



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 · September 8, 2016 @ 7:30 PM

I. Committee Members In Attendance:

A) Anthony Perez · Jeffrey Hunter · Emmanuel Capellan

Committee Members Excused Absence:

A) Helene Hartman-Kutnowsky · Shanequa Charles · Carlos Gonzalez

Attendees:

A) Andrew Sandler, CB7 District Manager · Anthony Riveccio · Aldo Perez

II. Minutes Review:

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

III. Topics On Agenda:

- A) Review of Veterans Committee Past Year's Goals · Objectives · Accomplishments
- B) Identifying · Exploring New Ways to Increase Veteran Membership
- C) Veterans Housing Concerns · HUDVASH
- D) Vet Committee Introductory Packet
- E) Upcoming Scheduled Presentations
- F) Committee Vice Chair Needed
- G) Letter of Support Vote · James A. Peters VA Medical Center Fisher House Proposal
- H) Upcoming Events

A. Review of Veteran's Committee Past Year's Goals · Objectives · Achievements:

- i. **November 23rd, 2015:** Veteran's Plaque was re-installed at the Bronx Victory WWI Memorial on Mosholu Parkway at Marion Avenue.
- ii. **March 28th, 2016:** Bronx CB7 Veterans Committee became active members of the Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. Veteran Advisory Board (VAB), the goals are educating & updating local community boards and elected officials on veteran's resources available within The Bronx and across New York City.

Borough President Diaz released the "Bronx Veteran & Military Resource Guide, shared "The Pocket Guide" and Brochures, the first of its kind, and published by his office. The Complete guide can be accessed at <http://on.nyc.gov/1XY8nIr>

- iii. **May 17th, 2016:** The Veterans Committee adopted its new Mission, Vision and Purpose Statement including the Statement of Values identifying and positioning the committee as invaluable, memorable and unique entity within the District.



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Mission Statement: 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.

- iv. **May, 31st, 2016:** Veterans Committee has been added to CB7 Webpage and is now visible and post of upcoming events, resources and information.
- v. **June 4, 2016:** Veterans Committee cohosted the 2ND Annual Veterans & Community Job Expo with NYS Senator Gustavo Rivera, there were dozens of employers and hundreds of people that participated and some applicants obtained immediate employment; event was a huge success!!
- vi. **June 21, 2016: Proclamation · Stewardship:** Veterans Committee presented with Proclamation for Stewardship from the Bronx Borough President's Office for its dedication and commitment to helping Veterans and their families obtain critical resources including, Housing, Education, Employment and Supportive Services.

B. Identifying · Exploring New Ways to Increase Veteran Membership

- i. Aldo Perez, Community Member recommended connecting with Veterans Permanent and Supportive Housing Developments within the District, such as Samaritan Village and another on Briggs Avenue, directly and using printed flyers/brochures.
- ii. Anthony Riveccio, Community Member identified another avenue to increase visibility and developing active participation, by hosting annual events/celebrations at POE Park and at WWI Monument on Mosholu Parkway.
- iii. Robyn L. Saunders, Committee Chair recommended taking a Tour of the Bronx VA, an invitation by Sean Kingston, VHA-CM, Program Specialist (Outreach), James J. Peters VA Medical Center located at 130 W. Kingsbridge Rd, Bronx NY 10468; Tel: 718-584-9000 x5344.
- iv. Flyers and Brochures, to be developed and presented at next committee meeting, for approval.

C. Veteran's Housing Applications Concerns · HUDVASH

- i. Jeffrey Hunter, Committee Member expressed his interests and concerns about the importance of having a Veteran Housing Specialist appointed to the Fordham Section 8 Housing Office, within this District.
- ii. According to Mr. Hunter, Veterans need to have a separate representative (separate from civilians) available to assist and process new and current applications, pose inquiries, and identify available housing, specifically for Veterans.
- iii. Mr. Hunter distributed handouts of the "Comptroller Stringer Audit: NYCHA Renovations Keep Apartments Vacant For An Average of Seven Years" detailing a number of apartments were left vacant over a decade. Additionally, NYCHA has discontinued



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transferring veteran's (with more than one year on their vouchers) to NYCHA housing and there is a lack of current affordable housing within the HUD-VASH Program.

