

MINUTES OF COMMUNITY BOARD #16 – SEPTEMBER 27, 2011

Attendance

David Alexander
Carolyn A. Benjamin-Smith
Margaret Brewer
Adrainer Coleman
Essie Duggan
Norman Frazier
Helen Giles (A)
Shirley Gonsalves
Daniel Goodine (A)
Chanel Haliburton
Sarah Hall
Kofi Hormeku
Michael Howard (E)
Allene Ingram (A)
Prince Issachar (E)
Daisy Jackson (E)
Minyarn Johnson
Carl Joseph (A)
Pamela Junior (E)
Eula Key
Bettie Kollock-Wallace
Charles Ladson
Deborah Mack (E)
James Mack (E)
Yolanda Matthews
Linda Mayo
John McCadney, Jr.
Sadie McNamara (E)
Ted McQueen
Genese Morgan

Terry Norfleet
Rev. Joseph Norton
Deidre Olivera-Douglas
Blanche L. Peltonbusch (E)
Marie Pierre
Rev. Devon Ponds (E)
Mattie Pusey (A)
Linda Rivera
Melaine Rochford (A)
Wendy Rutherford
Beatrice Saunders
Melina Terry (A)
Evang. Hellen Thomas-Purdie
Ernestine Turner (E)
Rev. Dr. Miran Ukaegbu
Annie Walkes (E)
Jennifer Williams (A)
Yvette Williams-Lawson (E)
Herman Winston (E)
Hazel Younger (E)
Viola D. Greene-Walker, District Manager
Jimmi Brevil, Community Assistant
Latrice Walker for Hon. Yvette Clarke
Essie Duggan for Hon. Velmanette Montgomery
Melvin Faulkner for Hon. Inez Barron
Tammy Brathwaite for Hon. Darlene Mealy
Rene Hastick-Motes for Hon. Marty Markowitz
Alexis Hockaday for Hon. William F. Boyland, Jr.
Maurice Phillips for Hon. John Sampson
Karen Cherry for Hon. Edolphus Towns

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

First Vice Chairperson Bettie Kollock-Wallace called the public hearing to order at 7:05 p.m., followed with an invocation by Rev. Joseph Norton.

IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by the Administration for Children's Services and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter for the acquisition of property located at 33 Somers Street (Block 1538, Lot 46) for continued use as a day care center.

District Manager Viola Greene-Walker, for the purpose of clarity, stated that the location has been in use as a day care center since early 1970. It currently serves about 140 children. The City is in the process of renegotiating the lease with the private owner of the property. As part of the ULURP (Uniform Land Use Review Procedure), the Board and the community are given an opportunity to comment. Certainly, one of the needs of the community is quality day care, and she suggests that the Board votes to approve this application.

There being no comments, a motion was made by Ms. Eula Key, seconded by Mr. David Alexander and carried to close the public hearing.

A motion was made by Rev. Joseph Norton, seconded by Mr. David Alexander and carried to waive the reading of the minutes.

District Manager Viola Greene-Walker highlighted articles found in her report concerning the Youth Leadership Course, a program of the Citizens Committee for Children of New York City which is seeking applications from two high school students from Community District #16. The Brooklyn Public Library is seeking volunteers for their After-School Homework Helper Program. The New York City Service and Citizens Committee for New York City are offering grants to volunteer led neighborhood groups. A representative from the Citizens Committee is present tonight to give a brief presentation.

The representative stated that last year, fifty \$1,000 grants were awarded, none were awarded to Community District #16 because no applications came from the district. They would like for that to change this year and encourage volunteer led groups to submit applications. Unlike many grant offerings, the groups are not required to have 501(c)(3) status to receive funding.

This is a good opportunity to bring communities together and make positive changes to your block. Encourage the youth on the block to participate and encourage your local elected officials to come and lend a hand. Along with the grants, awardees will also have the availability of several city agency services to help beautify their block such as, the Departments of Transportation, Sanitation, and Parks and Recreation. Requested services may include anything from repairing damaged or missing street signs to a replacement of worn-out/missing litter baskets to conducting tree, bike rack, and speed bump surveys.

These grants are only a small part of what the Citizens Committee has to offer and they will return next month to present on their other offerings.

A motion was made by Ms. Margaret Brewer, seconded by Mr. Ted McQueen and carried to waive further reading of the District Manager's report.

