

MINUTES OF COMMUNITY BOARD #16 – April 25, 2006

Attendance

Rev. Reuben Akinfime (A)
David Alexander
Joyce Anderson (E)
Josephine Blakeley
James A. Bowens
Helen Brown
Hazel Clark
Esther Cobb (A)
Adrainer Kim Coleman
Roger Dixon
Essie Duggan
John Frederick (A)
Sam Gardner (A)
Shirley Gonsalves
Sarah Hall
Atikay Henry (A)
Henry Hill
Philip Hogan (A)
Kofi Hormeku (A)
Michael Howard (E)
Hattie Hunt
Allene Ingram
Wordell Johnson
Dr. Cade Jones, III
Eula Key
Danny King (A)
Bettie Kollock-Wallace (E)

Deborah Mack
James Mack (A)
Rev. Thelma Martin (E)
Yolanda Matthews
Sadie McNamara
Joseph Norton (A)
Bishop Landon Penn
Elder Devon Ponds
Mattie Pusey
Isaiah Simmons (E)
Ernestine Turner
Rev. Miran Ukaegbu (E)
Marcus Victory
Alice Vines (E)
Annie Walkes
Herman Winston
Hazel Younger
Viola D. Greene-Walker, DM
E. Jane Coleman, ADM
Jimmi Brevil, Community Assistant
Zo Mpofu for Congressman Major Owens
Edna Johnson for Sen. Velmanette Montgomery
J. Tillmon for Assemblywoman Dianne Gordon
T. Muhammed for Assemblyman Wm. F. Boyland, Jr.
D. Robinson for Assemblyman Nick Perry
Lisa Kenner, Female Leader 55th A.D.

MEETING HELD AT BROWNSVILLE MULTI-SERVICE CENTER, 444 THOMAS S. BOYLAND STREET, BROOKLYN

First Vice Chairperson Hazel Younger called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.. An invocation was said by Dr. Cade Jones, III.

A motion was made by Dr. Cade Jones, III, seconded by Ms. Josephine Blakeley and carried to dispense with the reading of last month's minutes.

A motion was made by Mr. Henry Hill, seconded by Mr. James Bowens and carried to dispense with the reading of the District Manager's report.

First Vice Chairperson Younger recognized a delegation from the Brownsville Multi Service Family Health Center (BMS) consisting of Ms. Wilma Carthan, Mr. Harvey Lawrence, Ms. Yanick Manigat, and Ms. Collette Pean.

Mr. Lawrence stated that BMS has been in the neighborhood since 1993. BMS is the result of people like Joseph Francois, Maurice Reid, and a host of others who were determined to bring affordable quality healthcare to this neighborhood.

His challenge, as Chief Operating Officer, is to honor and amplify on the things that they have committed to by providing quality healthcare to the people of the neighborhood, regardless of their ability to pay. They offer a range of services to keep people well including pediatrics, adult medicine, ob-gyn, podiatry, dentistry, optometry, and dermatology.

Their main site is at 592 Rockaway Avenue. They are the lead partner in a new school called the World Academy for Total Community Health (WATCH). They want to send the message to the students that they are citizens of the world and that they have within themselves the ability to effect changes just as anyone else in the world.

They recently opened a satellite health center in East New York called BMS @ Genesis which is a state of the art health facility. They are probably one of the first community-based health organizations to have electronic medical records – a technology so new that few hospitals have it. Electronic medical records provide health practitioners a secure way to access medical records

from a computer. This reduces errors in prescribing medication due to someone misreading a doctor's handwriting.

Ms. Manigat stated that about a year and a half ago, the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene came to BMS and indicated that they could no longer continue operation of the tuberculosis clinic at 259 Bristol Street and asked BMS to take over the operation. They have since been preparing for the take over. They do not have a projected opening date but expect it to be sometime in May. They will provide TB screening, chest x-rays and follow-up with patients who have active cases of tuberculosis. The services will be provided to people of the community, regardless of their ability to pay.

