



CB9M

16-18 Old Broadway
New York, New York 10027
(212) 864-6200/Fax # 662-7396

COMMUNITY BOARD #9, MANHATTAN

SENIOR ISSUES COMMITTEE MINUTES TUESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2011

Scott Stringer
President, Borough of Manhattan

Larry English, Esq.
Chair

Carolyn R. Thompson
First Vice-Chair

Charles Cooper, Jr.
Second Vice-Chair

Anthony Fletcher
Treasurer

Diane Wilson
Assistant Treasurer

Theodore Kovaleff
Secretary

Jane Arrendell
Assistant Secretary

Eutha Prince
District Manager

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Ernestine Welch, Chair, **Present**

Cora Gilmore, **Present**

Georgiette Morgan-Thomas, **Excused**

Anthony Fletcher, **Present**

OTHER ATTENDEES PRESENT

Verna Arthur, Department For The Aging

Joyce Garrett

Mark Bones, VISION

Gerald Powell

Tiffany Alston, CB9M member

William Landers

Phil Jones, Public Advocate

Max Clark, Public Advocate

Shirley Saxton, Social Security Admin.

Ginia Addo

PUBLIC MEMBERS:

G. Marilyn Alexander, **Excused**

Wanda Capan, **Present**

Laenoria Conyers, **Present**

Bessie Davis, **Present**

Ruther Miller, **Present**

Virginia Lee, **Present**

Inez Woodhouse, **Present**

Vanisha Taylor, **Absent**

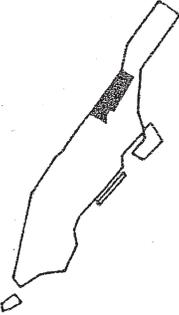
Nazarene Robinson, **Absent**

Dothe Rudolph, **Present**

Ruth Lewis, Adult Day, **Excused**

Margaret Collins, **Present**

Helen Marshall, **Present**



The meeting was held on Tuesday, January 11, 2011 at the George Bruce Library, 518 West 125th Street, New York, NY 10027

Ernestine Welch, Chair called the meeting to order at 11:30 A.M. due to a delay in availability to access the building.

The agenda was adopted and minutes accepted with any necessary corrections which may be found.

Commentary/Suggestions:

Ms. Welch urged seniors to share at the next coming meeting in celebration of Martin Luther Day/Black History Month.

Reports:

Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Mark Bones, Community Coordinator, stated that the Blind and Visually Impaired is a non-profit organization that was established in 1869. VISION provides free services to the blind and visually impaired individuals.

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In order to qualify for services a written doctor's letter confirming that you are partially or legally blind is needed. The organization offers free materials to assist clients their daily activities and safety (see attached)

There are four common eye diseases:

- **Macular Degeneration** – affects central vision and is usually age related.
- **Glaucoma** – affects side vision and maintains vision in the center.
- **Cataracts** – cause a general clouding of the eye. As it progresses it becomes difficult to read.
- **Diabetic Retinopathy** – affects people with diabetes; can causes cloudiness and blind spots throughout the eye.

Mr. Bones urged seniors to take care of their eyes and recommended that they should perform a yearly eye examination with ophthalmologist.

Public Advocate:

Phil Jones, Deputy Director, reported that the Office of the Public Advocate assist with complaints, inquiries involving government-related services and regulations; provides information, referrals and works closely with other city agencies.

Max Clark, Building Liaison reported that the office of Public Advocate deals with non New York Housing Authority (private) buildings. Assist constituents with the following:

- Evictions
- Apartment applications that are 12 years and over
- Harassment
- Write letters to landlords; NYCHA; HPD on behalf of the constituents.

There are three classes of violations

1. Non-hazardous – building owner is given three months to correct the situation.
2. Hazardous – building owner is given 30 days to correct the problem.
3. Class C – imminent threat to health.

The Public Advocate can enforce laws **only** to city agencies **not** state or federal government. The senior hotline was eliminated due to budget cuts.

Suggestions to the Office of the Public Advocate:

- Follow-up on Senior Hotline – seniors complaint are very important
- The M18 bus has been discontinued and seniors utilized this route.
- Street Furniture at 152nd Street and Amsterdam – requested at bus shelter
- 145th Street and Amsterdam there is a bus shelter but no seating.
- Public Advocate's Office and Department For the Aging need to work together
- Assist with Access-A-Ride
- Assist with repairs with New York City Housing Authority.

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Old Business:

Department For The Aging:

Verna Arthur, Director of Manhattan Community Outreach gave an update that the 3.5 millions funds for Case Management Program have been restored.

