



# THE CITY OF NEW YORK

## BOROUGH OF THE BRONX

### COMMUNITY BOARD 7



RUBEN DIAZ, JR., BOROUGH PRESIDENT

ADALINE WALKER-SANTIAGO, CHAIRPERSON

ANDREW SANDLER, DISTRICT MANAGER

## VETERANS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

### Thursday · April 14, 2016 @ 7:30 PM

#### I. Committee Members In Attendance:

- A) Helene Hartman-Kutnowsky · Velvet Ross · Ischia Bravo

#### Committee Members Absent:

- A) Jeffrey Hunter · Shanequa Charles · Carolos Gonzalez

#### Attendees:

- A) Adaline Walker-Santiago, CB7 Chair; Andrew Sandler, CB7 District Manager  
B) Lowell Green · Sheila Sanchez · Herman Guy · Elizabeth Thompson · Carol R. Ortiz  
Sirio Guerino, G.A.G. · Meli Ramos

#### II. Minutes Review:

- A) Minutes, reviewed and discussed from March, 2016 Committee Meeting.

#### III. Topics On Agenda:

- A) Bronx Borough President's Advisory Council Meeting  
B) Veteran's Committee Proposed Mission Statement & Motion  
C) Identifying · Exploring New Ways to Increase Veteran Membership  
D) CB7-Bronx Library Center 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Veteran's & Community Job Fair

#### I. Bronx Borough President's Advisory Council Meeting:

- a) **March 28th, 2016:** Robyn L. Saunders, Veteran's Committee Chair and Adaline Walker-Santiago, CB7 Chair attended the kick-off ceremony at the Samuel Young American Legion Post for the Bronx Veteran & Military Resource Guide. The special event was hosted by Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. and the Bronx Veteran Advisory Council, chaired by Joe Mondello whom emphasized their goals to educate & update community boards and elected officials on veteran's resource in The Bronx and across New York City;

Borough President Diaz released the "Bronx Veteran & Military Resource Guide, Accessing Veteran's Services – and shared "The Pocket Guide" and NYC Veteran's Services Information Guide Brochures, the first of its kind, and published by his office. The complete guide can be viewed at <http://on.nyc.gov/1XY8nIr> (**resources printed and distributed**);

"Pat Devine, veterans advocate with four decades of experience, received an award from the Bronx Veterans Advisory Council during the ceremony for his service. Among the dignitaries attending the event who also addressed the veterans were Loree Sutton, commissioner of the Mayor's Office of Veteran Affairs; Jamal Othman, Deputy Director at NYS Division of Veterans' Affairs.



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On hand to learn more about the resource guide were representatives from community boards 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 12. Elected officials who sent representatives to the meeting included Senator Gustavo Rivera, Assemblyman Marcos Crespo, Assemblyman Michael Benedetto, Assemblyman Michael Blake and Councilman James Vacca (Bronx Times, 2016)."

- b) Shawn Kingston, Bronx VA Medical Center facilitated PowerPoint presentation about new initiatives and programs currently underway at the Bronx VA Medical Center.

## II. Veteran's Committee Proposed Mission Statement & Motion

- a) Robyn L. Saunders, Chair proposed for the committee to adopt and pass the motion for a Mission, Vision and Purpose Statement and Statement of Values as a way to position the committee as invaluable, memorable and unique.

### **Mission:**

The Mission of the Bronx Community Board 7 Veteran's Committee is to serve in the advisory capacity striving to enrich and enhance the quality of life for Veteran's, their families and dependents.

### **Purpose:**

- To strengthen relationships with government, external shareholders in an effort to provide advocacy, outreach services, and community support for common goals.
- To inform, educate, increase choices, recognize and create awareness of quality programs, projects, resources and services for community members.
- A valuable community resource and makes recommendation regarding current issues affecting Veterans, their families and dependents.

### **Statement of Values:**

Our statement of values is predicated on the committee's founding purpose. It forms the guiding principles critical to those who are charged with shaping the future to those we serve, and to the public we hope will come to better understand our role of service.

### **Compassion:**

We will treat all Veterans, their families and dependents with the utmost dignity and compassion by providing services in a caring manner, with a sympathetic consciousness of others' experiencing distress.

### **Excellence:**

We will strive to exceed the expectations of Veterans and their families, perform at the highest level of competence and take pride in our accomplishments.

### **Professionalism:**

Our success depends on maintaining a skilled, diverse, and compassionate committee and we will foster a culture that values equal opportunity, innovation, and accountability.

### **Integrity:**

We recognize the importance of accurate information, practice transparency, openness, and timely communication with Veterans, their families, dependents and external stakeholders. Our aim is to



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listen, respond to their concerns, and seek continuous improvement in our programs, events and services.

**Accountability:** We will perform in a manner that makes us accountable and responsible to Veterans and their families, our leaders and other external stakeholders.

**Stewardship:** We will ensure responsible stewardship of resources as well as data and information entrusted to us and improve performance through the use of innovative technologies and sound principles.

\*\* Motion was passed by committee members and will be presented at the next Executive Committee Meeting and then to General Board Meeting, scheduled for May, 2016.

### III. Identifying · Exploring New Ways to Increase Veteran Membership

- a) Robyn L. Saunders, Committee Chair expressed identifying ways to increase membership by possibly hosting monthly meetings at various Veteran related facilities such as, Bronx VA Hospital, American Legion, etc.
- b) Request for Sean Kingston, Veteran's Outreach Coordinator, to make a PowerPoint presentation of new initiatives, programs and resources available at the James J. Peterson's Bronx VA, during the next committee meeting.
- c) Ischia Bravo, Committee member suggested that in order to have a better understanding of how the committee and seek to do a walk through of the Bronx VA Hospital to develop a collaborative partnership or create a clinical trial with various external stakeholders.
- d) Velvet Ross, Committee member, Elizabeth Thompson, Sheila Sanchez, Carlos R. Ortiz, Community members agreed committee should develop or conduct a needs assessment for Veterans, their families and dependents in an effort to streamline best ways to assist with advocacy, resources and/or other needs.
- e) Sirio Guerino, G.A.G, share shared recent news clipping, "Veterans May Face Higher Health Costs", whose healthcare may increase affecting Veterans under the age of 65 and their families,

### IV. Upcoming 2<sup>ND</sup> Annual CB7-Bronx Library Center · Friday, June 3, 2016 - 11am-4pm

- a) Robyn L. Saunders, Chair expressed need for assistance with the upcoming event, flyer distribution, employers, television and social media platforms. Adaline Walker-Santiago, Chair informed committee members that ALL contact with media, must be approved by Chairperson and District Manager. All in attendance agreed to assist with efforts.
- b) Chair also informed committee that Senator Gustavo's office is scheduled to have a career fair, the same day; which may cause some concern. Andrew Sandler, CB7 District Manager suggested to reach out to their offices, in an effort to combine events.

### IV. Meeting adjourned.

Next Committee Meeting scheduled, Thursday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at 7:30pm.