

MINUTES OF COMMUNITY BOARD #16 – OCTOBER 24, 2017

Attendance

David Alexander	John McCadney, Jr. (E)
Margaret Brewer	Andrea McCullough (A)
Dr. Cleopatra Brown	Ronella Medica (A)
Adrainer Coleman	Melanie Mendonca
Brenda Duchene	Shemene M. Minter (E)
Christopher Durosinmi	Genese Morgan
Norman Frazier	Anita Pierce (E)
Danny Goodine (A)	Marie Pierre
Chyanne Hairston (A)	Linda Rivera
Sarah Hall (E)	Johnnymae Robinson (E)
Balinda Harris	Evelyn Sanchez (E)
Mawuli Hormeku (E)	Celina Trowell (A)
Michael Howard (E)	Ernestine Turner
Carl Joseph	Rev. Dr. Miran Ukaegbu (E)
Eula Key (E)	Deborah Williams
Danny King	Patricia Williamson (A)
Bettie Kollock Wallace (E)	Pat Winston
Charles Ladson (A)	Viola D. Greene-Walker, District Manager
Wendy Lanier (A)	Jimmi Brevil, Community Assistant
Carolyn Lee	Richard Nelson for Hon. Jesse Hamilton, III
Albion Liburd (E)	Malcolm McDaniel for Hon. Eric L. Adams
Deborah Mack (E)	Carlos Soto for Hon. Rafael Espinal, Jr.
Yolanda Matthews	

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

Chairperson Genese Morgan called the public hearing to order at 7:05 p.m. and stated that, in recent days, several members of the community have informed her of family members who are ill and yet they continue to work towards improving our community. She asks that the audience stand and offer a moment of quiet reflection and prayer asking for strength for those who are ill and their families.

She next read the public hearing item: IN THE MATTER OF Statements of Community District Needs, and Capital and Expense Budget Requests for Fiscal Year 2019 Pursuant to Sections 230 and 2800 (d) (10 and 11) of the New York City Charter.

Chairperson Morgan, in behalf of Mr. Michael Howard, Chairperson of the Personnel, Budget, and Finance Committee, reported that each year the Community Board is required to submit its Statement of Community Needs and its capital and expense budget recommendations.

The capital budget allocates funds for physical improvements, land acquisition, and major equipment. Capital budget eligibility is defined as costing more than \$35,000 and lasting more than 5 years.

The Community Board can submit up to 40 capital budget requests.

The expense budget allocates funds for the ongoing operation of the city. These include salaries, fringe benefits, and pensions for city employees, the interest and repayment of the city's debts, supplies, equipment, and energy cost, etc.

The Community Board may submit up to 25 expense budget requests.

In preparing the Statement of District Needs, the Board is asked to identify three most pressing issues overall. The Committee submits for the Board's approval, the following: Affordable Housing, Health Care Services, and Commercial Development (retail mix, small business and MBWE support, etc.).

Chairperson Morgan asked that as they consider additional recommendations, the audience think of all the individuals in the community and all the things that they might need to sustain a good quality of life.

Next, she read the Committee's Capital Budget recommendations:

- Provide more housing for extremely low and low-income households
- Provide more housing for medium-income households
- Expand loan programs to rehabilitate multiple dwelling buildings
- Install security camera at Howard Houses
- Construct a comfort station for Powell Street Playground
- Reconstruct Newport Playground
- Install air condition units in all District 23 classrooms
- Upgrade student bathrooms, library and auditorium at Kappa V
- Rehabilitate Osborn Playground to include comfort, play equipment and paved surface
- Install new benches, checkers/chess tables at Livonia Park
- Rehabilitate Chester Playground to include play equipment, safety surface, and comfort station
- Rehabilitate P.S. 125 playground equipment
- Rehabilitate Dr. Richard Greene Playground to include comfort station
- Update and improve play equipment and spray showers at Fish Playground
- Install elevator or escalator at Junius Street station
- Make Broadway Junction station ADA accessible
- Install elevator or escalator at Atlantic Avenue station
- Install elevator or escalator at Rockaway Avenue IRT-3
- Install elevator or escalator at Sutter Avenue-Rutland Road station
- Install elevator or escalator at Saratoga Avenue station
- Install elevator or escalator at New Lots Avenue station on “L”
- Install elevator or escalator at Livonia Avenue station on “L”
- Rehabilitate Brownsville Recreation Center
- Rehabilitate Betsy Head Park to include ballfield, running track, swimming pool, basketball courts, and comfort station
- Install streetscape improvements along Pitkin Avenue between Howard Avenue and Mother Gaston Boulevard
- Reconstruct Floyd Patterson Field with synthetic turf for multi-purpose use
- Renovate interior of Saratoga Branch Library to include heating and cooling system, safety and security enhancements, new furniture and equipment
- Renovate Stone Avenue Branch Library to include new windows, doors, public self service improvements, repoint and rehab limestone, roof, and side entry steps.

Chairperson Morgan opened the floor for other Capital Budget recommendations and comments.

Dr. Cleopatra Brown suggested that the Brownsville Recreation Center Pool be made more accessible to persons with physical challenges.

Chairperson Morgan thanked Dr. Brown for the suggestion and stated that this an issue that is widespread in the community. We need to do a better job in making the community accessible.

Mr. Norman Frazier stated that the community also needs to respect and comply with “Handicap Parking” signs.

Chairperson Morgan asked if there was a specific location that he can tell her about?

Mr. Frazier stated that Bristol Street and Dumont Avenue has a space that is designated for picking up and dropping off of Access-A-Ride passengers that is constantly being blocked.

Chairperson Morgan read the Committee’s Expense Budget recommendations:

- Provide MWBE resources and technical assistance
- Establish a WorkForce1 development center in Community District #16
- Expand early care and education programs at day care and headstart centers
- Provide Career and Technical Education programs
- Provide educational programs for persons in need of high school diploma or GED
- Install training door at firehouses in Community District #16
- Continue funding of Beacon and Cornerstone Programs
- Increase access to swimming programs
- Increase arts programs

- Expand programs to destigmatize mental health problems and encourage treatment
- Expand preventive services such as counselling, parenting skills training and substance abuse treatment
- Expand outreach and educational programs such as healthy living to improve nutrition and physical activity for all ages
- Assign additional uniform officers to 73rd Precinct and PSA #2
- Increase transportation services for elderly and homebound residents
- Expand library hours to enable youth access to research and technology
- Fund affordable housing monitors for HPD funded housing
- Enhance cash assistance programs for low-income families
- Expand homelessness prevention programs
- Increase home delivered meals to low-income elderly residents
- Fund storefront/façade improvements along Pitkin Avenue between Mother Gaston Boulevard and Howard Avenue
- Fund storefront/façade improvements along Belmont Avenue between Mother Gaston Boulevard and Rockaway Avenue
- Provide funds for periodic cleaning of catch basins
- Provide funds for ongoing extermination of rats in vacant lots
- Increase funding for periodic cleaning of rain gardens.

She opened the floor for other Expense Budget recommendations and comments.

Ms. Balinda Harris requested funding to repair the sidewalk of the triangle formed by Eastern Parkway, Thomas S. Boyland Street, and Prospect Place.

Dr. Cleopatra Brown requested that street depressions along Strauss Street between Dumont and Blake Avenues be repaired.

Mr. William Boone stated that at Livonia Avenue near Rockaway Avenue there is a pile of debris from repair work done at the subway station that remains there, long after the repair work has been completed. He would like to see it removed.

Chairperson Morgan stated that this not a budget item. However, the Board will look into finding out why the condition still exist.

Chairperson Morgan asked if there were any additional recommendations?

Dr. Cleopatra Brown suggested that there be an increase in funding to allow additional teachers be hired to reduce the ratio of students to teachers in our classrooms.

Rev. David Demera stated that there is a location where two lots are being merged and the single-family home that occupy the lots are being replaced with a 33-unit building. Is there anything that Board can do to stop this from happening?

