

Public Safety Committee

Meetings Minutes

Monday, March 06, 2019

Location: CB12M Office, 530 West 166 Street --Suite 6A, New York, NY 10032

Committee Members Present: Interim Chair, Mary O'Shaughnessy (MO), Francisco Alvarez (FA), Gabriela Estrella (GE), Danielle Jettoo (DJ), Noquel Matos (NM), and Rud Morales (RM)

Board Member Excused: Katherine Diaz (KD) [sick]

Public Member Present: N/A

CB12 Staff Member Present: Ely Silvestre, Community Assistant

Public: PO Batz, Adam Fran, and Sharipau Harvey

The chair called meeting to order at 7:00 pm, and presented the agenda, offering printed Compstat reports for the 33rd and 34th precinct.

Chair and committee members introduce themselves. Members of the public present introduce themselves as well.

Chair explains functions of the Public Safety Committee to the public.

Officer Batz starts his report. He explains that he works in transit D3 sector. He explains the NCO program and how he is part of a division of the police that supervises the subway system. His work corresponds to Northern Manhattan.

PO Batz spoke on following up in complaints brought to them in the sector. He spoke of an assault/slashing incident in one of the train stations of the district that involved known individuals, one who used to live in the 168th street shelter, and one from the Bronx. PO Batz explained these individuals knew one another and that the perpetrator has been arrested.

PO Batz also spoke on the work that his unit is doing to warn people of the frigid temperatures and the dangers of falling asleep in the train. Additionally, he reported there have been a lot of complaints regarding noise and K2 usage at 168th street. Also some incidents of selling illegal MetroCard swipes and jammed machines.

Nonetheless, there is a significant police presence in the station. Even when we do not see officers, they could be there, as they have plain cloth operatives patrolling the station as well.

Washington Heights Corner Project are not being responsive to officers.

Needles are still being found on train tracks. In order to curtail this, they are going to pursue an

enforcement and education approach.

The emergency exit on 168th street station is closed. There is still construction work being done on the 1 train side and for that reason is closed.

Chair asks PO Batz about Baker Field and the car move issue on the flag football championship.

PO Batz: Officer did not have knowledge of it. Stated that he only knows no one was fined and does not know who parks there.

Chair: People don't make reservations to Baker Field. If residents had heard about traffic situation before it would have been better.

PO Batz: The procedure is that the Precinct is supposed to put notices up before it happens. Comments that the 34th Precinct is usually good about following this procedure but again reiterates that he does not know if this was indeed the case.

Question by FA to PO Batz: Anything new as far as snatching/larceny of subway riders while they are sleeping?

PO Batz: They are in communication with cleaning staff at train stations. They let them know if individuals are just roaming stations. Plain cloth police officers are also checking the trains.

Chair: Communicates that has been in touch with Emergency Services and the Red Cross to get them to come to meetings. Red Cross does vacates on areas. They can speak on where this happens, so we can get a sense of where these dwellings are.

Office of Emergency Management asked to come on a quarterly basis from now on.

There have been some slashing/shootings in the 34th precinct. Chair and FA wanted to know more about these happenings but precinct representatives were not present. Manhattan DA representative was not present either.

Chair speaks to the public about internship programs being offered at the Manhattan DA's.

Chair mentions upcoming St. Patrick's Parade.

Chair speaks on preliminary budget and explains how it represents CB12 priorities for budgetary allocations for the community. She explains in detail structure of the document and also how communication happens with the city.

Chair explains that Committee found that this district has the most noise complaints. We asked for decibel readers to document noise levels.

DJ: brings up new police tower on Sherman and Academy and states that it is an eyesore.

NM: Agrees.

RM: brings up the fact that 6 to 8 more police officers have been added to the 34th precinct. Also brings up the fact that one of the budgetary requests was for more mental health and crisis management training for police officers. This latter request is not seen in the budgetary allocations document.