Ms. Pean stated that the AIDS/HIV crisis has hit this community hard. The case management services formerly provided from this building (444 Thomas S. Boyland Street) are now being provided from their new facility at 408 Rockaway Avenue. All of us are affected by this crisis even if we are not infected. For this reason, you will often see them on the streets distributing information about the disease. They will only be able to continue to provide these services with the support of the Community Board.

Mr. Roger Dixon asked for a clarification on the term "Article 28 facility".

Ms. Manigat stated that it refers to standards set forth by New York State's Department of Health. The standard deals with the size of rooms, the ratio of personnel to clients, and how each room is equipped.

Mr. Lawrence added that as an Article 28 facility they are a diagnostic and treatment center which means that they can diagnose and treat patients for most illnesses. For sicknesses that they can't treat, they have the ability to refer to area hospitals.

Mr. Dixon asked if they do their own lab work.

Ms. Pean stated that it depends on the type of work. Some things such as diabetes testing are done on the premises. Most other lab work is outsourced which allows them to do what they do best which is diagnosis and treatment.

Ms. Mattie Pusey asked what effect does Medicaid Part D have on their services.

Mr. Lawrence stated that in terms of prescription drugs, BMS has a 340b prescription program. Under this program, BMS patients are able to save between 20 and 90% on the cost of prescription drugs.

Mr. David Alexander asked if there are any job vacancies at BMS and if so, how does one apply for the positions?

Ms. Pean stated that vacancies are posted on a bulletin board at the entrance of 592 Rockaway Avenue. If you see a position that you would like to apply for, bring your resume to the personnel office on the second floor, Monday to Friday between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.. Their preference is to hire people from the area and they are one of the largest employers in Brownsville.

Mr. Lawrence added that from here on they will forward information about job openings to the office of the Community Board.

Ms. Deborah Mack asked where are BMS's facilities located?

Ms. Pean stated that they have six facilities:

- 592 Rockaway Avenue houses their administrative offices, adult medicine, pediatrics, ob-gyn, optometry, physical therapy, podiatry, the dental clinic, and the pharmacy. They also operate a farmer's market adjacent to the facility on Saturdays from July through November.
- 408 Rockaway Avenue houses their WIC division along with much of their HIV/AIDS case management.
- BMS @ Genesis is located in East New York at 356 Snediker Avenue. The facility offers adult medicine, ob-gyn, and pediatrics.

- They operate the Brownsville Community Residential Program (a 21-bed half-way house for people recovering from substance abuse) at 657 East 98th Street.
- At Thomas Jefferson High School (400 Pennsylvania Avenue) they operate a school-based health center that services all of the youth at the school, with the consent of the student's parent, and are the lead partner in the WATCH program.
- They operate the health facility at the women's shelter at 116 Williams Avenue.

First Vice Chairperson Younger thanked the delegation for all the helpful information and recognized Misters Nick Ponzo, Jimmy Germaine, and Mr. Rich Mahatera of Wells Fargo Bank Home Mortgages.

Mr. Ponzo stated that Wells Fargo, which has been in existence for 154 years, is the oldest continually operating bank in the United States. They are the largest mortgage bank in the nation. They asked to speak here this evening in order to bring you the message that in order to create wealth one of the fundamental things you should do is own your own home. Owning your own home today is not as difficult as some may think.

His particular area of expertise is reverse mortgages. Reverse mortgages are special mortgage products for homeowners 62 years of age and older that allows them to access the equity in their home. While they continue to live in their property they never need to make a mortgage payment. The money they get from this mortgage is tax free and does not affect their social security benefits or Medicare. It may however have an impact on Medicaid and that should be discussed with officials at Medicaid. The program is helpful to seniors who may be living on a small stipend from social security and in a home loaded with equity. A reverse mortgage allows them to access that equity so that they may enjoy their twilight years with fewer worries about money.

Mr. Germaine stated that property values in the area are on the rise. Investors are knocking on doors and offering owners cash for their properties. As land becomes scarcer, single family homes are being demolished and replaced with multi-family units that may be affordable for some but not for all. Wells Fargo has instituted a campaign called the Great American Homeowners Challenge which seeks to place ten million Americans in homes over the next three years.

A homeowner is about three hundred times more prosperous than a renter. This is no accident, when you rent you do not build any equity from the payment made to the landlord.