Chairperson Morgan stated that she can respond to that question, however, it does not pertain to the budget recommendations. She will address the issue after the public hearing portion of tonight's meeting has concluded.

Dr. Cleopatra Brown requested that funding be provided to upgraded outdated electrical systems in the schools where air conditioners are to be installed.

Mr. Norman Frazier stated that additional street lighting is needed on Livonia Avenue between Rockaway Avenue and Saratoga Avenue, as well as on Bristol and Chester Streets between Dumont Avenue and Livonia Avenue.

Dr. Cleopatra Brown stated that East 98th Street between Livonia and Sutter Avenue can be added to that list.

There being no further comment on the public hearing item, a motion was made by Ms. Linda Rivera, seconded by Mr. David Alexander, and carried to close the public hearing.

The roll was called and a quorum was not present.

A motion was made by Mr. David Alexander, seconded by Dr. Cleopatra Brown, and carried to waive the reading of the minutes from September 26, 2017.

District Manager Viola Greene-Walker stated that within the District Manager's report is an item that she also reported in her September report. Applications are being accepted for 107 newly constructed units at 428 Saratoga Avenue. Interested persons may apply online or through the mail. The Application deadline is October 30, 2017. To apply online, please go to nyc.gov/housingconnect. You may also seek assistance with applying at the Board's office.

Additionally, the report contains information on various grants and opportunities, and a listing of complaints received by the Board's office for resolution during the month.

A motion was made by Mr. David Alexander, seconded by Ms. Carolyn Lee, and carried to accept the District Manager's report.

Chairperson Morgan recognized representatives from the 73rd Precinct.

P.O. Sean Dolan introduced himself and his partner P.O. Christopher Ferreira as the Neighborhood Coordinating Officers (NCOs) for Sector A of the Precinct which covers the Ocean Hill section.

P.O. Dolan reported that Deputy Inspector Mascol is at a town hall meeting with Mayor di Blasio and is unable to attend tonight's Community Board meeting. He will take any concerns, heard this evening, back to Inspector Mascol.

Mr. Marvin King stated that, this past weekend, he was in the area of Dumont Avenue and Grafton Street where he noticed a number of young men speeding through stop signs on motorbikes. There was a police officer in a sector car whom he tried to wave down. Instead of stopping, the officer waved back to him and kept driving.

One of the riders lost control of his motorbike and several pieces fell from it. He took some of the pieces to the 73rd Precinct to report the incident and was told to call 3-1-1.

P.O. Dolan stated that not having knowledge of the specific incident he cannot provide more information about it. However, the issue of illegal dirt bikes and ATVs is a problem citywide. They sometime establish checkpoints to try to catch riders and when these vehicles are found chained to fences, they are confiscated and vouchered at the precincts.

Chasing the vehicles in residential communities is not an option as it places the rider, the officer, and the public at risk.

Chairperson Morgan thanked the Officers for the information they provided.

Ms. Margaret Brewer, Chairperson of the Public Safety Committee, in behalf of Deputy Inspector Rafael Mascol, Commanding Officer of the 73rd Precinct, reported that the Precinct is up about 2% in crime year-to-date. The main cause of that increase is burglaries which are up 12%, followed by felony assaults which have increased by 3.7%.

Although there has been an increase in burglaries for the year, tremendous work has taken place in identifying and appending burglary recidivist. Homicides are down 45% and shootings are down 18.5%.

Deputy Inspector Mascol warns the community not to leave their property unattended. Especially, do not leave property visible in cars or walk absent-mindedly with cell phones in their hands.

Ms. Brewer reported that the City Services Planning Work Group met on October 4, 2017 to discuss the following:

- BMS/ Art in the Park - BMS Family Health Center has secured a community grant to display art pieces at Howard Playground which will be hung on the fence for one year, beginning October 28, 2017. This is in effort to reduce stress in the environment as well as neighborhood beautification.
- Yielding to Emergency Vehicles - It was brought to the Public Safety Committee's attention that emergency vehicles are having difficulty getting through traffic. Keep in mind that there are roughly 90,000 people living in the community within a two (2) mile radius. Please, "Go to the right, when you see the lights". Literature is available on tonight's distribution table with guidelines on the subject.

