Alvarez, Ayisha Olgivie, Rosy Perez, Beatrice Hall (Public Member, Excused).

**BOARD MEMBER PRESENT:** Richard Allman.

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT:** Orlando De Los Santos, Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Co.; Julio Batista, NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital; Jahnielle Edwards, Columbia University Irving Medical Center; Joelkys Abreu; Ed McTiernan.

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S. Simon, chair, called the meeting to order at 7:18 p.m. and introduced the committee members. He noted that three topics that were tentatively listed on the agenda did not pan out for tonight's meeting and are now possible topics for the February meeting: 1) Presentation on NY-Presbyterian Hospital's Community Health Needs Assessment /Community Service Plan, 2) Continued discussion with NY State Nurses Assn. on staffing levels at the Allen Hospital maternity unit and 3) Closing of detox units at Harlem Hospital and 10 other City hospitals.

1. **Presentation on Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Co. programs** – Orlando De Los Santos, Financial Service Professional, whose office is in Saddle Brook, N.J., distributed handouts and spoke about two free programs offered by the company – “different philanthropic ways to give back to the community.” He said MassMutual is one of the strongest insurance companies financially and therefore can afford to do this.  
LifeBridge – free life insurance for eligible parents or legal guardians, covers educational expenses of children (college tuition, trade school, private school, etc.) up to \$50K for a 10-year period in the event of parent's or guardian's death. “It gives them a certain peace of mind that their kids will be covered...No other insurance company does this.” You are eligible to apply if you are between 19-42 years old, have one or more dependent children under 18, are a permanent, legal resident of the U.S., are currently employed with a total family income between \$10K-\$40K annually, and are in good health. Call MassMutual at 1-800-272-2216 for more info.  
FutureSmart – “Finances 101” curriculum for middle school students; 3.5 hours (7 modules, 30 minutes each); “web-based interactive courses designed to empower young people with the skills to manage their finances and make sound financial decisions.” School gets software free of charge, can be downloaded, offered in English and Spanish. Courses have educated more than 1.5 million students across the country to date; goal is to reach 2 million students in 2020. The committee suggested he contact School District 6 to bring the program to our community. J. Batista suggested that he work with the Neighborhood Trust Federal Credit Union.
2. **NY-Presbyterian Hospital Report** – Julio Batista, Director of Community Affairs, reported as follows:
  - The nursing staff collected 1500 coats over the holidays. They were distributed through local organizations such as the Washington Heights Corner Project, the Dominican Women's Development Center (DWDC), men's and women's shelters and the Bowery Mission.
  - Three Kings' Day event was held at the Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital. Toys were given to 400 kids.
  - The Medical Center Neighborhood Fund is now accepting applications from WH-I community groups north of 155<sup>th</sup> Street.
  - Free cancer screening will be provided at the Herbert Irving Pavilion on Jan. 25.
  - A Grants 101 workshop will be provided to community groups at the Vagelos Education Center on Jan. 29.
  - A resume writing and job interview workshop, jointly sponsored by State Sen. Jackson, will be held on Feb. 6 in response to a recent job fair where people needed help with resumes and preparing for interviews.
  - There is no change in the status of the psych unit at the Allen Hospital.
  - He promised to look into a complaint received by CB 12 that the paramedic ambulance is longer based at the Allen so residents reportedly have to wait for an ambulance from 168<sup>th</sup> Street and that the regular ambulance at Allen has inadequate staffing.
3. **Columbia University Medical Center Report** – Jahnielle Edwards, Community Affairs Associate, reported as follows:
  - Over 800 toys were collected during the holiday toy drive and were distributed to nine local day care centers, Head Start programs, and community-based organizations serving families in Washington Heights-Inwood.
  - The Medical Center Neighborhood Fund applications are being accepted until early February.
  - The Herbert Irving Comprehensive Cancer Center will host a webinar on HPV and cancer in Spanish on Jan. 15.

