

MINUTES OF COMMUNITY BOARD #16 – DECEMBER 18, 2012

Attendance

David Alexander
Carolyn A. Benjamin-Smith
Margaret Brewer
Lamont Carolina
Adrainer Coleman
Christopher Durosini
Essie Duggan
Norman Frazier
Helen Giles (A)
Shirley Gonsalves
Daniel Goodine
Chanel Haliburton
Sarah Hall
Kofi Hormeku
Michael Howard (A)
Allene Ingram (A)
Min. Prince Issachar (E)
Daisy Jackson (E)
Minyarn Johnson (A)
Carl Joseph
Pamela Junior
Eula Key
Bettie Kollock-Wallace
Charles Ladson, Sr.
Deborah Mack
James Mack (A)
Yolanda Matthew (A)
John McCadney, Jr.

Andrea McCullough (A)
Sadie McNamara (E)
Genese Morgan (E)
Terry Norfleet (A)
Rev. Joseph Norton (E)
Blanche L. Peltonbusch
Marie Pierre (E)
Rev. Devon Ponds (E)
Mattie Pusey
Linda Rivera (E)
Melaine Rochford (E)
Wendy Rutherford (A)
Beatrice Saunds (A)
Melina Terry (A)
Evang. Hellen Thomas-Purdie
Ernestine Turner
Rev. Dr. Miran Ukaegbu (E)
Jennifer Williams (A)
Yvette Williams-Lawson (A)
Patricia Winston (E)
Viola D. Greene-Walker, District Manager
E. Jane Coleman, Assistant District Manager
Jimmi Brevil, Community Assistant
Hon. William F. Boyland, Jr.
Latrice Walker for Hon. Yvette Clarke
Essie Duggan for Hon. Velmanette Montgomery
Wanda Mercado for Hon. Darlene Mealy

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

Chairperson Bettie Kollock-Wallace called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and an invocation was given by Mrs. Hazel Clark.

A motion was made by Ms. Mattie Pusey, seconded by Ms. Pamela Junior and carried to waive the reading of the minutes.

District Manager Greene-Walker highlighted the following articles found in her report:

- **Redistricting New York City Council** - The New York City Districting Commission revised several proposed City Council Maps on December 4, 2012 at the request of and in response to a letter from New York City Council Speaker Christine Quinn. The final public hearing and meeting being held by the Commission in Brooklyn to hear testimony will be on Thursday, January 10, 2013, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at St. Francis College Founders Hall Auditorium, located at 180 Remsen Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201.
- **Open House** - The Brownsville Justice Community Program invites you to their Open House on Wednesday, December 19, 2012, 4:00 p.m. at 444 Thomas S. Boyland Street.

Learn how you can receive:

- GED and college assistance
- Internship placement
- Professional development training
- Participation in community benefit projects
- paid stipend of up to \$1,400 over six months

Eligibility criteria: be between 16 and 24 years old with Justice System involvement in the last 12 months. Strong preference given to Brownsville residents (73rd Precinct/Community District #16).

For more information, contact Desiree Knight, Intake Coordinator, at (347) 404-9587 or deknight@courts.state.ny.us.

- **Disaster Assistance** is available for those who sustained losses or damage from Hurricane Sandy, you may be eligible for disaster aid. For more information or to apply visit: DisasterAssistance.gov, call (800) 621-FEMA (3362), TTY (800) 462-7585. The deadline for FEMA registration is January 28, 2013.

There are other time sensitive grants included in her report and she urged that it be read on a timely basis and the instructions followed for programs of interest to the reader.

A motion was made by Ms. Eula Key, seconded by Ms. Pamela Junior and carried to waive further reading of the District Manager's Report.

Chairperson Kollock-Wallace recognized Ms. Jackie Kennedy from the Brownsville Partnership.

Ms. Kennedy stated that she is the Outreach Coordinator for Brownsville Partnership which is an initiative of Community Solutions. They work collaboratively with other organizations and the residents of the community to make measurable changes in the community.

