

**SENIOR ISSUES COMMITTEE
MINUTES
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2014**

Committee Members:

Hon. Ernestine Welch, Chair, **Present**; Hon. Anthony Fletcher, **Excused**, Hon. Barbara Marshall, **Present**; Hon. Martin Wallace, **Present**; Hon. Carole Singleton, **Excused**;

Public Members:

Wanda Capan, **Excused**; Laenoria Conyers, **Excused**; Bessie Davis, **Present**; Cora Gilmore, **Present**; Ruther Miller, **Present**; Inez Woodhouse, **Present**;
Nazarene Robinson, **Excused**

Other Attendees Present:

The meeting was held on Tuesday, November 18th, 2014 at the George Bruce Library, 518 West 125th Street, New York, NY 10027, in spite of the cold, and wet winter weather.

Hon. Ernestine Welch, Chair called the meeting to order at 11:20 a.m. She stated that to be a public member one has to complete a Manhattan Community Board No. 9 public membership application. Please contact the office for an application and after the applications have been reviewed, you will be contacted if you are accepted.

The agenda was adopted as stated, and minutes were accepted with any necessary corrections.

Announcement:

- Christmas tree lighting at 125th Street will happen on Thursday, November 20th, 2014 o
- All urged to pick-up the many announcements and information for senior issues activities during this holiday period.

Updates/Reports

New York State Senate

Senator Bill Perkins stated that Albany is in recess there will be no voting at the moment for any legislation. He stated that his office is located at the Adam Clayton Powell State Building, 163 West 125th Street, Suite #926. He encouraged seniors to contact his office if they have any questions or concerns that need to be addressed, and Mr. Kevin Russell is the key person to be contacted at (212) 222-7315 or via email krussell@nysenate.gov. Senator reported that every ten years Census comes and changed the districting and this causes the voting polls to be changed. This is to balance the population.

New York City Department For The Aging

Ms. Verna Arthur, Director of Community Outreach in Manhattan brought greetings from Commissioner Donna Corrado. She reported that the department few initiative programs beyond retirement age such as: Age Friendly Initiative which was the city's plan to sustain and enhance its age-friendliness for its growing population of seniors. Age Friendly New York City outlines 59 specific initiatives on four areas:

- Community and civic participation.
- Housing
- Public spaces and transportation.
- Health and social services
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The Innovative Senior Centers represent new models in Senior Center Services Nationwide. These centers provides enhanced programming, including robust wellness programs, additional access to health care services, arts and cultural programs, as well as new technological and volunteer opportunities.

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Innovative senior centers go beyond the offering of traditional senior center to include flexible and expanded hours on evening and weekends, and café-style flexible meal times. One of the innovative senior centers included programming specifically for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender and visually impaired communities.

Silver Alert Program:

In 2009 New York City launched a Senior Alert system "Silver Alert Program" to assist to locate missing seniors at risk. The New York City Police Department will issue a Silver Alert when a senior with cognitive impairments go missing. Notifications will send through the City's Notify NYC system to subscribers in the five boroughs, the media and will be transmitted wirelessly to yellow cabs. The public will be asked to call in any tips to a special number.

Ms. Arthur reminded the seniors that Medicare Enrollment started on October 15th to December 7th and anyone who has questions can call DFTA to assist or answer questions. She can be reached at (212) 609-4180.

Manhattan Community Board No. 9 Senior Issues Committee Public Member:

Ms. Cora Gilmore stated that she attended the Department For The Aging Annual Planned Consultations reported that rent control and rent stabilization, housing, home care, health care and Medicare, Medicaid were high lights of the seniors issues at the annual planned consultations. She stated that seniors from other parts of the city attended but there was no representation from Harlem. She indicated that the department has funds to assist seniors and solve problems, but seniors should attend and bring their concerns. Their concerns can be put in a written testimony and a senior can read it at the consultations.

New York City Housing Authority Grant Houses

Ms. Gloria Allen reported that right now she is acting President of the Grant's Houses Tenants Association. The election to elect new officers will be held in December and she stated that she will be stepping down from a seat as a Vice-President for 20 years. She has been an acting President for ¾ months now. She mentioned that the new officers should encourage seniors to attend CB9M's Senior Issues Committee meetings because they're informative and educational.

Old Business

Senior Reading Garden next to the George Bruce Library

Ms. Carter is the care taker of the Senior Reading Garden next to the George and the Vegetable Garden which is located at 430 West 125th Street. The vegetable garden can hold about 40 members but at the moment has 38 members who are residents of Grant Houses. The vegetable garden has several programs such as Introductory Fair, Educational segment for hour and thirty minutes. The educational segment is about garden lessons and at the end of the lesson, participants are given free seeds.

Things that are needed for the Senior Reading Garden:

- The walkway need to be changed.
- Iron benches needed due to prevent vandalizing.

Suggestions:

- Invite Access-A-Ride
- Sub-Committee to prepare a letter and resolution regarding Mt. Morris Park and transportation for seniors.

Prepared by: Hleziphi Zita, Community Associate & Coordinator of the Senior Issues Committee