

## **MINUTES OF COMMUNITY BOARD #16 – MARCH 27, 2018**

### Attendance

David Alexander  
Margaret Brewer (E)  
Dr. Cleopatra Brown  
Adrainer Coleman  
Brenda Duchene  
Christopher Durosinmi (A)  
Norman Frazier  
Danny Goodine  
Chyanne Hairston (A)  
Sarah Hall  
Balinda Harris  
Mawuli Hormeku  
Michael Howard  
Carl Joseph  
Eula Key  
Danny King (A)  
Dr. Bettie Kollock Wallace  
Charles Ladson (E)  
Wendy Lanier (A)  
Carolyn Lee  
Albion Liburd  
Deborah Mack (A)  
Yolanda Matthews  
John McCadney, Jr.  
Andrea McCullough (A)  
Ronella Medica (A)

Melanie Mendonca  
Shemene M. Minter (E)  
Genese Morgan  
Anita Pierce  
Marie Pierre (E)  
Linda Rivera  
Johnnymae Robinson  
Evelyn Sanchez (A)  
Celina Trowell (A)  
Ernestine Turner  
Rev. Dr. Miran Ukaegbu  
Deborah Williams  
Patricia Williamson (A)  
Pat Winston  
Viola D. Greene-Walker, District Manager  
Jimmi Brevil, Community Assistant  
Reginald Belon for Hon. Yvette Clarke  
Melvin Faulkner for Hon. Charles Barron  
Adrienne Felton for Hon. Leticia James  
Cynthia Moices for Hon. Alicka Ampy-Samuel  
James Moultrie for Hon. Latrice Walker  
Richard Nelson for Hon. Jesse Hamilton, III  
Nicholas Perry for Hon. Scott Stringer  
Joy Simmons for Hon. Inez Barron  
Carlos Soto for Hon. Rafael Espinal, Jr.  
Devin Thorpe for Hon. Roxanne Persaud

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

Chairperson Genese Morgan called the hearing to order at 7:05 p.m. and an invocation was said by Dr. Bettie Kollock-Wallace.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Deputy Inspector Rafael Mascol, Commanding Officer of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Precinct.

Deputy Inspector Mascol stated that March has been a difficult month for the 73<sup>rd</sup> Precinct. They are seeing spikes in nearly all categories of crime within the command. There does not appear to be a contributing factor to this, except in the case of robberies which can be attributed to a spike in domestic robberies as he mentioned at last month's Board meeting. Overall, street-level robberies are down, although there have been a couple of robberies that took place around Fulton Street for which they have no leads on the perpetrators. In one instance, a woman had her pocketbook snatched from her as she exited the train station. He continues to advise everyone to be vigilant as they travel to and from their destinations. Limit your use of cellphones as you travel as it distracts you and makes it easier to target you for a crime of opportunity.

The Precinct's Domestic Violence Unit continues to spread awareness about domestic robbery at meetings such as this Board meeting and at local schools. They are letting people know that this is a serious act and that there are ways to resolve these issues without resorting to crime.

There has been a small uptick in burglaries with there being two more this year, as compared to the same period last year. There is a construction site where construction was nearly complete and someone entered the site to steal some refrigerators and stoves from the site. He encourages the audience to report suspicious activity, as it is taking place, to improve the chance of apprehending culprits.

They have also experienced a spike in shooting incidents. Last year, a record was set of 65 days without a shooting in the Precinct. This year, their streak was broken at 63 days without a violent incident. They have since had six violent incidents one of which was the tragic murder of three family members, including a 15-month old child and the suicide of a fourth family member who they believe committed the murders. He asks that the community keep those they left behind in prayer.

There were five other shooting incidents during the month. One has been solved and the perpetrator has been arrested.

They are seeking additional information to resolve the remainder. One occurred in the vicinity of Livonia Avenue and Rockaway Avenue, one near Bristol Street and Dumont Avenue, and over the weekend there was a shooting in the area of Thomas S. Boyland Street and St. Mark's Avenue. If you have any information regarding these crimes, please reach out to the Precinct.

To keep the community informed, they post information on social media platforms about things going on in the Precinct, both positive and crime related items. He encourages the audience to follow them on the platforms.

He reminds the audience to avoid falling prey to scams wherein checks are fished out of mailboxes, by assuring that envelopes fall completely down the chute of the mailbox, use one of the newer mailboxes with slots instead of the chute, paying online, or mail your envelope directly at the postal station. The scam is achieved by taking checks stolen from the mail, bleaching them and rewriting them in such a way that the scammers gain the proceeds.

He also warned the audience of IRS scams by informing them that the agency does not call taxpayers nor do they ask for payment via Green Dot cards. The IRS will only send correspondence via mail.