First Vice Chairperson Kollock-Wallace recognized Mr. Reggie Jackson of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

Mr. Jackson stated that he is a Community Based Organization Liaison Coordinator for the Department's Bureau of STD (Sexually Transmitted Diseases) Control. He operates out of the basement of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's Clinton Hill's office, located at Flatbush Avenue Extension. The Bureau was formed in response to the high incidence of STDs in segments of our population such as teens, men who have sex with men, substance abusers, and formerly incarcerated individuals.

The program seeks to promote behavior that prevents the spread of STDs, while diagnosis, counseling, and partner notification and referral are provided to those suffering from STDs. The connection between patients and health and social services is promoted and technical and clinical expertise is provided to the health care community.

They also perform outreach and will come to present with any group or organization that makes a request. More information can be found by calling 311 or visiting their website at nyc.gov/std.

First Vice Chairperson Kollock-Wallace recognized Ms. Mikelle Agate from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

Ms. Agate stated that she is from DEP's newly formed Office of Green Infrastructure. They are here tonight to brief the community on an upcoming project that will include sites in the neighborhood.

Green Infrastructure is a system of controls designed to manage storm water runoff and help reduce combined sewer overflow and manage flooding. These are amongst the last remaining water quality issues in New York City. When rain falls in the city, much of it ends up in our combined sewer system and the overflow causes sanitary waste to enter our nearby waterways instead of treatment plants. This means that the Jamaica Bay Watershed does not meet water quality standards. By managing storm water, we can help ensure the quality of our surrounding waterways.

The Office of Green Infrastructure has been allotted approximately one hundred and ninety million dollars to build out green infrastructure on public properties within the next five years. They will utilize water controls such as bioswales- enhanced tree pits that are larger and usually contain a tree at its center and other live plantings to help absorb the water, rain gardens – designed specifically to collect and hold water, green roofs, and porous pavement in places such as parking lots. They are looking to build in public sidewalks, on public properties such as schools and New York City Housing Authority facilities.

The building of these controls has additional advantages such as improving street drainage, enhancing streetscapes, creating healthier environment, and reducing heat island effects. Construction within Community District #16 will take place in spring and summer of 2012, with monitoring to take place between spring 2012 through spring 2013.

First Vice Chairperson Kollock-Wallace thanked the presenters for their presentations.

Ms. Genese Morgan, Chairperson of the Economic Development Committee, reported that the Committee met on Thursday, September 15, 2011 at 6:30 p.m. to continue discussions for economic development and revitalization efforts within our community. At this meeting, there were no requests for new or renewal applications for liquor licenses; however, since the Committee met throughout the summer months, they reviewed one application at their July 13, 2011 meeting pertaining to a renewal for La Nueva Vida Restaurant, Inc., located at 109 Belmont Avenue, Brooklyn, New York 11212.

In their June 28, 2011 Committee report, they reported that Hunter College would reconsider working on a studio project for the Brownsville community once an available instructor was located to oversee the project. The Committee is happy to announce that the one year long project is in the earliest stage of development. Members of the Committee met with the project's instructor, Ralph Blessing, and graduate students of Hunter College on Wednesday, September 21, 2011 at Hunter College to provide background information, answer questions and begin planning a scope of work. Additional updates concerning the project will be reported as progress is made.

Additionally, the Committee is happy to announce that Community Board #16 now has a one year intern (Joe Blankenship) from Pratt Institute to assist with the revitalization efforts of Belmont Avenue. He will be located in the Board's Office on Mondays and Tuesdays of each week to work with Committee members and merchants.

Furthermore, the Committee has determined that there is a need to assess the availability of commercial banking institutions and services within our community and they have begun preparing a banking survey to understand the strengths, weaknesses and contributing factors of our local banking climate. This survey will be distributed at-large via an online survey tool and via paper for individuals unable to access the online version. The Committee asks that you would please participate to make this initiative successful.

Regarding the "renewal" application for a beer and wine license for La Nueva Vida Restaurant, Inc., please consider the following:

- The establishment is a restaurant located at 109 Belmont Avenue
- The owner of the establishment has submitted to the interview process and place of business visit by the Committee.
- The Committee has determined that subsequent to their July 13, 2011 meeting, the establishment has been sold.

The Committee is asking that the Board not support this application and would like to turn the matter over to the full Board for voting.

The next Committee meeting is scheduled for October 20, 2011 at 6:30 p.m.. If anyone has any questions or comments regarding the contents of this report, please feel free to contact Genese Morgan (genesemor@aol.com).

A motion was made by Rev. Dr. Miran Ukaegbu, seconded by Mr. David Alexander and carried to accept the report of the Economic Committee.

A vote was taken resulting with the unanimous approval of the Committee's recommendation not to support the renewal application for a beer and wine license for La Nueva Vida Restaurant, Inc., located at 109 Belmont Avenue.