His position with Wells Fargo is not simply that of a Mortgage Consultant, he is also working with the community. Currently, he is working with Brownsville Academy on a program to give donations to the school and also donations for scholarships for the students.

Mr. Mahatera stated that there are three basic types of borrowers, those with less than perfect credit, those with excellent credit, and those who fall somewhere in between. His focus is on those in between. He works with individuals to help them achieve their goal of homeownership by using one of the various programs the bank has to offer.

Someone asked if the seniors do not have to pay their reverse mortgages who pays them?

Mr. Ponzo stated that the program was developed by Housing and Urban Development. The philosophy is that the program allows seniors access to the equity in their homes and enable them to stay in their neighborhoods. True, over the course of time, because they are not making payments the mortgage balance can be a large sum and is often paid by the estate. However, one needs to consider that over the years the value of the home is also increasing and the estate should see a net benefit. Historically, the value of real estate doubles every seven to ten years.

First Vice Chairperson Younger thanked the presenters for their presentation.

Ms. Bettie Kollock-Wallace, Acting Chairperson of the Land Use, Planning and Zoning Committee, reported that the Committee met on April 11, 2006 with representatives from Phase: Piggy Back, Inc. regarding their proposal to develop housing for senior citizens on the southeast corner of Rockaway and Riverdale Avenues (Block 3603, Lot 25). The project will consist of 85 one-bedroom units and 1 two-bedroom unit for a superintendent. The building will also have a

laundry room, open space and 15 on-site parking spaces.

Phase: Piggy Back Inc. applied for HUD funding in 2005 but was not successful. They will be applying again this year and are confident that they will receive funding.

Community Board #16 initially approved this project on November 23, 2004. Phase: Piggy Back, Inc. is requesting an updated letter of support from the Community Board as part of the application process. The Committee recommends that Community Board #16 continue its support for the Phase: Piggy Back, Inc., senior housing project.

A motion was made by Ms. Mattie Pusey, seconded by Ms. Hattie Hunt and carried to accept the report of the Land Use, Planning and Zoning Committee and its recommendation to continue support of Phase: Piggy Back, Inc.'s proposal for senior housing.

Ms. Hattie Hunt, Chairperson of the Youth Services Planning Committee, reported that the Committee met on April 18th and continued their discussion on a youth conference which they are planning for Saturday, June 24th at the Kappa V School, located on Rockaway Avenue at Hegeman Avenue.

As the Committee continues with its plans, they invite volunteers to work with them. The next Conference Planning Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 9th at 6:00 p.m..

The next scheduled Youth Planning Committee meeting will be on May 16th at 6:00 p.m..

She made an appeal to the audience for anyone interested in assisting them in the planning to contact her.

A motion was made by Dr. Cade Jones, III, seconded by Ms. Josephine Blakeley and carried to accept the report of the Youth Services Planning Committee.

First Vice Chairperson Younger stated that it has been discussed that an area be designated for members to sit in order to make it easier to see who is here, as such, she is suggesting that the members sit in the first two rows on either side of the aisle.

She announced that the following persons have been asked by Chairperson Thelma Martin to serve on the 2006 Nominating Committee: David Alexander, Adrainer Coleman, Eula Key, Hazel Clark and Josephine Blakeley.

The Nominating Committee is charged with the responsibility of selecting candidates for the Executive Offices of the Board who will serve from June 2006 to June 2007.

First Vice Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Lisa Kenner, Female District Leader of the 55th Assembly District.

Ms. Kenner stated that while she has been absent at the Community Board meeting in the past few months, she continues to advocate for the community.

She has been working with the senior citizens of Woodson, Van Dyke, and Tilden Houses to stop the relocation of their management offices to a site at the Langston Hughes Houses. The effort has been temporarily successful. She has also been in discussion with the management of R.D. Brown Senior Houses with regard to noise levels of religious services held on Sunday mornings at the center. Some of the seniors prefer to wake up late on Sunday and the noise is preventing them from doing so.

Over 68 former residents of Prospect Plaza Houses died from cancer while living there. No one had bothered to check the site for contamination until now.