- Neighborhood cleanliness – The Public Safety Committee discussed collaborating with the Sanitation and Health Committees of Community Board #16 to encourage having a clean community to support public safety, mental health as well as the environment. The planning for this will begin at the November meeting.
- Safety for Our Seniors/Safe Reporting Practices – Over the summer, she encountered situations that involved members of our community that could have used some preventive measures. An oversight plan has been developed for our seniors and other “potentially vulnerable” community members. These pro-active methods will need volunteers. She asks interested persons to please contact the District Manager’s office and provide their contact information.
- Shared Community Values - Last October, the Public Safety Committee discussed bringing various trainings to the District to go with their plan to strengthen the community by having as many “Trained Neighbors” as possible. Courses included CERT, First-aid, CPR, Mental Health (these trainings were offered through the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and Citizens Police Academy to name a few).

She encouraged everyone to get involved.

Today, the Public Safety Committee introduces Shared Community Values. A flier with the guiding principles of the initiative is available on tonight’s distribution table.

We must work collectively on communicating and exercising these values throughout the District to measure the success of Shared Community Values.

As Halloween approaches, she wants everyone to enjoy the festivities, but also keep in mind that there are those who are at their worst on this occasion. There will be community centers/after school programs and libraries hosting activities. Contact the one nearest you for information.

She thanked Linda Rivera and Pat Winston for hosting a walk against Breast Cancer this October and took a moment to remember past Board member, Daisy Jackson who succumbed to her bout with the disease in March 2016. She stated that she misses Ms. Jackson whose hard work, passion, and commitment humbled her, and allowed her to learn about Brownsville from a different perspective.

The Committee welcomes input and involvement from the community. The Public Safety Committee will be meeting every 1st Wednesday. The next meeting will be on November 1, 2017 at 6:00 p.m., in the Board’s office at 444 Thomas S. Boyland Street - Room 103.

She looks forward to hearing from the audience regarding the Shared Community Values initiative.

A motion was made by Mr. David Alexander, seconded by Ms. Linda Rivera, and carried to accept the report of the City Services Planning Work Group.

Ms. Linda Rivera reported that the Community Resident Planning Work Group met on October 11, 2017 and discussed the continuance of the goals of the Youth Service Planning Committee. As another school year begins, there was an overview of the past year’s deficits. It was brought to the Youth Services Planning Committee’s attention that the math and English levels in School District #23 are still below average. The Committee believes that schools with low math and English levels should meet with the superintendent(s) of these schools to discuss the school’s needs and offer recommendation to resolve this concern. Also discussed was the possibility of classrooms being overcrowded, which could be an issue regarding the students’ ability to retain and absorb their education. In addition, after-school programs which are an important part of the educational process, have been envisioned as a possible solution in schools where they do not exist. Preparation for the next Youth Conference is underway for next year. The Committee will continue to work on these issues.

The Work Group has been informed that \$5 million dollars has been allocated by the mayor’s office to air condition classrooms which will provide relief to the students and teachers during the oppressively warm months of the school year. Health concerns, such as asthma, are an issue

in overheated classrooms. Although this is a positive gesture, there were no discussions by the Administration to address rewiring these old school buildings to accommodate the air conditioners or how the funding would be allocated to the schools. The Committee will address this matter with the appropriate officials.

There is an ongoing discussion on the mental state of the students attending schools in School District #23. The Health and Human Services Committee is reaching out to the providers that perform mental health treatment for the students and their families.

The Women's and Senior Citizens Committees hosted a successful Breast Cancer Awareness Walk at Betsy Head Park on October 12th which was well attended.