They focus on stabilizing families who are struggling, empowering families who are strong and have the capacity to bring about positive changes such as reducing gun violence in the community, and making visible positive changes in the community.

Their team consists of about twenty persons working out of their office at 444 Thomas S. Boyland Street with a goal of bringing investments of both people skills and resources to make positive physical changes to the community.

They utilize residents as much as possible because they understand that the residents, not only know what the challenges are, they also know how the challenges can best be addressed.

Among the organizations they are partnered with are the Center for Court Innovation - which also operates the Brownsville Justice Center, SCO Family Services, the Brownsville Recreation Center, GrowNYC, and Neighborhood Financial Services. She introduced Ms. Julie Rodriguez of Neighborhood Financial Services.

Ms. Rodriguez stated that they offer free and confidential financial assessments to Brownsville residents. Their goal is to give residents access to the economy. They help them build and repair their credit and assist them in creating action plans to reach economic goals such home ownership, college education, and financial well-being. They offer seminars at local libraries, childcare centers, and recently held a graduation ceremony at I.S. 323. They partner with organizations such as Brownsville Partnership in order to reach as many residents as possible. If you are interested in receiving counseling or have an organization that would like to partner with them, please reach out to Brownsville Partnership.

Ms. Kennedy stated that the Brownsville Partnership will host the next All In Strategy Meeting on December 20th, from 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., at the Heritage House, located in the Stone Avenue Branch Library at the corner of Mother Gaston Boulevard and Dumont Avenue, to discuss ways to bring an end the violence in Brownsville.

Chairperson Kollock-Wallace recognized Ms. Beverly Johnson from the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's Central Brooklyn Public Health Office.

Ms. Johnson stated that an outbreak of invasive meningococcal disease has recently been identified among men who have sex with men, many of whom are HIV-infected. The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene recommends meningococcal vaccination for the following persons:

Men who have had intimate contact with another man met through a website, digital application "app", or at a bar or party since September 1, 2012, if they:

1. Are HIV-positive, OR
2. Are HIV-negative and live in specific areas of Brooklyn, including Bedford Stuyvesant, Brownsville, Bushwick, Clinton Hill, Crown Heights, Downtown, Dumbo, East New York, Prospect Heights and Williamsburg.

In addition, men who meet the criteria above and plan to have intimate contact with another man met through a website, digital application, or a bar or party in the near future should also be vaccinated.

Invasive meningococcal disease is a serious infection that can cause a high fever, headache, stiff neck, and rash. Some people die from the infection. If you develop these symptoms, you should immediately seek medical care.

The disease is spread by prolonged close contact with an infected person. Examples of prolonged close contact include kissing and having sex. In addition, sharing eating utensils, a drinking glass, or a cigarette with an infected person may spread the disease. It is not spread by simply breathing the air where a person with the disease has been.

People living with HIV are at greater risk than the general population of acquiring the infection that causes invasive meningococcal disease. Approximately 20% of people who develop the disease die of it. There are several vaccines licensed for use in adults that can help protect people against invasive meningococcal disease. Meningococcal vaccine may provide protection 7 to 10 days after vaccination, but not everyone will develop protective levels of antibodies. If you are HIV-infected and you do receive the meningococcal conjugate vaccine, you should return to your health care provider eight weeks later for a second dose.

If you meet all the criteria listed above, then the Health Department recommends that you receive meningococcal vaccine. If you meet some but not all of the criteria, for example, you are a man, have had sex with men that you met using an online dating site since September 1, 2012, but are HIV negative and live in Manhattan, the Health Department is recommending you discuss with your health care provider about your specific health situation and make a decision together whether you should be vaccinated or not.

Ms. Margaret Brewer, Chairperson of the Health and Human Services Committee, reported that members of the Committee met on Thursday, December 13, 2012, to discuss and review key health and social concerns in our area, mental health, healthy eating, and an area health outbreak.

In discussing the concerns and the Committee's position, the short term plans are as follows:

With regard to mental health, the concerns were how to deal with mental illness in our society? The Committee has partnered with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene as well as the Brookdale University Hospital and Medical Center's Community Advisory Board to create a panel of professionals to assemble appropriate lectures and literature to support the public conversations necessary to educate the community on how to recognize, get assistance with, and how to move forward, creating a balance with supporting factors of mental illness in our community.

