

HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES – February 7, 2019

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Steve Simon (Chair), Daryl Cochrane (Asst. Chair), Tanya Bonner, Sara Fisher, Danielle Jettoo, Elizabeth Lehmann.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Richard Allman, Beatrice Hall (Public Member, Excused).

BOARD MEMBER PRESENT: Mary Anderson

GUESTS: Emma Hulse and Andres Nieto, NY-Presbyterian Hospital; Julias Camagong, Anthony Ciampa and Shanna Murphy, NY State Nurses Assn.; Joshua Goldberg, PIN Pharma Inc.; Stan Kachnowski, HITLAB; David Friend, Paul Hintersteiner.

S. Simon, chair, called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. and introduced the committee members who were present.

1. **Presentation on the CHALK (Choosing Healthy & Active Lifestyles for Kids) program** – Emma Hulse, Program Manager, CHALK, Ambulatory Care Network, NY-Presbyterian Hospital, gave a Powerpoint presentation and said the following:
 - CHALK is in partnership with Columbia University Medical Center and the community
 - Its purpose is to address high rates of obesity and promote wellness
 - 7500 participants each year
 - Provides technical assistance, capacity building, nutrition education to local organizations
 - Sponsors a mini-grant program (\$2000 for three years) for “projects that promote healthy lifestyles for children and families in northern Manhattan.” Application deadline: March 1.
 - Community suffers from a lack of resources to deal with food insecurity; there aren’t a lot of food pantries. CHALK helped create food pantry at Narrow Door Church on Sherman Ave. Also work with mobile food pantry operated by West Side Campaign Against Hunger, which stops outside Holyrood Church.
 - Provided \$10 vouchers to 700 ACN patients to use to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at local greenmarkets. They receive it when visiting a nutritionist. 89% of the vouchers have been redeemed.
 - Also working to improve school lunches
 - Has a program at Highbridge Recreation Center encouraging use of this facility, which is free for children under 18.
2. **Update from NY State Nurses Association** – Anthony Ciampa, President, NYSNA Executive Committee, NY-Presbyterian Hospital, and Shanna Murphy, a member of the executive committee, reported as follows:
 - They have met with State Senators Robert Jackson and Gustavo Rivera to discuss NYPH’s plan to close the psych unit at the Allen Hospital. They both committed to help obtain a copy of the Certificate of Need application submitted by NYPH to the State Dept. of Health on 12/29/17.
 - DOH told NYSNA yesterday that it will be providing the CON in response to the union’s FOIL request.
 - NYPH has not submitted the separate Prior Approval Review (PAR) application required to initiate the closure proceedings. This would be reviewed by DOH and the Office of Mental Health, which is aware that this is a contentious issue within the community.
 - There would be ample opportunity for public comment. The review would take several months, maybe longer given the complexity of the case.
 - Ultimately, the Behavioral Health Science Advisory Council would review data collected by the NYC field office and the central office in Albany, along with public testimony, to issue a recommendation to the State Health Commissioner – if the PAR is submitted by NYPH.
 - 26 of the 30 beds in the psych unit were filled as of last week. There are 3½ providers.
 - NYSNA has a “moral and ethical responsibility” to advocate for patients.
 - Its contract expired 12/31/18. There have been 18 negotiating sessions with a group of hospitals, including NYPH, Montefiore and Mount Sinai, but no progress – no significant counter-proposals or agreements.
 - The key issue: safe staffing ratios. “We care for too many patients...chronically short-staffed.” Have to double up when a colleague goes for lunch.
 - Also trying to pass a law in Albany to require safe staffing ratios.
 - NYPH is very profitable, makes “hundreds of millions of dollars.”
 - NYSNA will be picketing outside the Milstein Hospital and the Allen Hospital on Feb. 13.

3. Isabella Geriatric Center Report – Betty Lehmann, Director of Marketing & Communications, reported:

- Working with Presbyterian Senior Services to provide caregiver support for family members caring for a relative with dementia. Isabella is the hub for the program.
- The 50+ Club is going to Mohegan Sun casino.
- MJHS Health System, Isabella's parent, is closing its home care program. But the one at Isabella is not affected.

4. Old Business – S. Simon reported on the following:

- Brownfield cleanup at 4650 Broadway: Hello Living has evidently not purchased the property yet. DEC's response to my inquiry: "The only information we have is the current owner and BCP [Brownfield Cleanup Program] applicant (4650 Broadway Holdings LLC) may be contemplating selling the property. We are currently still working with the current owner/BCP applicant and their consultant on advancing the investigation and remediation of the site." The consultant, Langan engineering, said: "They haven't sold the property so, as of now, my client still owns it. We are wrapping up the groundwater treatment plan..."
- Street and Sidewalk Cleanliness Ratings: The rating for acceptably clean streets in our district for December was 97.3%. The rating for acceptably clean sidewalks was 98.8%.
- There were 285 service requests for DEP from WH-I residents in January. The most frequent ones were as follows: Noise: Construction Before/After Hours (38), Leak (32), Dirty Water (31), Lead Kit Requests (22).
- DDC provided a written status report on its four current projects in our district: installation of sewer/water main in Inwood, water main/fire hydrant/water valve replacements on Haven Avenue, W. 169th Street to W. 172nd Street, installation of gas main on Wadsworth Avenue between W. 183rd Street and W. 190th Street and pedestrian safety project at the Broadway/Nagle/Bennett/Hillside Avenues intersection.

S. Fisher: We should request updates on Legionnaires' disease and lead paint hazards.

T. Bonner: We should hold a community forum on Trump Administration's plan to change the "Public Charge" rule for immigrants, as we discussed in December.

S. Simon: We should co-sponsor the forum with other community organizations such as Northern Manhattan Improvement Corp. and Northern Manhattan Coalition on Immigrants' Rights.

D. Jettoo: We should ask DEP for lead testing kits.

S. Fisher and D. Cochrane discussed the need for playgrounds for special needs children.

5. New Business – Joshua Goldberg, scientist/researcher, PIN Pharma Inc., reported that a clinical trial he had worked on for 10 years – to stimulate an immune response to cancer – was successful. His lab was located in the Audubon Research Center on Broadway and W. 166th Street, which is operated by Columbia University. His company's lease was not renewed, and it had to move downtown. He said most of the space is now occupied by Columbia's own academic labs, not commercial tenants, although the building was conceived to be an incubator for private companies. New leases are only for 18 months. "It takes a long time for ideas to come to fruition ...You can't file a patent in 18 months." HITLAB, a current tenant, is in jeopardy; its lease was not renewed.

S. Simon noted that he was involved in the negotiations regarding this building about 30 years ago and that he would look into this issue further.

D. Cochrane: We should hold a joint meeting with the Housing & Human Services Committee on the Community Health Profile recently released by NYC Dept. of Health & Mental Hygiene.

S. Fisher: The CUMC Research Forum on opioids was very good – "made me feel hopeful"

D. Cochrane: May is ALS Awareness Month. He will invite a speaker.

S. Fisher: April is Donor Awareness Month. She will invite a speaker.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:38 p.m.
Respectfully submitted, Steve Simon.