

**SENIOR ISSUES COMMITTEE
MINUTES
TUESDAY, MARCH 6, 2012**

Committee Members:

Ernestine Welch, Chair, **Present**; Cora Gilmore, **Present**; Anthony Fletcher, **Present**

Public Members:

G. Marilyn Alexander, **Excused**; Wanda Capan, **Excused**; Laenoria Conyers, **Present**; Bessie Davis, **Present**; Ruther Miller, **Absent**; Virginia Lee, **Excused**; Inez Woodhouse, **Present**

Other Attendees Present:

Verna Arthur, Department For The Aging; Alpha Sesay, City College; Gisele Guerre; Sonia Addo; Sarah Martin, Grant Tenants Association; Dothe Rudolph; Victoria Mason Ailey; Aretha Fletcher; Anne Burley

The meeting was held on Tuesday, March 6, 2012 at the George Bruce Library, 518 West 125th Street, New York, NY 10027

Ernestine Welch, Chair called the meeting to order at 11:20 a.m.

The agenda was adopted and the minutes were accepted as written.

Update:

Columbia University:

Victoria Mason Ailey, Vice President, Office of Community & Government Affairs

- Stated that the University is concerned that the bus service is not used as it is supposed to be.
- The shuttle bus service is not intended to supplement the MTA service.
- Proper identification is required to board the shuttle bus and the following identifications are acceptable Medicare Health Insurance card; Access-A-Ride card.
- The shuttle bus service runs from Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
- Additional stops cannot be accommodated because the current stops were assigned based on the Land Use and Zoning requirements.
- Stated that in the future she will take a ride on the bus to see which stops and how much time the bus stays per stop.

Community Board No. 9 Manhattan:

Anthony Fletcher, Treasurer and Member of Senior Issues Committee

- On Friday, March 2nd Ernestine Welch, Reverend Morgan-Thomas and I met to discuss on how New York City Housing Authority can be approached regarding the senior reading garden next to the George Bruce Library.
- According to NYCHA's policy, non residents cannot utilize or volunteer in their premises without an insurance.
- NYCHA requested that CB9 should provide an insurance to cover the non residents due to lack of funds in the budget.

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Rev. Georgette Morgan-Thomas, Chair of CB9M

- Will contact Commissioner Margarita Lopez regarding this matter and request NYCHA to assist with maintenance of the garden.

NYC Department For The Aging:

Verna Arthur, Director of Community Outreach

- DFTA tries to meet the needs of many of the 1.3 million older New Yorkers who are in need of services now and in the future, by contracting with more than 400 local agencies, to provide a wide array of services throughout the five boroughs. These services are designed to reflect the rich cultural and diversity of New York City's local neighborhoods.
- The good news is that DFTA was spared from cuts in this year's budget.
- NYC's 65 and plus population will double over the next 20 years, as baby boomers age and people living longer.
- Aging research is showing us that, what was once seen as an inevitable decline in older people is no longer valid. Now we see the process of aging as a result to the positive influence of healthy lifestyles, good nutrition, rich social networks, intellectual and creative stimulation and opportunities for ongoing involvement.
- One of Mayor Bloomberg's 59 Age-friendly NYC Initiatives is the Innovative Senior Centers (ISCs).
- One of the most far-reaching of the Age-friendly Initiatives is the Department's revamping of its senior center network to better help seniors thrive.
- Of the eight ISCs that were launched, Manhattan has 2: Lenox Hill, and Young Men and Young Women Hebrew Associations; as well as 2 citywide ISCs – VISION and SAGE.
- The rest of the City's network of 250 or so senior centers will be linked to these centers in various ways.
- Moreover, DFTA expects these innovative centers to develop practices and approaches that other centers can adopt as they too do things like:
 - Developing healthy menus, meal options and health-enhancing activities.
 - Adding exciting new programs.
 - Strengthening their community linkages and their capacity to address issues like poverty by providing assistance with benefits and entitlements.
- Urged senior to speak to their senior center directors to implement healthy and innovative program in their centers if they have not already done so.
- Wilson Major Morris Senior Center is no longer one of DFTA's Programs; it is funded by discretionary funds.
- Distributed information pamphlets re: Food Stamp Programs (SNAP).

Announcements:

- Community Board No. 9 Manhattan will hold a Public Hearing on Mayor's Preliminary Budget FY2013, Tuesday, March 13th, 6:30 p.m. at Broadway Housing Communities, 583 Riverside Drive, Lower Level (Brick Room)
- The Commonwealth Organization will hold an International Grandparents meeting, Friday, March 9th, 10:00 a.m., 361 West 125th Street between St. Nicholas and Morningside Avenue.
- Met Supermarket on Tuesday and Thursday have ten percent (10%) discount for seniors excluding items on sale and taxable.

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Suggestions:

- A survey on supermarkets should be done in our district re:
 - a) Discount for seniors and how much
 - b) Which days of the week
 - c) Requirements for discount and how to obtain reward cards

Brad Taylor, 1st Vice Chair of Community Board No. 9 Manhattan on behalf of Senior Issues Committee presented the Certificate of Appreciation to Ms. Inez Woodhouse for her dedication to the Committee.

Adjournment: 12:30 P.M.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 3, 2012, George Bruce Library

Prepared by: Hleziphi Zita, Community Associate