The Committee is working hard to provide for the informational needs of our community. As the most accessible governmental body to this community, it is vital that they take their work seriously and do all that they can as members of the Board to work collectively to improve the quality of life and build a more economically independent community. Cooperation is not only appreciated, but needed.

On healthy eating, the concerns are healthy food choices: knowing what is healthy and having access to it. Ms. Sharon Taylor-Marshall of Brooklyn Perinatal and a member of the Committee, shared information that there will be training conducted during the weeks of January 12th and 19th at the Brownsville Recreation Center, located at 1555 Linden Boulevard. "Brooklyn Knows" Trainings will be 4 ½ days, covering the areas of Public Speaking and Food Educator Training. This is in preparation to create Healthy Eating consultants in our community. More information will follow as it is made available.

She reiterated that an outbreak of invasive meningococcal disease has been recently identified among men who have sex with men, many of whom are HIV infected. The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene recommends meningococcal vaccination for the following:

Men who have had intimate contact with another man met through a website, digital application, or at a bar or party since September 1, 2012 if they:

1. Are HIV positive or
2. Are HIV negative and live in specific areas of Brooklyn... further

information has been made available on tonight's distribution table.

On October 23, 2012, members of the Committee attended a breakfast held by Grandmother's LOV (Love Over Violence). The organization is supported by the NYPD Clergy task Force and is made up of grandmothers who've had to assume the responsibility of their children's children, whose lives were interrupted by street violence. The grandmothers have asked that the Committee bring a conversation discussing bipolarism in the family. The Committee is aiming for the January breakfast to have the professional mental health partners lecture on the topic.

If you have a topic relating to mental health in our community that you would like to publicly discuss, feel free to send an email to bk16@cb.nyc.gov with "Mental Health Lecture" in the subject line.

On November 5th, as well as December 3rd, 2012, she represented Community Board #16 at the Brookdale University Hospital and Medical Center (BUHMC) Community Advisory Board meeting. Presentations from the Pediatric Sickle Cell Program and the Treatment for Life Program, a program designed to provide for the needs of those infected and living with HIV in our community were made. Both are featured at the Brookdale Hospital. For more information, go to www.brookdalehospital.org.

The October's Committee report mentioned working on a program called "Towards a Quieter Brownsville". Since then, the Committee has been in contact with Arlene Bronzaft of the Mayor's Council on the Environment of NYC and co-author of "Why Noise Matters", who just so happened to be a native of Brownsville and was delighted to assist in improving the quality of life here. Ms. Bronzaft has proven to be very thorough and knowledgeable. The Committee looks forward to a great partnership. Ms. Bronzaft will meet with the Committee in the near future and give a presentation. Meanwhile, we have provided some information on the topic of noise.

The Committee will meet again on January 10th, 2013 at 4:30 p.m. at 444 Thomas S. Boyland Street-Room 103. All ideas are welcome. If there are any topics or concerns you would like to bring to the Committee, please feel free to do so.

Please share the information from tonight's meeting with at least one more person.

A motion was made by Mr. David Alexander, seconded by Ms. Eula Key and carried to accept the report of the Health and Human Services Committee.

Ms. Pamela Junior, Secretary of the Land Use, Planning and Zoning Committee, in behalf of Ms. Bettie Kollock-Wallace, Chairperson of the Committee, reported that the Committee met on December 11, 2012 regarding:

- 1) Application by Retro Fitness to the Board of Standards and Appeals for a special permit to operate a health club at 81 East 98th Street. Retro Fitness is seeking a letter of support from Community Board #16. Due to several unanswered questions, the item was tabled until the January 8, 2013 Committee meeting.
- 2) A proposal by the African American Planning Commission, Inc. in partnership with Common Ground for a mix of affordable rental housing and permanent supportive rental housing (160 studio apartments and a two-bedroom unit for a superintendent) for a target tenant population which shall include veterans, low-income persons from the community, homeless single adults, and single adults at-risk of homelessness on a city-owned vacant lot on the north side of Livonia Avenue (Block 3566, Lot 6) between Howard Avenue and Grafton Street. The proposal was tabled until the January 8, 2013 meeting.
- 3) A proposal by Dunn Development for 39 units for low-income working families and 40 studio apartments for formerly homeless single adults with on-site support services provided by CAMBA on a city-owned lot at the northeast corner of Bergen Street and Saratoga Avenue (Block 1447). The proposal was tabled until the January 8, 2013 meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. David Alexander, seconded by Mr. Charles Ladson and carried to accept the report of the Land Use, Planning and Zoning Committee.

Mr. Kofi Hormeku, Chairperson of the Parks and Recreation Committee, reminded the audience of the availability of the Committee's Inspection Report and urged them to pick up a copy and read it at their leisure.

The community parks are in good condition, however if, someone sees a problem at a particular location, he urges them to contact him or the Community Board office at (718) 385-0323 so that the issue may be addressed.

A motion was made by Mr. Charles Ladson, seconded by Ms. Essie Duggan and carried to accept the report of the Parks and Recreation Committee.

Ms. Essie Duggan, Chairperson of the Senior Citizens Affairs Committee, reported that members of the Committee met on Wednesday, December 5, 2012 at the Marcus Garvey Senior Citizen Center, located at 1400 East New York Avenue between Thomas S. Boyland and Amboy Streets.

This was their second luncheon meeting that they plan to convene at the senior centers throughout the District.

The seniors shared some security concerns with the Committee, but their current and most urgent need is the continuation of their lunch program which is scheduled to be discontinued as of December 31, 2012, due to lack of funding. The program has been funded by Councilmember Mealy.

The seniors agreed that they would develop a petition with a cover letter to Mayor Bloomberg and the other local, State, City and Federal officials to inform them of the situation and request their assistance in securing financial assistance for the continuance of their lunch program, which ensures that the seniors are provided with at least one warm and nutritious meal daily.

If you would like to join the Committee, please contact the Community Board office at (718) 385-0323 to receive a notice of the next Committee meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. David Alexander, seconded by Mr. Charles Ladson and carried to accept the report of the Senior Citizens Affairs Committee.

Mr. John McCadney, Jr., Chairperson of the Transportation and Franchises Committee, reported that the Committee was scheduled to meet with representatives from the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) on December 13, 2012 to discuss proposed bicycle lanes in Community District #16. Because DOT representatives were unable to attend the meeting, the presentation has been rescheduled for Thursday, January 10, 2013, 6:00 p.m. at 444 Thomas S. Boyland Street. The Committee is interested in hearing your reaction to proposed bicycle lanes.

Muni-meters have been installed in the Pitkin Avenue Business Improvement District (on Pitkin Avenue between Howard Avenue and Mother Gaston Boulevard and on Rockaway Avenue between Glenmore and Sutter Avenues). Metered parking is limited to 2 hours.

The Committee discussed transportation concerns such as: double parking, parking in bus stops, non-handicap accessibility of train stations in the community, parking in front of fire hydrants, and traffic congestion in the area of Legion Street, East New York Avenue, and Howard Avenue. The Committee will be following up with DOT, Transit Authority, and the 73rd Precinct to resolve the complaints.

A motion was made by Mr. David Alexander, seconded by Mr. Charles Ladson and carried to accept the report of the Transportation and Franchises Committee.

Ms. Wanda Mercado, representing Councilmember Darlene Mealy, reported that in the current issue of Councilmember Mealy's monthly newsletter, there is a Big Apple prescription discount card which may be cut out of the newsletter and used by anyone in New York City, whether or not they are New York City residents. The card will allow the bearer to save from 15 to 30% on their prescription drug purchases in New York City.

Councilmember Mealy will host her next Advisory Board Meeting on Saturday, January 5, 2012, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at her District Office, located at 1757 Union Street, between Rochester and Utica Avenues. The Financial Clinic will present on building financial security.