Residents of New York City Housing Authority Apartments may be subject to rent increases beginning May 1, 2006. A meeting regarding the increases will be held on May 1st at Brooklyn College.

She publicly thanked her predecessor, Ms. Alicka Ampry-Samuels, for the assistance that she has

given her in her role as the new District Leader. Ms. Pam Junior, who recently ran for City Council, has also been working with her on projects to benefit the children of the District.

First Vice Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Tahira Muhammed of Assemblyman William F. Boyland, Jr.'s office.

Ms. Muhammed reported that the Assemblyman hosts a community advisory meeting on the second Saturday of each month. The meetings feature different speakers each month. Next month's speaker will be from the Brooklyn District Attorney's office. Everyone is invited to come and participate. They will also be sponsoring CPR training with the Red Cross at various senior centers throughout the area. The community will be advised once time and locations are finalized.

First Vice Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Edna Johnson of State Senator Velmanette Montgomery's office.

Ms. Johnson stated that the Senator's name has been in the newspapers recently for her opposition to a proposed gang bill. She believes that the legislation would be harmful to our youth if passed. She has also written to Mayor Bloomberg and Commissioner Kelly requesting that they allocate a percentage of the 800 newly hired officers to be assigned as Community Affairs and Youth Officers to work with our youth.

First Vice Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Zo Mpofo of Congressman Major Owens' office.

Ms. Mpofo stated that the Congressman will sponsor a workshop on Thursday, April 27, 2006 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Van Dyke Community Center, located at 392 Blake Avenue, where personnel from several agencies will provide information about Medicaid Part D. Flyers on the workshop and information about the proposed rent increase for New York City Housing Authority properties are available on tonight's distribution table.

First Vice Chairperson Younger recognized Mr. Dalton Robinson of Assemblyman Nick Perry's office.

Mr. Robinson stated that at a previous meeting he made a request, to persons who were present and resided in the Assemblyman's District, to help them in obtaining responses to a survey that was distributed in the district regarding teens and gangs. He is again encouraging the audience to ask the teens who received the surveys to return them to their office.

First Vice Chairperson Younger recognized Captain Jeffrey Maddrey, Commanding Officer of the 73rd Precinct.

Captain Maddrey reported that the crime figures in the Precinct are down overall by one percent. However, youth on youth crimes continue to be an issue. He will continue to work on initiatives to reduce crime in the Precinct. He and the two other Captains in the Precinct are constantly reviewing crime trends and assigning personnel where they are most needed. Recently, there had been an increase in robberies in the area of the footbridge at Livonia Avenue and Junius Street. That trend has reversed since they began to assign an officer to the location at all times.

Someone asked if they have formulated any plans to help keep crime down as the warmer weather (when crime tends to increase) approaches?

Captain Maddrey stated that they will be receiving additional officers from the 800 that recently graduated from the Academy. He does not yet have the exact number but he plans to distribute them throughout the Precinct.

Someone asked what happened to Operation Impact on the north side of the Precinct?

Captain Maddrey stated the 73rd Precinct is the only Precinct in the City where the Commanding Officer is empowered to move officer as he sees fit. While he has not abandoned the north side, he has moved the Impact Zone to the southern side where it seems to have a greater impact.

First Vice Chairperson Younger recognized Police Officer Dean Elmore, Community Affairs Officer for the 73rd Precinct.

Officer Elmore stated that the Precinct will be sponsoring a bicycle registration drive on May 20th. Bring your bicycles to the Precinct from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. so that they can be registered. Once registered, if the bicycle is stolen and subsequently found it can be returned.

The Precinct's Explorer program currently has sixteen members and they are looking for more. Seven of their past members have progressed from Explorers to Auxiliary Officers to Police Officers. Four have gone on to become lawyers. It is an excellent way for the children to network in a positive manner.

The Mayor has a free program to either have a wall painted or power washed to remove graffiti. The program is manned by volunteers and what better way is there to help keep your neighborhood looking clean and graffiti free.

Terrorism continues to be a concern and the Department asks that we continue to be vigilant. We do not know when something may happen, but it tends to happen when we become complacent. Information flyers on how to spot and report suspicious activity as well as criminal description sheets are available on the distribution table.