Social Security Administration:

Shirley Saxton, Public Relations warned seniors that because of the tax income filing period to be careful of the scammers – do not provide your social security.

Monthly Refreshments:

The majority present expressed the need for CB9 to assign a small budget for coffee, tea and other light refreshments for the monthly Senior Issues Committee meetings.

Action Taken:

- Write a letter to the Public Advocate to restore senior hotline.

Adjournment: 12:30 P.M.

The next meeting will be held on February 1, George Bruce Library at 11:00 A.M.

Prepared by: Hleziphi Zita, Community Associate

VISIONS

services for the blind and visually impaired

**Free services to live actively with vision loss
at home and work
at Selis Manor
at VCB**

Mission Statement

VISIONS/Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired is a nonprofit rehabilitation and social service organization. VISIONS purpose is to develop and implement programs to assist blind and visually impaired people of all ages to lead independent and active lives, and to educate the public to understand the capabilities and needs of people who are blind and visually impaired.

VISIONS / VCB

500 Greenwich Street, 3rd Floor
New York, NY 10013-1354

Phone: 212-625-1616 / Fax: 212-219-4078

Toll Free: 1-888-245-8333

Website: www.visionsvcb.org

Email: info@visionsvcb.org

Blindline® 1-888-625-1616

VISIONS at Selis Manor

135 West 23rd Street.

New York, NY 10011

Phone: 646-486-4444 / Fax: 646-486-4343

Incorporated as a 501(c)(3) charity in 1926

VISIONS meets all of the BBB Wise Giving Standards and is an accredited charity and member of the BBB seal program for Charity Accountability



Photographs by Peter Byron and Jean Geiger

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VISIONS

services for the blind and visually impaired



**Promoting the independence of people of all
ages who are blind and visually impaired**

(212) 625-1616

www.visionsvcb.org

FREE INDIVIDUALIZED SERVICES

Vision Rehabilitation Services

VISIONS Rehabilitation Department helps blind individuals of all ages achieve their highest level of independence. Vision Rehabilitation Professionals provide instruction in adaptive independent living skills and mobility at home at work and in the community. Audio books are also available for people who are newly blind as well as textbooks with lesson plans for Vision Rehabilitation Therapists and Mobility Specialists.
Intake Coordinator / Outreach Specialist (212-625-1616, ext. 134)

VISIONS at Selis Manor

VISIONS at Selis Manor is an adapted learning environment and meeting place for blind youth, adults and seniors. Located at 135 West 23rd Street in Manhattan, VISIONS at Selis Manor offers support groups, computer training, adapted recreation, volunteer and social work services for people who are blind.
Director (646-486-4444, ext. 11)

Employment Services

Employment services are provided to correspond to the age and experience of each client.

Youth: Prevocational Services familiarize participants with the world of work including related social skills, interview techniques, and visits to businesses. Work experiences provide participants with summer placement and after-school jobs.

Youth Employment Specialist (646-486-4444, ext. 26)

Adults/Seniors: Full time job placement matches an individual's education and experience to career opportunities. Participants explore the world of work including job searches, technology training, business etiquette, dressing for success, resume writing, interviewing tips. Internships and work experiences provide participants with on the job training.

Director of Workforce Development and Training
(646-486-4444, ext. 14)

Blindline®

Blindline® provides a toll-free number for access to a New York statewide database of products and services for people who are blind or visually impaired, their family members, caregivers, and professionals. The call center is available Monday through Friday from 9:00am to 5:00pm by calling 888-625-1616. A fully accessible website (www.blindline.org) with direct access to the database and a customer feedback feature is open to the public.
Blindline® Coordinator (1-888-625-1616, ext. 710)

VISIONS VCB

Located in Rockland County, New York, VCB is one of the largest and most comprehensive residential vision rehabilitation and therapeutic recreation programs serving people of all ages who are blind in the United States. VCB is adapted to meet the needs of people who are blind and visually impaired, including people who are independent wheelchair users, and is open year round.
VCB Director (212-625-1616, ext. 107)

Intergenerational Program

VISIONS Intergenerational Program recruits and trains high school students in assisting blind seniors in their homes, and at Selis Manor. The youth provide companionship, escort, assistance with reading and shopping.

Intergenerational Coordinator (212-625-1616, ext. 108)

Community Outreach and Training

Through inter-agency collaborations, VISIONS ensures that individuals who are blind have access to community-based resources. VISIONS works closely with advisory boards in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens and Staten Island. VISIONS provides public education forums on eye disease and blindness prevention and vision screenings in all five boroughs of New York City, and has affiliations with over 60 senior centers.

Community Coordinator (212-625-1616, ext. 109 or 144)