The Neighborhood Technical Assistance Clinic's nonprofit expert, Valerie Oliver-Durrah, will present: a training and capacity building workshop on diversifying funding strategies for the current economic climate, on Wednesday January 30, 2012, 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the District Office. RSVP by calling (718) 953-3097 or emailing charris@council.nyc.gov.

Topics to be covered during the clinic will include: step by step process on completing the City Council Funding Application, how to form a giving circle, how to organize a special event to raise funds, and how to create a simple fundraising plan.

Ms. Mercado may be reached at (718) 953-3097 or by emailing wmercado@council.nyc.gov.

Ms. Blanche L. Peltonbusch asked what is Councilmember Mealy doing to make her meetings accessible to persons in wheelchairs? What is she doing to bring in larger apartments (3- to 5-bedrooms) in the community? What are her plans to work cooperatively with other elected officials to meet the needs of the community?

Ms. Mercado stated that she has made Councilmember Mealy aware of the issue of accessibility and she is working to find venues to accommodate wheelchairs. The Councilmember also met with Institute for Community Living and they are in the process of constructing affordable studios and up to three-bedroom apartments at 805 East New York Avenue.

Mr. Charles Ladson asked what is Councilmember Mealy's position regarding "Stop and Frisk"?

Ms. Mercado stated that she has not heard any official statement on the Councilmember's position regarding legislation that would reform "Stop and Frisk".

Ms. Sharon Devonish-Leid, representing Kings County District Attorney Charles Hynes, stated that at the recent Project Safe Surrender event held at Mount Zion Church, they were able to help dismiss 482 outstanding warrants.

The recent gun buyback program eliminated 134 guns from the streets; consisting of 80 revolvers, 31 semi-automatic pistols, 4 rifles, 3 shotguns, a sawed-off shotgun, and 15 others – zip starters and pistol starters. Since its inception in 2008, they have collected a total of 1532 guns. They will continue to host these events throughout the coming year. Another Project Safe Surrender event is tentatively scheduled for April 2013 and as information is made available, she will inform the community. She can be reached by calling (718) 250-3470.

Ms. Essie Duggan, representing Senator Velmanette Montgomery, stated that the borders of Senator Montgomery's district have been revised and the district was renumbered as the 25th Senatorial District. As such, she no longer represents some households in the Ocean Hill community that were previously in her district and now has a larger portion of the Gowanus community. She extends her gratitude to those whom she had the privilege of serving.

She also sends thanks to all who did whatever they could to assist those who were affected in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, be it prayers or donations of time, money, or supplies. It all served to let them know that during times of crisis we are there for one another.

Mr. Kevin Parris, representing Borough President Marty Markowitz, stated that he is the new liaison to Community District #16 as well the Events Coordinator for the Borough President. He also works on all Land Use Applications for the Borough of Brooklyn. He can be reached by calling (718) 802-3856.

Ms. Latrice Walker, representing Congresswoman Yvette Clarke, stated that the deadline for the so-called "Fiscal Cliff" is December 31, 2012. President Obama has requested that Congress remain in session through the Christmas holiday in order to work on legislation that will prevent taxes being raised for all Americans and the loss of funding for many social programs in 2013. In the past, President Obama had lobbied for taxes to be raised for those earning \$250,000 and above and to protect those earning less than that amount. He has been negotiating with Republican leaders in Congress and is now lobbying to protect those earning \$400,000 and less.

There is also talk of decreasing Social Security funding by two hundred billion dollars and raising the eligibility age from 65 to 67 years old. This should be causing outrage from this community where we need to protect the many seniors who depend on Social Security for their survival. However, they are not receiving feedback from the community. They need to hear from the community in order to document their opinions on issues affecting the community. The

local office number is (718) 287-1142 and their Washington, D.C. number is (202) 225-6231.

Due to redistricting, Congresswoman Clarke's district will become the 9th Congressional District beginning in January 2013.

Mr. Ladson asked what is Congresswoman Clarke's position on the issue of gun control?

