



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



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

## VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

<b>Chair:</b>	<b>Chad Royer</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>Wednesday, June 16, 2021</b>
<b>Meeting Time:</b>	<b>6:30 PM</b>
<b>Members: (Check Those In Attendance)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chad Royer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Emmanuel Asamoah <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hugo Gonzalez <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jean Hill <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jeffery Hunter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Helene Redd <input type="checkbox"/> Adaline Walker Santiago
<b>Minutes done by:</b>	<b>Chad Royer</b>

**Minutes:**

- I) **Introductions**
- II) **Review of previous minutes (If applicable)**
- III) **Follow-up from previous month (If applicable)**
- VI) **New Business**
- VII) **Outreach**
  - a) **The committee has a flyer sample for the recruitment flyer that is currently being worked on. The flyer sample will be shared with the committee for review.**
  - b) **Union Community Health Center will provide medical services and dental services for veterans using a mobile van starting this summer. The committee has submitted a list of locations for UCHC to consider for the mobile vans to visit. The goal is to reach out to veterans in different parts of the neighborhood so that services can be provided to people who need it.**
- VII) **New Business**
  - a) **Presentation by Maria Santana, Recruitment Officer of HERO Dads**
    - 1) **HERO Dads is a partnership between Bronx Works and Montefiore and the goal of the program is to help fathers who**



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have no custody or joint custody of their children, or stepfathers participate in a four week research study to identify psychological and economic impacts of fathers having limited to no access to their children.

- 2) Spanish speaking speakers are available for the program. Participants receive \$450 prepaid Visa card, Unlimited Metro Card, parenting courses, free job training, job placement assistance, and access to resources regarding assistance in paying child support.
- 3) The parent would have to be at least 18 years old, and either be a noncustodial father, a father with joint custody, or a stepfather. The child has to be 24 years of age or younger. The person seeking assistance would have to be in the 200% poverty level, meaning they would have to earn less than \$25,000. However, the program will accept parents who are working and even earning a little more than the threshold because many who enter the program want to take advantage of the services so that they can be better fathers.
- 4) Classes are currently virtual and there is availability in the mornings, afternoons, and evening. They are working on weekend availability but would need more people to sign up for the weekends.
- 5) For additional information, please call 1-917-886-5146, or email at [masantana@bronxworks.org](mailto:masantana@bronxworks.org)

b) Presentation by Bonnie Morales, Support Coordinator of New York Survivor Outreach Services: Army Survivor Outreach Program

- 1) The program started in 2009 and it was designed to assist families who are dealing with the loss of a veteran.



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- 2) The program helps family members of deceased Army veterans obtain state and federal benefits using a holistic and multiple agency approach in delivering services and support. The services are free.
- 3) There are 35 SOS coordinators providing long term care that perform active duty installations, support and benefit coordinators and financial counselors. They primarily deal with active duty but also service the Army reserve and Army National Guard.
- 4) There are over 100 National Guard SOS coordinators nationwide, with 3 active duty coordinators in New York (Fort Drum, Fort Hamilton, and West Point, 3 National Guard SOS coordinators in the Bronx, New York, and Westchester County, one in Syracuse and Albany, and a reserve coordinator that covers all of Western New York. They will also help out retirees and service members in the community if brought to them.
- 5) Her primary role is providing long term case management for survivors while working closely with the Casualty Assistance Centers, the benefits coordinators and casualty assistance officers appointed within the state. Some of the work includes notifying the families and dealing with funeral paperwork and offering peer support bereavement counseling. The dependent children may be eligible for some VA benefits, such as a Survivor Benefits Plan from the army. Assistance can be provided in obtaining supporting documents like DD-214, or MGB-22 for a National Guard service member.



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6) The organization also looks to connect military families through community events. For more information, contact 1-914-945-7514, or email [bonnie.L.morales2.ctr@mail.mil](mailto:bonnie.L.morales2.ctr@mail.mil)

c) Discussion on Past Bills

- 1) Many of our leaders at Capitol Hill write bills into law with the intention of the contents being carried out. Anyone can look at bills that have been introduced and/or passed from the House and the Senate by going to [Congress.gov](http://Congress.gov) and past bills can be sorted based on the different assemblies of Congress. Anyone can also see the status of how far a bill has gone.
- 2) One of the issues affecting veterans affairs is that while some bills may have passed, we still have issues affecting the way our veterans are being served on the local level. Of the many programs funded by the government, the level of service can vary from excellent, satisfactory, unsatisfactory and unacceptable. We have lost many of our veterans due to COVID, natural causes, and neglect. About 22 veterans per day lose their lives due to suicidal acts.
- 3) Our community needs to reach out to our leaders to make sure that agencies that are supposed to be helping our veterans actually provide the services that our veteran constituents need. Many of the veterans may not be aware of the resources available to them and there needs to be a way to convey the information wherever they are with the use of technology.
- 4) Motion by Jean Hill, seconded by Hugo Gonzalez, to have Bronx Community Board 7 formally request Link NYC to dedicate advertisement space for public announcements on the



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**Link NYC street kiosks designed to reach out to veterans. 5**

**Yay, 0 nay, 0 abstentions. Motion carries.**

- VIII) Next meeting date: Wednesday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021**
- IX) Discussion on next month's agenda**
- X) Adjournment**