



**THE CITY OF NEW YORK
BOROUGH OF THE BRONX
COMMUNITY BOARD 7**



RUBEN DIAZ, JR., BOROUGH PRESIDENT EMMANUEL MARTINEZ, CHAIRPERSON ISCHIA BRAVO, DISTRICT MANAGER

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

Chair:	Michelle Avila
Meeting Date:	Tuesday, October 19, 2021
Meeting Time:	6:30 PM
Members (Check Those In Attendance)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Michelle Avila <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Helene Wilson <input type="checkbox"/> Gloria Bent <input type="checkbox"/> Untwain Fyffe <input type="checkbox"/> Alfred Grant <input type="checkbox"/> Michelle Gonzalez <input type="checkbox"/>

Minutes:

- I) Introductions**
- II) Review of previous minutes (If applicable)**
- III) Follow-up from previous month (If applicable)**
- IV) New Business**
 - a. Presentation: James Baldwin Outdoor Learning Center**
 - Presentation by Tavis Allison from the James Baldwin Outdoor Learning Center (JBOLC). The JBOLC operates a farmer's market in CB7 offering fresh produce which can be purchased with EBT and also acts as a hub for community services, including as well as free yoga and tae kwon do instruction. The garden sees about 100 – 300 people each Saturday.
 - The Garden is located in the intersection of Goulden Avenue and Sedgwick Avenue and W Mosholu Parkway South Bronx, NY 10468. They were founded in 2018 but their history on the campus of DeWitt Clinton High School in the Bronx goes back to 2010 with the start of the Clinton Garden, a project of an activist/journalism class Ray, founder & director, taught starting in 2004.
 - They have since expanded operations to Meg's Garden, established in 2016 and Edible Forest started in 2017 and DOT Pollinator Garden established in 2018. The JBOLC engages students and the community in



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outdoor environmental education, gardening, composting and holistic sustainability. In August of 2020, in the midst of COVID, we started the JBOLC Garden Community Farmers Market as another way to connect the community to healthy food and the environment that grows it, and took on unexpected roles to serve neighborhood needs during the pandemic (e.g. collecting food scraps).

- During the COVID-19 pandemic the JBOLC operated a Food Relief program to increase accessibility of healthy food in a low-income Bronx, NY neighborhood by acquiring fresh vegetables from our farmers at a reduced price to distribute to friendly fridges in the neighborhood.
- Tavis encouraged community members to visit the garden to purchase fresh food but also to take part in the various activities taking place.
- JBOLC would also like to form partnerships with groups looking to promote health in the neighborhood. If there are groups looking to fight food injustice or do health outreach, engaging people in the community to promote health, encourages folks to reach out.
- They are also looking to expand to year-round service. Currently they have volunteer chefs from Moss Café that will prepare hot meals with unused produced. Meals will be available for suggested donations and proceeds will offset cost of events. Would like to partner with to bring more off-season activities.

b. Discussion: New York State Nurses Association (NYSNA). Concerns regarding unsafe staffing and environmental conditions present in Montefiore Hospital's emergency departments.

- Montefiore NYSNA nurses attended the Health & Human Services Committee meeting to share their experiences working in the Adult and Pediatric Emergency Departments at Montefiore Medical Center. They shared concerns regarding adequate staffing, infection control protocols,



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adequate space for patients, and specifically space and protocols for psychiatric and behavioral health patients.