District Manager Viola Greene-Walker, in behalf of Ms. Bettie Kollock-Wallace, Chairperson of the Land Use, Planning, and Zoning Committee, reported that the Committee met on September 13, 2011 with representatives from the Department of City Planning who informed the Committee about a study that will be conducted of the area in the vicinity of Broadway Junction and Cypress Hills.

The goals and objectives of the study are to coordinate neighborhood and land use planning with transportation and community sustainability objectives to:

- 1) Improve access to job centers by building on transit assets.

- 2) Facilitate affordable housing opportunities.
- 3) Improve the physical environment through streetscape enhancements.
- 4) Improve the area's environmental performance.
- 5) Improve access to fresh food and retail services.

They will be invited to make a presentation at the October 25th Board meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. David Alexander, seconded by Rev. Dr. Miran Ukaegbu and carried to accept the Land Use, Planning, and Zoning Committee Report.

Ms. Marie Pierre, Chairperson of the Legislative Committee, reported that the Committee met on September 21, 2011 and reviewed several pieces of legislation. Copies of the following two pieces of legislation are in each member's folder:

- 1) Tenants Bill of Rights
- 2) Intro 494

She requested that Board members review them and submit their comments and suggestions to Ms. Greene-Walker at bk16@cb.nyc.gov or to her at mvpierre@aol.com within the next two weeks.

The next meeting of the Legislative Committee will be held on October 19th, at 6:30 p.m..

A motion was made by Rev. Dr. Miran Ukaegbu, seconded by Ms. Linda Rivera and carried to accept the Legislative Committee Report.

Mr. Kofi Hormeku, Chairperson of the Parks and Recreation Committee, reported that construction of the addition to Marion Street Park has been completed. He asked the audience to visit the park when possible and pass along their comments.

He recently met with the new Borough Parks Commissioner (Kevin Jeffrey) and was assured that the work on the Brownsville Recreation and Betsy Head Recreation Centers will begin in the near future.

Barbequing is no longer allowed in any Park's facility in the District.

Board members were reminded that copies of the Committee's Inspection Report can be found in their folders each month, detailing the condition of each of the District's Parks and Recreation facilities.

The Committee is dedicated to doing what it takes to ensure that our parks receive the necessary resources. He invites anyone who shares this conviction to join the Committee.

The next meeting will be held on October 3, 2011 at 6:00 sharp.

A motion was made by Ms. Margaret Brewer, seconded by Ms. Linda Rivera and carried to accept the Parks and Recreation Committee Report.

Ms. Linda Rivera, member of the Sanitation and Environmental Protection Committee, in behalf of Rev. Dr. Miran Ukaegbu, Chairperson of the Committee, reported that they met on September 14, 2011 and discussed locations of multiple dwellings where they are not complying with recycling regulations. The District Manager is following up with the Department of Sanitation to get compliance by the building owners.

During the last snowstorm, sidewalks in front of vacant buildings and bus stops were not cleared in a timely fashion. These locations will be brought to the attention of the Department of Sanitation and monitored more closely.

At their next meeting on November 9, 2011, the Committee will prepare information on recycling for presentation at the Community Board meeting which will continue their education series for the public.

A motion was made by Mr. David Alexander, seconded by Ms. Essie Duggan and carried to accept the report of the Sanitation and Environmental Protection Committee.

First Vice Chairperson Kollock-Wallace recognized Ms. Tammy Brathwaite, representing Councilmember Darlene Mealy.

Ms. Brathwaite announced that Councilmember Mealy will host her next Community Advisory Board meeting on Saturday, October 1st and she has a new website (cmdarlenemealy.com) where she lists some upcoming events and updates of issues in her district.

First Vice Chairperson Kollock-Wallace recognized Ms. Essie Duggan, representing Senator Velmanette Montgomery.

Ms. Duggan stated that Senator Montgomery, along with other State and City legislatures have collaborated to find a way for New York high school student to receive college credits from colleges such as Medgar Evers, Long Island University, and City University of New York while still attending high school. She encourages any high school student, not already taking advantage of the opportunity, to do so.

First Vice Chairperson Kollock-Wallace recognized Ms. Alexis Hockaday, representing Assemblyman William F. Boyland, Jr.

Ms. Hockaday read a report from Assemblyman Boyland commenting on the Obama Administration's American Jobs Act of 2011.