The Precinct is currently accepting applications for the Fresh Air Fund. The Fund allows City children to spend part of their summer in a rural atmosphere at no cost to their parents.

First Vice Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Christine Larkin of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

Ms. Larkin announced that flyers are on the distribution table with information about their ongoing Brooklyn Food and Fitness Task Force.

First Vice Chairperson Younger recognized Mr. Herman Schaffer of the New York City Office of Emergency Management (OEM).

Mr. Schaffer stated that OEM is a small agency that is not well known. They coordinate disaster response, plan for disaster response and educate people about disasters. There are pamphlets on the distribution table with information about the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and the Ready New York programs.

The Ready New York program provides individuals with information on being prepared for an emergency. The CERT program is a national program. CERT is a training program that prepares you to help yourself, your family, and your neighbors in the event of a disaster. During an incident, emergency service personnel may not be able to reach everyone right away. By getting trained in CERT, you will have the skills to help emergency responders save lives and protect property.

As a member of a CERT team, you can respond to disasters, participate in drills and exercises, and receive additional training. CERT teams are known and trusted resources to emergency responders and their communities. The training program prepares you to help yourself, your family, and your neighbors in the event of a disaster. During an incident, emergency service personnel may not be able to reach everyone right away. By receiving CERT training, you will have the skills to help emergency responders save lives and protect property.

First Vice Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Renee Regnier, Volunteer Coordinator and American Cancer Society liaison person in the Brooklyn office of the American Cancer Society.

Ms Regnier thanked the Board for the opportunity to share information about the American Cancer Society and its programs in this community.

Starting with the big picture...the American Cancer Society is the largest voluntary, nonprofit health organization in the country with one simple goal: to eliminate cancer as a major public health problem.

In order to achieve this goal, basically they do three things:

1. take care of cancer patients and their families
2. run programs inside local clinics to make it easier for everyone to get mammograms and prostate and colon checkups, get help to quit smoking, and to receive quality care for cancer
3. fund independent cancer research.

On a local level, there are many ways that they help patients. They help people get free rides to chemotherapy and radiation, offer free wigs and prostheses, match newly-diagnosed patients with long time survivors, provide specialized help with understanding treatment choices, run support programs in English, Chinese, Haitian Creole and Russian in 12 local hospitals, and offer free mammograms in 45 Brooklyn clinics for 3,000 women without insurance.

The glue that holds all of these American Cancer Society programs together is their toll-free 800 number (800-ACS-2345 or 1-866-228-4327 for TTY) which is a fully staffed 24 hours, seven days a week hotline of trained cancer specialists who offer professional help any time of day or night.

All of these services are free. That's essential. Sadly, getting sick today is an expensive proposition. A woman diagnosed with breast cancer tomorrow will face over \$4,000 in out-of-pocket medical expenses in the first year. Therefore, it is essential that they provide all of their services free of charge.

The number one reason that they are able to offer their services for free is because of the funds raised at their largest annual event - Relay for Life. It takes place every year right here in Central Brooklyn and in over 4,300 communities around the world. Many people have participated in a Relay, so when they say that this is their largest annual event, it is actually the largest annual event to raise money for cancer research and programs.

Relay for Life is a community gathering of families, friends, and co-workers who come together once a year to support cancer survivors, honor those we've lost and most important of all — connect with each other.

Relay is truly a special journey. Every spring, starting now, teams of family members, friends and co-workers get together, often in the name of a survivor. They reach out to their neighbors, co-workers, local merchants, and everyone else who they can think of to help raise money for their team.

During the weekend of June 10th, all of the teams come together at a local school track or park (in Brownsville, at the Brownsville Recreational Center, located at 1555 Linden Boulevard) to celebrate their efforts, honor cancer survivors and connect with each other.

She invited anyone who is interested in getting involved to join them for a team meeting on Thursday, April 27 at 6:00 p.m. at the St. Matthew's Church school building on Lincoln Place.

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Ms. Eula Key, seconded by Ms. Sarah Hall and carried to adjourn the meeting.