- For psychiatric and behavioral health patients, nurses alluded to not having adequate physical space in the Emergency Departments to treat patients. They also relayed concerns with the extreme wait times for beds within inpatient units.
- The Montefiore NYSNA nurses expressed their frustration and feelings of burnout due to the sustained conditions. Nurses alluded to high levels of staff turnover that is causing further strains on existing staff.
- The Montefiore NYSNA nurses relayed that they have raised these concerns with supervisors and leadership at Montefiore, filing numerous Protest of Assignment documents to alert their respective managers of these unsafe patient conditions. The Montefiore NYSNA nurses requested that Community Board 7 draft a letter to Montefiore demanding community, caregiver and administrative collaboration to develop real plans to serve patients with the dignity, respect and quality they deserve. Please see attached letter from the Montefiore NYSNA nurses outlining their concerns.
- Several members of the public commented that these are not new problems within Montefiore's Emergency Departments. There have historically been long wait times and overcrowding. A community board member recalled that this issue was brought to the Community Board in 2018, and was said to be addressed then.
- The Health & Human Services Committee did not have quorum. The Committee Chair relayed that she would bring the request to the Executive Committee and draft a motion for the next general board meeting on October 26, 2021.

c. COVID19 & COVID-19 Vaccine Updates



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- The Committee reviewed COVID-19 rates and vaccination rates in neighborhoods overlapping with Community Board 7. See attachment for rate breakdowns. In general, COVID-19 rates are decreasing within our communities.
- Committee Chair expressed importance in encouraging community members to get vaccinated.

d. FY23 Capital Budget & Expense Requests

- The Committee reviewed Expense requests for FY22. The Committee did not have quorum so could not vote to keep the requests. The Committee Chair relayed she would email Committee members to confirm whether the Committee is in favor of keeping existing FY22 Expense requests.
- The Committee Chair reviewed categories of expense requests with Board members and community members at the meeting. The participants identified the following needs and possible expense requests for consideration 1. Pest Control 2. Chronic diseases 3. Mental Health supports 4. Substance abuse supports 5. Domestic Violence services 6. Access to PrEP 7. Expanding street outreach for homeless services 8. Support services to income New Yorkers.
- The Committee Chair thanked participants for sharing priorities and relayed that she will follow up with Committee members over email for final considerations and recommendations to the general board.

e. General Announcements

- NYC H+H Jacobi Hospital has opened a new Pride Center for LGBTQ patients. The Center will serve lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning/queer (LGBTQ) patients as they receive high-quality, culturally competent, respectful care in the hospital's state-of-the-art facility. The new Pride Health Center will provide LGBTQ-affirming



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care for a variety of services, including primary care, adolescent care, OB/GYN, family planning services, behavioral health, dental services, ophthalmology, hormone therapy, testing for sexually transmitted infections and HIV, and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), and more. Social work support will also be available for patients to assist with continuity of care. The Pride Health Center at NYC Health + Hospitals/Jacobi is located within Building 8 on the first floor (1D). The Center will have sessions on Thursday afternoons from 1:30-5:00PM and will have a cadre of full-time dedicated providers who are supported by a team of nurses, administrators, and patient care associates. In addition to Center hours, LGBTQ-affirming care is available 24/7 at Jacobi via the Emergency and Ambulatory Care Departments. There is a free Shuttle that can transport patients from North Central to Jacobi hospital during the day.

- The Bronx District Attorney's Office is hosting an Infant Safety Expo on October 28, 2021 from 2pm – 5pm on Zoom. This event is for pregnant or a parent/ caregiver for an infant under the age of one.
- Sirio Guerrino announced that Saturday, October 23 is the Jerome Gun Hill BID Fall Festival beginning at 12pm.
- Sirio also announced that he will be at the JBOLC Garden on Saturday and looks forward to seeing folks there.
- Walter Bell, Founder and Trainer for Simple and Safe, an Opioid Overdose Prevention program, relayed to the Committee that he would like to extend Narcan training services to the Community Board to curb the high rates of overdoses in our communities. The training is one hour and Narcan saves lives. You can find more information at simpleandsafe.org. Individuals do not need previous training or degree to take this training.



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- Michelle Avila, Chair of Health & Human Services Committee reminded folks to vote in General Election. Early voting starts on Saturday, October 23.

V) **Next meeting date: November 16, 2021**

VI) **Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 7: 56pm.**