Someone thanked Deputy Inspector Mascol for his assistance in resolving parking issues in front their church.

Deputy Inspector Mascol stated that this part of philosophy of the Police Department going forward. They have Neighborhood Coordinating Officers (NCOs) who work diligently to resolve issues affecting the community. They will not be able to solve every problem; but rest assured that they will give it every effort. He invites everyone to attend the Precinct Council meeting held every third Thursday and the quarterly Build the Block meetings hosted by the NCOs. Visit [buildtheblock.nyc](http://buildtheblock.nyc), to find your precinct sector, names and contact information of your NCOs, and the next meeting date.

Ms. Jasmine Stewart stated that she resides in the area of Hegeman Avenue between Osborn Street and Watkins Street. They are experiencing problems related to the Golden Hall catering hall. The venue is the source of a variety of negative issues, including gun shots, congestion, illegal parking, and noise complaints.

Deputy Inspector Mascol stated that he is aware of the venue. It is owned by one individual who rents it out to various others. They have been in contact with her and are working on ways to improve the situation. He offered to speak to Ms. Stewart privately to inform her of some of the steps that have been taken.

Ms. Stewart stated that there is an issue with reaching the Precinct by telephone after normal business hours. After the choices for the Precinct's units are read, all responses loop back to the choices.

Deputy Inspector Mascol stated that they had a new phone system installed about a month ago. He is unaware of any issues, but will have his assistant look into it immediately. In the event of an emergency, call 9-1-1. In situations of ongoing issues, reach out to the NCOs.

Ms. Adrienne Felton from the Office of Public Advocate Letitia James stated that she understands some of the frustration of calling 3-1-1. However, she encourages everyone to continue to call them with non-emergency complaints. Calling 3-1-1 causes reports to be generated which can be used by Deputy Inspector Mascol when seeking resources for his Command. He can use the complaints to support his request for personnel and other resources.

A roll call of Board members was conducted with no quorum being present.

Chairperson Morgan called forward Ms. Darienne Best of the Brownsville Child Development Center.

Ms. Best stated that she is the Director of the Brownsville Child Development Center which is a relatively new facility, located on East 98<sup>th</sup> Street at Livonia Avenue. She is here this evening with their Outreach Coordinator Mr. Emanuel Perez to speak about their services.

They provide counselling service to young children and their parents. They are a part of the Provide NYC Initiative which means that they service children under the age of six and their parents. A typical clinic would see children ages 6 and up. The youth are showing behavioral concerns at school and may be referred by their teachers. The Center seeks to provide social emotional support to the community's young children and their families. They offered assistance to the schools affected by the recent murder/suicide which took place in the community.

They also provide consultation services to local child care providers and work with children, teachers, and parents at providers such as SCO First Step, Shirley Chisholm Early Learning Center, and the Morris Kopelman Learning Center.

Informational fliers on the Center were distributed.

Mr. David Alexander asked if the Center hires from the community?

Ms. Best stated that they do try to hire as much as possible from the community. They recently hired a Parent Advocate from the Brownsville community and have other staff from the community. Clinicians must be Licensed Social Workers. She will gladly accept resumes from qualified individuals.

Someone asked if the Center was in direct contact with the relatives of the family involved in the murder/suicide?

Ms. Best stated that they are not, however, the incident took place very close to some of the schools they support. As such, they reached out to those schools.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month and they will be conducting an event at Betsy Head Park on Saturday, May 19<sup>th</sup>. It will be a free event and as they get closer to the date, they will provide more information to the community.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Ms. Linda Holmes of Legal Hands Brownsville.

Ms. Holmes stated that she is an attorney with the Legal Aid Society with a background in housing. For the past five years, she has represented homeowners in foreclosure proceedings and tenants in landlord-tenant proceedings.

She works at Legal Hand which is a walk-in legal clinic. Monday to Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., you can walk in and speak to trained volunteers who can assist with understanding court documents, negotiating the court system, and helping you with your legal issues. On Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays, she is there and can assist with housing issues, tenant rights, repairs, etc.

On Thursdays and Fridays, her colleague from the Legal Aid Society is present with a background in family law. She can assist with issues of custodial rights, child support, orders of protection, matrimonial, and divorce issues.

They encourage anyone with questions about the legal system to come by and talk with them.

Someone asked if they offer services or programs to help people become entrepreneurs or homeowners, or something similar?

Ms. Holmes stated that there are trainings done on Thursdays where they invite other agencies to speak on various topics. Last week, they had a speaker from the Department of Labor who spoke on the various changes in the law that affect employees and employers. They post their events on facebook, you can also visit their office, or call.