In an effort to combat high unemployment, President Barack Obama recently released a comprehensive job plan called the American Jobs Act, designed to stimulate job growth and encourage businesses to start hiring again. The president's message is simple: We need to act now to inject confidence back into the marketplace and create more consumer demand in our economy. By making long-term investments in education, innovation and infrastructure, we can help millions of Americans rejoin the workforce now.

One of the major problems holding back growth in the private sector is the recent stagnation in consumer demand. The scars left from the recent recessions and housing crisis have made consumers hesitant to start buying again, and for good reason. Many Americans are unsure of their future or if they will have a job in six months. And given tepid demand for the products and services many businesses offer, employers are reluctant to hire more aggressively until consumer demand starts to rise again.

The Jobs crisis in our community is one that cannot be ignored any longer. Mayor Michael Bloomberg recently compared the crisis of high unemployment in the United States to the problems that produced the recent riots in Cairo and Madrid. The mayor also warned that the job crisis – if not solved – will have major consequences far into the future.

Assemblyman Boyland has been fighting to rejuvenate our economy and is looking forward to seeing the results of the newly created Brownsville Regional Economic Development Council (Ch. 54 of 2011). With a more localized community-based system working on economic development, our council has the opportunity to showcase the diversity of our region and what we have to offer. Along with bringing jobs to the area, the council competes with councils from around the state to provide the funds we need to achieve our economic goals. We will be able to capitalize on our unique strengths as a region so we can build a strong economy from the ground up, harvesting our ideas, people and local assets.

It is time we start investing in our future to jumpstart our economy and grow our workforce now. The President's plan to get our country back on track is not a short-term fix, it is one that will help millions out of unemployment and strengthen our country's infrastructure for years to come.

Assemblyman Boyland hosts his Community Advisory Board meetings on the second Saturday, of each month and the next meeting will be on October 8th at 10:00 a.m.. Their office is located at 467 Thomas S. Boyland Street and the telephone number is (718) 498-8681.

First Vice Chairperson Kollock-Wallace recognized Mr. Maurice Phillips, representing Senator John Sampson.

Mr. Phillips stated that he commends the committee chairpersons for their reports read this evening. He especially thanks the Legislative Committee for bringing to the community's attention the tenant's bill and intro 494 which compels banks to set aside monies to care for vacant properties that they have closed on.

Senator Sampson has been called upon to intervene in behalf of many residents in the Canarsie area of his district whose property suffered damage during recent rain storms. The City Comptroller's Office is responsible for handling claims such as damage to an automobile from potholes, or as in the case of the Canarsie residents, damage from sewer backups. When contacting the Comptroller's office, one of the first things you will be asked is, did you report the problem. He encourages residents to call 311 to report potholes and other problems so that they will be on record.

A meeting was arranged with the stakeholders, including the Department of Environmental Protection, homeowners, businesses, and insurance companies. The insurance companies were invited because many sought to disallow claims.

Mr. Randy Hudson stated that insurance companies often try to dodge paying claims. He asked if there is any way to ban insurers who follow this practice from doing business in the State.

Mr. Phillips stated that the State Insurance Department oversees insurance companies doing business in the State and ensures their compliance.

First Vice Chairperson Kollock-Wallace recognized Ms. Latrice Walker, representing Congresswoman Yvette Clarke.

Ms. Walker stated that at the last Community Board meeting, she reported that Congresswoman Clarke was seeking comments on legislation that sought to eliminate the ability to obtain sugary drinks when using food stamps. They received many responses for which Congresswoman Clarke extends thanks and urges everyone to give this type of feedback for legislation that affects their community to all their elected officials.

In the instance where the Bloomberg Administration's request for a waiver to allow the City to disallow purchases of sugary drinks, the waiver was denied, thus making it a non issue.

Congresswoman Clarke has introduced H.R. 2921, the Expanding Opportunities for Small Business Act of 2011. During these trying economic times, we must do everything to ensure that our nation's small businesses, especially socially and economically disadvantaged small businesses, can create jobs.

Congresswoman Clarke has stated that "This bill expands small business opportunity to access federal procurement opportunities under the Section 8(a) Business Development Program. It also calls on the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to conduct a study that provides Congress with the recommendations that increases procurement by minority, women, and veteran owned small businesses".

H.R. 2921 would:

- Increase 8(a) eligibility by 3 years and, upon graduation from the 8(a) program, provide two years of SBA technical assistance;
- Directs the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to examine the top five performers with regards to disadvantaged/women/veteran goal achievement with an emphasis on providing policy recommendations to improve the performance of underperforming agencies.; and
- Increases the target of socially and economically disadvantaged small businesses procuring federal contracts by 3%.