Chair: Makes a note to follow up on this.

DJ: Speaks on the need/importance of these trainings. Shares she sees many cops stopping people randomly.

RM: Speaks on how we have a 50/50 situation with police officers in the community. How good they are depends on the commander handling the situation. Commanders need to be held accountable. A lot of good cops too that have been in the precinct for 30 years.

GE: Points out that there is another expense budget chart. That one has request for training.

RM: Speaks how businesses are closing in the area as a response to summonses. 7 businesses have closed. Member wants to know how business owners can get better educated about what is required of them in terms of safety/regulations.

Also, they are receiving many summons. Reiterates that in 4 months 7 businesses have closed. These are lost jobs. Member speaks as to the need of a balanced approach between enforcement of safety rules and keeping businesses open.

DJ: It doesn't seem as business owners are given much opportunity to cure defects. Suggests FDNY to give education seminar on how to correct issues. Member explains it is hard to vote liquor licenses because we only have information on violations but no information on remedial actions taken.

RM: Speaks on free trainings available to businesses.

DJ: Speaks on the need of businesses being informed of the resources available to them.

RM: Problem is that businesses have to deal with 5 agencies at once. FDNY is the best out of these agencies. They give businesses 45 days to fix issues. NYPD is not as good as them.

Conversation on businesses not attending licensing meetings develops.

RM: Explains that business owners don't speak Spanish or managers and for this reason don't attend CB meetings.

Chair: Suggest obtaining live translation for meetings.

RM: Explains that business owners need to show up to meetings and take responsibility instead of pointing fingers. Offers la Marina as an example.

GE: Offers the idea of putting together a town hall meeting in conjunction with elected officials, businesses and agencies to facilitate a conversation.

RM: There is tension between businesses and the council member's office. Suggests having MBP office.

DJ: Likes, seconds idea of town hall meeting. Thinks there may be an issue of being misinformed on the part of businesses.

RM: Reiterates importance of translators to change perception of community board as just being Caucasian.

Chair: States she likes the idea of having a town hall meeting as a way to encourage CB as a safe space, not hostile to businesses.

FA: Raises question as to whether there is a way to make sure that we get a heads up when the 34th precinct or any other precincts representatives are not able to come.

Chair: Brings up fact that is Ash Wednesday in many Christian churches and that may be reason why they were not able to attend.

GE: Says the lack of attendance by precincts should be brought up officially, to avoid this in the future.

RM: Encourages committee to stand together if we feel an action should be taken.

Chair: Suggests emailing Ebenezer about lack of attendance and say you weren't here, can you please explain why. For FDNY, we should check if there was any major emergency.

DJ: Suggests KYR presentation from NMIC and police department about laws in businesses.

RM: Asks whether presentation can be done in conjunction with Youth and Education Committee?

Chair: Fire Department has training/education branch. They can do Fire Safety Presentation.

DJ: Speaks on Citizenship App putting out alerts of fires every other day.

Chair: Suggests NYCFireWire twitter account for knowing about fires. Citizenship app does not validate calls of fire/confirm them.

Asked Red Cross to come speak on their fire responses. They will send a home fire education campaign.

DJ: Fire Department does not collect batteries. They have chemicals that are not safe for the environment.

Chair: We'll find out where to go.

RM: Talks about how criminal records give scarlet letters.

NM: Speaks on the need for reintegration to society programs after people come out of jail. Points out the connection this has to safety.

RM: Speaks about vetting, extreme vetting and how this creates a barrier of entry for people with

records.

Chair: Shares how she was vetted for 20 years before being able to join the Family Justice Center.

Member of the public asks question: what's the process for adding a budget item?

Chair: Goes to full board and is voted upon, if it passes then it goes to the city.

Member of the public: Suggests SAP translation for meetings.

Chair: Brings up need of Greek and Arabic translation as well.

Chair: Closes meeting 10 minutes after 8pm, recapping meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Noquel Matos