Someone asked if they have information for landlords seeking to commence an eviction?

Ms. Holmes stated that most of their materials are tenant centric but they do have some information for landlords.

Someone asked if they can help with preparing health proxies or wills?

Ms. Holmes stated that Legal Aid has an office for seniors and they can offer referrals.

Having achieved a quorum of members, a motion was made by Mr. David Alexander, seconded by Ms. Linda Rivera, and carried to accept the minutes of the February 27, 2018 meeting.

District Manager Greene-Walker highlighted the following items from the District Manager's report:

- 1) March is Colon Cancer Awareness Month. Colon cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in New York City. If you are 40 years old or older, get screened for colorectal cancer and talk with your doctor to ensure that you are healthy and not a victim of colorectal cancer.
- 2) The Fire Department of New York City is urging the public to close all doors on their way out of a building during a fire. This will keep the fire inside. If doors are left open, the flames and smoke can travel more quickly.
- 3) Sunday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> is Earth Day. There will be an event at Prospect Park and all are invited to attend. Additional information can be found in her report.
- 4) NYU Aspire Program - NYU School of Professional Studies (NYUSPS) Aspire is a scholarship program for rising high school juniors and seniors from underrepresented communities who will be first-generation college students. The deadline to apply for this program is March 30, 2018. Additional information on the program can be found in the report.
- 5) The Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation's Summer Internship Program is accepting applications for internship opportunities with businesses within the Brooklyn Navy Yard
- 6) Applications are being accepted for teens to participate in Youth Communication's 39th annual intensive summer writing workshop.
- 7) Information regarding various grants that are available to eligible organizations and individuals, and a listing of complaints received by the Board's office for resolution are also found in the report.

A motion was made by Ms. Eula Key, seconded by Mr. David Alexander, and carried to accept tonight's District Manager's Report.

Ms. Deborah Williams, Chairperson of the Parks and Recreation Committee, reported that the City Services Planning Work Group met on March 8, 2018 with Dionne Grayman and Sheila Gordon, co-founders of We Run Brownsville, which is a nonprofit organization that trains women to compete in 5-mile runs around the City. In addition, their goal is to help improve women's health by having women in Brownsville take on active roles in their community. They are seeking participation from the community in a 2-mile run on Saturday, July 14, 2018 at Betsy Head Park from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Ms. Grayman was scheduled to briefly inform the community on how they can get involved, however, she was not present.

The Work Group also met with representatives from the Department of Parks and Recreation who presented plans to build a comfort station at the Imagination Playground at Betsy Head Park, located at Thomas S. Boyland Street and Dumont Avenue. The cost of the new comfort station will be \$4 million. She asked Mr. Jorge Prado to come forward and present the plan.

Mr. Prado presented slides depicting the Betsy Head Park and its geographic relationship to other parks and area facilities. Tonight's presentation is for the addition of a comfort station where one does not currently exist. He stated that the proposed comfort station installation is part of a larger rehabilitation plan for Betsy Head Park.

He gave a brief history of the park and its namesake.

Slides were displayed showing the existing conditions of the park and a sketch of a proposed skate park. A conceptual site plan showed the location of the proposed comfort station to be the

location of the current handball court (approximately across from the Department of Health building at 259 Bristol Street). Slides showing the landscaping, fencing, and lighting plans were displayed.

A slide showing the floor plan of the comfort station was stated to be the typical plan for the Parks Department's comfort stations featuring men's and women's comfort rooms and a mechanical room between them, all fully ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) accessible. The mechanical room will house controls for all of the parks plumbing. Elevation drawings of the comfort station show a façade designed to mimic elements found on the bark of the London Plane trees found throughout the park.

Additional slides depicted materials and vegetation to be used on the proposed project.

The Department of Parks and Recreation is seeking the Board's support on this proposal and a letter to that effect, should the Board approve the plans.

Someone asked what is a World's Fair bench?

Mr. Prado stated that it is the name of the style of an award-winning bench originally designed for the 1939 World's Fair hallmarked by their circular wrought iron arms. There is also a 1964 World's Fair bench.

Ms. Bernadette Mitchell asked if the handball court will be relocated within the park?

Mr. Prado stated that they will not be, however, there are handball courts available at nearby parks. The feeling was that the skateboard park which is not available at any nearby facilities would be a good trade off.

Someone asked why not add a handball court as well?

Mr. Prado stated that the scope of his work is with the comfort station. Other design plans for the park were previously presented to this Board and approved. He is not cognizant of the why other design elements were approved.

Mr. Norman Frazier asked what the cost of the proposed project will be?

Mr. Prado stated that it is projected to be \$4,000,000.