Minority owned businesses tend to hire minorities and have a greater tendency to serve minority communities. Continuing to provide minority businesses with the tools to survive is how we will combat high unemployment rates. As our national unemployment rate remains above 9 percent, with the rate for African Americans minorities around 16.7 percent and 11.3 percent for Hispanics, it is imperative that these small businesses have the resources they need to succeed and create jobs.

She looks forward to hearing comments from the Board's Legislative Committee on this bill.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is accepting claims for damages from tropical storm Irene. Parties seeking to file claims should call (800)-621-3362.

First Vice Chairperson Kollock-Wallace recognized Ms. Rene Hastick-Motes, representing the Office of Borough President Marty Markowitz.

Ms. Hastick-Motes announced that the college application process begins in November. On Monday, October 24th, Borough President Markowitz will host a Parents' Guide to College. She urges anyone planning to attend college or knows someone who wants to attend to come out and get this valuable information.

October 6th is Take Your Man to the Doctor Day – an initiative supported by Borough President Markowitz where women are encouraged to encourage the men in their lives to visit with health care professionals for health screenings. They provide a list of hospitals that will perform the screenings, on that day, free of charge. Some services will be available from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Brooklyn Borough Hall.

She can be reached at (718) 802-4091 and she invites the audience to reach out to her for assistance and welcomes visits to her office.

First Vice Chairperson Kollock-Wallace recognized Mr. Melvin Faulkner, representing Assemblywoman Inez Barron.

Mr. Faulkner announced the following:

Wake Forest University has an opportunity for minority students to attend its MBA program for FREE.

There is a need for Black male teachers. Black males who are seniors in high school and want to go to college out of state for FREE may be eligible for The Call Me Mister program offered by four historical black colleges in South Carolina, Benedict College, Chaflin University, Morris College and South Carolina State University. Harvard University is also offering FREE tuition to families of honor students with household incomes less than \$125,000 per year.

Syracuse University School of Architecture is actively seeking young women and men of color interested in pursuing a 5 year professional degree in Architecture.

Free eyeglasses are available from Target for any child age 12 and under whose parent or guardian brings a valid prescription for glasses from their doctor to a Target with an optical department. You can find stores with optical departments by visiting their website: target.com.

If you know young adults between the ages of 18-31 with a High School Diploma, please let them know that they can earn up to \$100,000 and earn benefits. The Federal Aviation Association is accepting applications for Air Traffic Controller School.

For information on any of the above announcements, please call him at (718) 257-5824.

First Vice Chairperson Kollock-Wallace recognized Mr. Alex Bibb from the U.S. Financial Diaries.

Mr. Bibb stated that he is a Field Researcher for the U.S. Financial Diaries which is a nationwide project gathering information in the states of California, Mississippi, Oklahoma, and Kentucky. In New York they are gathering data in Brownsville, East New York, and parts of Queens.

The project will track the financial lives of three hundred families to understand the spending and saving habits of these American households. They are actively seeking thirty working African-American families who reside in Brownsville to participate in the study. Interested persons may contact him at (917) 300-9129 or alex@usdiaries.org.

The study will assist policy makers, government, and nonprofits to understand the economic habits of regular Americans and develop solutions.

Someone asked if the participants are compensated.

Mr. Bibb stated that gifts are given to the participants at various phases of the study. However, they don't advertise it, so as not to skew their results.

First Vice Chairperson Kollock-Wallace recognized Ms. Judy Kamihlar from the Brooklyn Public Library.

Ms. Kamihlar stated that the Brooklyn Public Library (BPL) now has new laptop computers available for customer use at the following branches: Brownsville, Saratoga, and Stone Avenue.

In addition, BPL customers at these libraries will benefit from more of the following:

- Computer classes
- Job-readiness workshops
- One-on-one job-readiness sessions
- Staff on hand to provide assistance and answer questions

First Vice Chairperson Kollock-Wallace recognized Mr. Malcolm McDaniel of the East Brooklyn Leader who stated that we often complain about the education being offered to our children. In his dealings with parents, he has concluded that most parents never receive nor ask for syllabi and do not even know that they exist. He suggests that all parents reach out to their children's teachers and request a copy of the syllabus for each class.

Mr. Randy Hudson announced that CAMBA is offering classes for entrepreneurs to learn how to create and follow a business plan.

First Vice Chairperson Kollock Wallace asked if assistance is also offered in setting up a 501(c)3?

Mr. Hudson stated that CAMBA does offer 501(c)(3) classes.

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Ms. Marie Pierre, seconded by Ms. Essie Duggan and carried to adjourn the meeting.