Ms. Walker stated that the recent murder of 27 people in Connecticut has turned the nation's attention towards the issue of gun control. During tomorrow's session of Congress, legislators will have an opportunity to voice their thoughts on the issue.

As unfortunate as the tragedy in Newtown is, by sheer numbers, our community has suffered far more shooting victims this year. As such, Congresswoman Clarke is definitely in support of stronger gun laws. A piece of legislation that she tried to put through to increase funding for public housing ended up having a provision giving public housing residents the right to have guns. The National Rifle Association and other gun lobbies are well funded and strongly allied in their quest for loose gun laws.

Ms. Mabel Davis stated that in a televised round table discussion, a speaker stated that a possible source to reduce the deficit could be workers' pensions. What is Congresswoman Clarke's position on this?

Ms. Walker stated that in general, pensions are a state issue. However, she doesn't think that Congresswoman Clarke would want government problems resolved on the backs of seniors and retirees. They have worked and paid into these systems and have earned their benefits.

Assemblyman William F. Boyland, Jr. stated that he just came out of a meeting with the new manager for New York City Housing Authority's (NYCHA) centers. Many of the issues arising with the centers are due to the fact that they have been without programming for about seven years. He remembers a time when every NYCHA development had an active community center and senior center with various programming to engage the residents. They discussed finding ways and programs to collaborate with to return the programming to the centers.

Promises were made to actively pursue courses of action in order to help the new generation of NYCHA residents in our community. Talks are in progress with the Fruit of Islam wherein they will offer cultural programs to residents.

The issue of gang activity and that many major crimes in the community are being committed by youth ages 11 to 25 was discussed. They will be focusing on this demographic as well as seniors who should not feel like prisoners in their own community.

He is also collaborating with the Brooklyn Children's Psychiatric Center, located at 1819 Bergen Street, and they will be outreaching to community schools and NYCHA complexes to offer assistance with family counseling.

He is also working with Bank of America to outreach to the community's senior population about access banking. Although many of our seniors dislike direct deposit, it will soon be an essential part of many of their lives as Social Security and other federal funds will only be available through direct deposit. The first of a series of workshops will be held at Saratoga Square Senior Center on January 11, 2013. Workshops will be held at senior centers throughout the district with the collaboration of Chase and Popular Community Bank (formerly Banco Popular).

Mr. Ladson asked Assemblyman Boyland where does he stand on the issue of gun control?

Assemblyman Boyland stated that legislation has been introduced in Albany wherein persons who wish to purchase semi-automatic weapons in the State of New York must first undergo a psychiatric evaluation. As was mentioned by Ms. Walker earlier, the NRA and other gun lobbyist are a strong contingent, however, New York has some of the strongest gun laws in the nation and he will continue to work on making them stronger.

Mr. David Alexander asked what is the status of bringing in a trade school to the community?

Assemblyman Boyland stated that the issue has been raised before and as was stated previously, it is a question of finding an appropriate venue. Among the issues discussed with NYCHA

earlier was perhaps bringing a school such as Automotive High School to one of the centers.

Mr. John McCadney, Jr. stated that a group came before the Economic Development Committee of the Board recently with a proposal to bring a credit union to the community. The group led them to believe that Assemblyman Boyland is in support of them and their proposal. Is this a fact?

Assemblyman Boyland stated that he is aware of the group and is supportive of having a federal credit union in the community as a supplement to the available banks. The group is in the early stages of developing their plans and he is trying to guide them through the process.

Ms. Mattie Pusey asked Assemblyman Boyland what is he doing to help better secure our schools?

Assemblyman Boyland stated that he met with Captain Gulotta of the 73rd Precinct and was advised that officers will be patrolling the travel corridors to the schools in the hours prior to the start of the school day and around dismissals, creating something like a school safety zone. Some non-profits such as the Fruit of Islam and Trucked Up have expressed an interest in helping patrol these corridors as well.

Chairperson Kollock-Wallace thanked District Manager Greene-Walker, the Executive Board, and everyone else who helped her in chairing the Community Board during the year.

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. David Alexander, seconded by Ms. Adrainer Coleman and carried to adjourn the meeting.