Open enrollment continues at Central Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation's SONYC BIZ Entrepreneurial program for students attending middle schools and their GED program for ages 17 and up. Both programs are located on the 3rd Floor of 444 Thomas S. Boyland Street. Their telephone number is (718) 498-4513

Enrollment opportunities also continue at The CAMPUS Afterschool Tech and Arts Program for Middle School Students at the Brownsville Collaborative Middle School (BCMS) located at 85 Watkins Street. To enroll, call (718) 284-4700 for applications.

Fathers and mentors are now meeting. If you are interested, please call Mr. William Rochford at (718) 240-3657 or (917) 428-9647, to obtain the date and time of the meetings.

The Work Group encourages all eligible voters in the community to exercise their right to vote and let their voices be heard. The next Work Group meeting will be held on November 8th at 6:00 p.m.

A motion was made by Ms. Marie Pierre, seconded by Mr. David Alexander, and carried to accept the report of the Community Resident Planning Work Group.

District Manager Greene-Walker reported that the Equity Planning Work Group met on October 10, 2017 with representatives from the 5th Avenue Committee and Habitat for Humanity NYC who were awarded several vacant sites by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development through a competitive bid to develop several buildings on the sites to include homeownership and rental. They are in the process of designing the buildings and are seeking the Community Board's comments. The Land Use, Planning, and Zoning Committee will review each site, the proposed design and submit their recommendations to the Board at next month's meeting.

There are ongoing conversations with our elected officials and financial services to bring more banking opportunities to the community.

Central Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation is organizing MWBE workshops. Once the Work Group have the dates, the community will be notified.

The next Equity Planning Work Group meeting will be held on November 14, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.

A motion was made by Mr. David Alexander, seconded by Ms. Linda Rivera, and carried to accept the report of the Equity Planning Work Group.

Ms. Marie Pierre reported that the Fiscal and Policy Work Group met on October 17, 2017 and discussed a proposition which will be on the ballot on November 7th, asking New Yorkers whether to hold a New York State Constitutional Convention. Committee members attended several forums discussing this issue and also entertained two guest speakers who presented the pros and cons of the Convention.

After reviewing several facts, the Fiscal and Policy Work Group recommends to our community members to vote "NO" on the proposition to hold a New York State Constitutional Convention. The Work Group's recommendation is based on several concerns.

- The present political climate poses a great threat in securing many of the rights that we enjoy and take for granted.
- The process that is used to choose delegates does not rule out corruption.

- Low turnout in local elections can take away the emphasis on how important this issue is.
- There is no definite timeline set.
- No guarantee that big money will not influence the process
- There needs to be a more cost-effective process.
- There is a process of single amendment still in place; it is the lack of enough community involvement that makes it ineffective.

This recommendation does not mean that our community does not like change. It is the change at any cost that concerns the community. The Work Group recommends that the audience exercise their constitutional right to vote, turn over their ballots on November 7th, and vote “NO” on the New York Constitutional Convention. The next Fiscal and Policy Work Group meeting will be on November 9, 2017.

A motion was made by Mr. Norman Frazier, seconded by Ms. Linda Rivera, and carried to accept the report of the Fiscal and Policy Work Group.

Chairperson Morgan stated that in reference to Rev. David Demera’s concern about the proposed build-up near the Nehemiah Homes, the Board has had a number of presentations by Borough Hall’s Land Use Director who informed the Board that the Nehemiah Homes are considerably under-built and the homeowners have a lot of air rights. As such, they can build up as-of-right.

Rev. Demera stated that, it is his understanding that the homeowners’ association has an agreement that sets certain guidelines as to the height of the buildings.

Chairperson Morgan stated that she is unfamiliar with the Nehemiah Homeowners’ Association rules. She thinks that such a document should play a part in keeping development in character with the neighborhood. However, the air rights allow the owners to legally raise the heights of their buildings. There are a number of locations within the District where this has occurred.

