

**SENIOR ISSUES COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2012**

***Committee Members:***

Ernestine Welch, Chair, **Present**; Tiffany Alston, **Present**; Anthony Fletcher, **Excused**;  
Carole Singleton, **Present**; Gladys Tinsley, **Present**

***Public Members:***

G. Marilyn Alexander, **Excused**; Wanda Capan, **Present**; Laenoria Conyers, **Present**; Bessie  
Davis, **Present**; Ruther Miller, **Excused**; Inez Woodhouse, **Present**;  
Nazarene Robinson, **Present**

***Other Attendees Present:***

Cecilia Varga; Florence Rice; Dothe Rudolph; Raysa Alarconi; Jully Merino, Columbia  
University Office of Community and Government Relations; Iretha Fletcher; Anne Payne; Sarah  
Martin, President of Grant Houses Tenants Association; Victoria Meson-Ailey, Vice President,  
Columbia University Office of Community and Government Relations; Joel Balavram, Senior  
Representative at NYS Attorney General's Office; Shirley Saxton, Public Affairs Specialist,  
Social Security Administration; Cari Tropnas; Sanders Mendez; David Barlow, Woodlawn  
Cemetery

The meeting was held on Tuesday, September 11, 2012 at the George Bruce Library, 518 West  
125<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, NY 10027

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

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

**Reports:**

***New York State Attorney General's Office:***

Joel Balavram, Senior Representative stated that the Attorney General's Office located at 163 West 125<sup>th</sup>  
Street receives approximately 2,000 complaints and 90 percent of the complaints are non fraudulent  
according to the Attorney General. The Attorney General's Office normally mediates complaints and  
with the extreme volume of work the office has interns who assist in research and finding solutions to the  
problem (s). Pay Day Loans are illegal in New York State because a legal interest rate in New York City  
is 24.9 percent (24.9%) and the paid day loans charges 95.0% interest rate on a loan. Consumer beware  
anytime you borrow money is free no deposit is required and the following are scams – secret shopper;  
Sweepstakes/lottery and Grandparent and never sends money to an unknown person through Moneygram  
or Western Union. Mr. Balavram distributed the following booklets of information “A Housing Guide  
for Senior Citizens, Smart Seniors, and Identity Theft Kit: What to Do If you Have Been  
Victimized”

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***Columbia University Office of Community and Governmental Affairs:***

Victoria Mason-Ailey reported that she will give a full report on senior transportation at next committee meeting.

***Senior Reading Garden:***

Sarah Martin, President of Grant Houses Tenants Association reported that the working group is continuing to plant and taking care of the garden. Dr. Vicky Gholson mentioned that the Grant's Tomb donated shrubs and I have arranged a truck to pick up the shrubs for the garden. There was a misleading/misinformation article on the post about my remarks regarding NYCHA and the garden.

***Announcement:***

- i. Thursday, September 20, 2012 is The NYCHA's 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Senior Benefit & Entitlement Fair at Riverbank State Park, 679 Riverside Drive, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

**Adjournment: 1:00 p.m.**

**Prepared by: Hleziphi Zita, Community Associate**