4. **Isabella Geriatric Center Report** – Betty Lehmann, Director of Marketing & Communications, reported as follows:
  - CB 12 held a beautiful entertainment event for seniors at Isabella last month. There were 14 acts from the community, including youth groups and a group of hula dancers with an average of 84.
  - The MTA's plan to replace the elevators at the 191<sup>st</sup> Street station on the #1 line and close the entrance on St. Nicholas Avenue as of Feb. 1 for one year will have a severe impact on workers at Isabella as well as students at the George Washington H.S. campus. The plan to provide a limited number of shuttle buses is not sufficient. 500 staff people arrive and leave Isabella each morning at 7:30-8:30, the same time as the students, and 520 for the afternoon shift. There would be only one shuttle bus every 20 minutes in addition to regular M3 and M101 bus service. 240 workers leave at 10:30 p.m., but the buses stop running at 10 p.m. Isabella is sending a letter to the elected officials regarding this issue.
5. **Goals for 2020** – The committee had an open discussion in response to a request from Eleazar Bueno, the new CB 12 chair, that the chairpersons of each committee present their overall goals for 2020 to the Executive Committee and the general board. S. Simon invited the members to suggest goals for the committee and began by saying that the committee should continue to monitor work being done by CUMC and NYPH, especially in regard to the hospital's new Community Service Plan, that we should take up the offer made by Dr. Peter Gordon at our last meeting to work with him to eliminate HIV/AIDS in the community, and to continue to review the brownfield cleanup applications submitted for sites in our community.  
S. Fisher: environmental goals on water quality and green infrastructure.  
K. Diaz: host a forum on NYPH's Community Service Plan, invite WEAFT to present its report on the impact of climate change in the community; behavioral health; develop a plan for syringe litter.  
B. Lehmann: forum on needle exchanges; substance abuse; domestic violence; invite the Ryan Health Center to make a presentation about the primary care center it plans to open next summer on Wadsworth Ave. & W. 181<sup>st</sup> St.  
D. Cochrane: identify unmet needs such as high rate of teen pregnancy cited in the Community Health Profile; HIV/AIDS; review our budget priorities; health concerns of Native Americans; services from Health & Hospitals.  
T. Bonner: Census awareness campaign – work with CBOs that received grants to promote a complete count (Northern Manhattan Coalition on Immigrants' Rights, Northern Manhattan Improvement Corp., People's Theater Project and DWDC); work with the Business Development Committee to find a new location for WH Corner Project.  
J. Mazur: invite State Sen. Rivera (D-Bronx) to discuss the NY Health Act legislation.  
S. Simon: lead paint and recycling issues; community membership on CUMC's Institutional Review Boards.  
S. Fisher: food justice; budget priorities; Inwood rezoning task force.  
T. Bonner: cuts to SNAP benefits and the effect on people being able to purchase healthy food.  
J. Batista: an annual conference on health in partnership with NYPH and CHALK  
D. Cochrane: improve recycling in the community, including parks
6. **Old Business** – S. Simon reported on the following:
  - Updated Street and Sidewalk Cleanliness ratings were not available.
  - 168 service requests to DEP in December. The highest number of complaints once again was for Noise: Construction Before/After Hours (31), followed by Dirty Water (15), Noise – Barking Dog (14), Lead Kit Requests (12) and Noise: Alarms (12). We will ask DEP for specifics about construction noise complaints.
  - DDC provided a written status report on four current projects in our district:
    - installation of water main/fire hydrant/water valve replacements on Edgecombe Avenue bet. W. 165<sup>th</sup> St. – W. 170<sup>th</sup> St., Jumel Place bet. Edgecombe Ave. and W. 167<sup>th</sup> St., W. 166<sup>th</sup> St. & W. 167<sup>th</sup> St. bet. Edgecombe & Amsterdam Aves. -- 90% complete
    - water main/fire hydrant/water valve replacements on Haven Avenue, Fort Washington Avenue, Riverside Drive, W. 165<sup>th</sup> – W. 172<sup>nd</sup> Streets – 80% complete
    - installation of sewer/water main in Inwood – 57% complete
    - water main/gas main replacement on Wadsworth Ave. from W. 183<sup>rd</sup> St. – W. 190<sup>th</sup> St., W. 184<sup>th</sup> – W. 186<sup>th</sup> Sts. from Broadway to St. Nicholas Ave. – 17.6% complete
7. **Announcements** – S. Fisher: Saturday is the last day for Mulchfest held in local parks.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:11 p.m.  
Respectfully submitted, Steve Simon