Mr. Marvin King stated that he is a member of the Nehemiah Homeowners’ Association and is familiar with the document. It states that the homes are to be single-family buildings. The owner of the properties on Powell Street is proposing to convert a single-family home and an adjacent lot to a 33-unit multi-family dwelling. In accordance to the rules and regulations of the Homeowners’ Association, this is strictly forbidden. On October 27th, they will march to the Department of Buildings in protest to seek a cease and desist order for this plan.

Chairperson Morgan stated that more work needs to be done to resolve this issue. The Community Board was informed that the properties are under-built and air rights exist that allow for upward expansion. However, if the Homeowners’ Association has rules and regulations, with regards to the size of the home, they should have weight on the issue as well.

She recognized Mr. Carlos Soto, representing the Office of Councilmember Rafael Espinal, Jr. Mr. Soto stated that he is the Community Liaison for Councilmember Espinal. Their office is located at 786 Knickerbocker Avenue and the telephone number is (718) 642-8664. They offer many constituent services including advice from housing attorneys and immigration attorneys at no cost. They welcome everyone, regardless of where in Brooklyn they live.

On tonight’s distribution table are placards that can be placed on the door of a home to discourage unsolicited request to sell the property as well as unsolicited advertising materials on your property.

Mr. Richard Nelson, representing the Office of Senator Jesse Hamilton, announced that Senator Hamilton will host a Halloween Party on Friday, October 27th from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Full Gospel Assembly of God Church, located at 131 Sullivan Place. All are welcome to attend.

Senator Hamilton’s office is located at 1669 Bedford Avenue and the telephone number is (718) 284-4700.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Mr. William Boone of the Medgar Evers-Oasis Beacon Program.

Mr. Boone stated that he is the Outreach Coordinator for the Beacon Program at P.S./I.S. 323 which is located at 210 Chester Street. He introduced the Program’s new Assistant Director, Mr. Travis Davis.

Mr. Davis stated that on Thursday, October 26th from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., they will have a Lights On Afterschool event to celebrate and call attention to the importance of afterschool programs.

They continue to accept applications for youth grades 6 through 12 to join the Program.

Chairperson Morgan recognized representatives from the Department of Corrections.

Mr. Fabrice Armand, Director of Strategic Partnerships for the Department of Corrections, introduced Correction Officers Santana and Ng who have been with the Department for 6 and 10 years, respectively.

Additionally, he stated that fliers listing current non-uniform career opportunities available with the Department are available on tonight's distribution table. The positions are varied from Program Directors to Attorney, to Doctor with salaries ranging from \$15,000 to \$180,000. There is also an upcoming test to become a Correction Officer. Additional information can be found on the Department's website at www.nyc.gov/jointheboldest.

A representative of the Department of Education announced that the Department offers Adult Education Classes. Their Basic Education class emphasizes skills related to adult literacy needs and the TASC (formerly GED) classes prepare students to take the high school equivalency test, now called the Test Assessing Secondary Completion. Classes are held at P.S. 156 (104 Sutter Avenue) and P.S. 189 (1100 East New York Avenue). Informational fliers are available on tonight's distribution table.

They are requesting that the community take advantage of the classes offered in the neighborhood. Currently, they have about 10 students. They need to double that to keep the classes going at these locations.

A representative of the New York City Department of Education who reported that at the June 27, 2017 Community Board meeting, she announced that the Department is seeking to increase diversity within the City's specialized high schools. She is here tonight to provide an update to the Community Board. Since their previous presentation to the Board, they have done 25 tabling sessions at various events in the community, presented 33 times at local libraries and middle schools, and are on schedule to hold 31 Specialized High Schools Information Sessions during September. If anyone who knows a student in 7th or 8th grade who may benefit from entry into a specialized high school, should take a flier and give it to the student.

Chairperson Morgan stated that because a quorum was not achieved this evening, the Board is unable to vote on the Board's budget requests which are due at the Office of Budget and Management on October 31st. This is a cause for concern. She asked the membership to stay informed and be conscientious of their duties on the Board.

Mr. David Alexander asked if the members can be called and a vote taken over the telephone. Chairperson Morgan stated that it needs to be a public vote and may not be done over the telephone.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.