HUD-VASH DEFINED: The HUD-VASH Program is a joint effort between HUD and VA to move Veterans and their families out of homelessness and into permanent housing. Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH); includes affordable (subsidized) housing plus individualized support services.

HUD provides housing assistance through its Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8) that allows homeless Veterans to rent privately owned and public housing. The Veteran's Administration offers eligible homeless Veterans clinical and supportive services through its health care system.

Committee Agreed FY2017 Goal: Advocate for Veterans Liaison to be placed at the NYCHA Department located on Fordham Road to address issues related to recertification, applications and available apartments, specifically for VETS.

D. Veteran's Committee Packet

- i. Anthony Perez, Committee Member recommended that Bronx CB7 Veterans Committee should develop a package for wide dissemination, should include:
 - a. Introductory letter for Veterans informing of newly established Committee
 - b. Provide a list of resources within the District, Events, and opportunities to help plan future events
 - c. Survey
- ii. Andrew Sandler, District Manager and Aldo Perez, agreed to canvass the neighborhood in an effort to develop Needs Assessment of Veterans in need of services.

E. Upcoming Scheduled Presentations

- i. Robyn L. Saunders, Committee Chair informed group that Eric Chester, Outreach Coordinator, Bronx Vet Center, located at 2471 Morris Avenue, Suite 1A, Bronx, NY 10453 (718) 367.3500, is scheduled to make a presentation during October, 2016 Committee meeting about available resources.
- ii. 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 November, 2016 committee meeting.

F. CB7 Veteran's Committee Vice-Chair Needed

- i. Robyn L. Saunders, Committee Chair expressed need and importance of identifying a Vice-Chair for the Veterans Committee, members agreed to discuss further during next meeting.



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G. Letter of Support for James J. Peters VA Medical Center Fisher House Proposal

- i. Andrew Sandler, CB7 District Manager read and explained the proposal, distributed copies of letters of support to members from other organizations, in support of the proposal; Members voted and quorum reached in support of giving letter.

H. Upcoming Events

Wednesday, September 21, 2016: Bronx Library Center's 6th Annual Job Expo: NYS Senator Gustavo Rivera, NYS Assemblyman Jose Rivera and NYC Council Member Ritchie Torres and NYPL (CEIS) Department at 310 East Kingsbridge Road – Concourse Level, Bronx, New York 10458 from 11am – 5pm. *Flyers Disseminated.*

Wednesday, September 21, 2016: NYC Veterans Advisory Board (VAB): Will hold its Annual Borough of the Bronx meeting. The Veterans Community is invited to attend, located at Lincoln Hospital, 234 East 149th Street, Bronx, NY 10451 (entrance to conference room on Morris Ave.) Time: 5:30pm

Friday, September 23, 2016: Easterseals New York's Military and Veterans Services is hosting a Resource Fair and Luncheon for Women Veterans and Women in the Military. This interactive event includes free giveaways and door prizes! Location: Community Resource Exchange, 42 Broadway, 20th Floor, NYC 10004
FREE and seating is limited!

Register early:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/easterseals-new-york-military-womenwomen-veteran-appreciation-luncheon-tickets-26809179979>

Monday, September 26, 2016: Book Discussion: El Prisonero Del Cielo, Carlos Luis Zafon: Latino & Puerto Rican Culture Center · Bronx Library Center at 310 East Kingsbridge Road, Bronx, New York 10458 from 6pm – 7pm.

Wednesday, September 28, 2016: Barracks to Business: Translating Military Skills Into Career Success: Resume Assistance Available. Location: Hunter College 695 Park Ave., NYC 10065; Career Development Services 805 East Building (Enter the Campus through the West Bldg. located on the southwest corner of 68th St/Lexington Ave) Contact: Keith Okrosy, 212-772-4850 1pm-3:30pm. Must pre-register to attend.

Friday, September 30, 2016: Veterans' Business Information Fair!
Location: James J. Peters VA Medical Center, 130 West Kingsbridge Rd., Rm 3D22 More Info: johnnieh@mindspring.com / 646-417-2178 Time: 9am - 3pm

Meeting adjourned.

Next Committee Meeting scheduled, Thursday, October 13th, 2016 at 7:30pm.