Mr. Frazier asked why has the cost doubled from that of a standard comfort station?

Mr. Prado stated that it has not doubled. This particular installation has additional landscaping and long utility runs need to be placed. The structure is designed to last a lifetime and they also are adding a large plaza area.

Dr. Cleopatra Brown asked how many stalls are in each comfort room?

Mr. Prado stated that each room has three stalls and a sink. (Two commodes and a urinal in the men's room and three commodes in the women's room.)

Additional discussion took place with regards to the removal of the handball courts. Ending with Chairperson Morgan stating that there is a limited amount of space at the site. A choice was made to add the comfort stations based on the community's desire to have the comfort stations. She reminded the audience that there are handball courts across the street at Betsy Head Park and while there will be two less handball courts, there will now be a skate park and comfort stations which did not exist.

Ms. Williams next reported that on March 20<sup>th</sup>, Parks Commissioner Mitchell Silver presided over the ribbon cutting ceremony and the renaming of Saratoga Ballfield to Hilltop Park which is on Thomas S. Boyland Street between Dean and Pacific Streets.

The Work Group recommends that the Community Board vote in favor of the plan to construct a comfort station at the Imagination Playground at Betsy Head Park.

She thanked everyone who participates in our City Service Planning Work Group meetings which are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month. The next meeting will be on April 12, 2018, 6:00 p.m. at 444 Thomas Boyland.

In a roll call vote, members of the Board unanimously elected to approve the proposal and plans for the installation of a comfort station at Betsy Head Playground

Ms. Linda Rivera, Chairperson of the Women's Committee, reported that the Community Resident Planning Work Group met on March 14, 2018 and discussed plans for the 2018 Youth Conference for Middle School Students on June 2, 2018 at P.S./I.S. 323, located at 210 Chester Street. Information about the topics will be provided at next month's meeting.

They also met with Mr. Emanuel Perez, Community Outreach Coordinator at the Jewish Board's Brownsville Child Development Center whose Director you heard from earlier tonight.

In addition, they met with Delbert Brown, Community Health Worker at Bridging Access to Care, Inc. which provides a myriad of services for mental health, HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted infections to Parenting Skills Building and Behavioral Integration serving individuals from 9<sup>th</sup> grade to adult. For additional information, call Mr. Brown at (718) 881-1524.

The Ivy Hill Prep Charter school has filed an application with the State Department of Education to establish a K-5 school in the Ocean Hill – Brownsville community and is seeking a letter of support from the Community Board.

The Work Group recommends that the Community Board provide a letter of support with the following stipulations: 1) that 60% of the students come from the Ocean Hill – Brownsville community and 2) that the curriculum provide a STEM component.

The Work Group met with representatives from Addiction Care Intervention (ACI) Center which is proposing to relocate their inpatient treatment center for chemical dependency detox from 500 W. 57<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan which presently has 100 beds to a building under construction at Rockaway and Blake Avenues to house 175 to 188 beds.

ACI is requesting a letter of support from the Community Board to accompany their application to the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services to move their inpatient services from Manhattan to Brooklyn.

The Work Group recommends that the Community Board provide a letter of support with the following stipulations:

- afford Brownsville residents preferential access to the facility's treatment beds
- assurances of hiring Brownsville residents for a broad cross-section of available jobs
- include a Brownsville resident representative on the governing Board of ACI
- a commitment to collaborate, not duplicate services already offered in Brownsville.

On March 2, 2018, the inaugural meeting of Community Board 16's Health and Wellness Stakeholders Group (comprised of residents and health services agencies) was held at the Brookdale Hospital. The goal of the stakeholders is to understand the Brownsville story, coordinate, invest, empower residents and health service agencies in order to eliminate the barriers to health and wellness in Brownsville was shared and discussed successfully.

Please note that March is Colon Cancer Awareness Month. The Work Group urges you to check out your health – colon. April Is Alcoholism, Autism Awareness and World Health Awareness Month.

In commemoration of March being Women's History Month, the Women's Committee submits the following writing:

“Women have played key roles in shaping this country on every scale. Whether it was as an abolitionist like Sojourner Truth in 1843, running as the first major-party woman presidential candidate like Shirley Chisholm in 1972, or becoming the First Lady of the United States (2009-2017) like Michelle Obama. Our presence has made an impact and is irreversible. Every community has benefited at the hands of its women standing up and making a difference. We continue to see our greatness each and every day. Even today as the #MeToo era has begun,

women have become tired of the constant sexual harassment and unequal treatment in our circles. Standing up not only for their rights today but for the next generations to follow. Making it clear that it's not okay to treat anyone this way. We've made a difference in every industry and we must continue to strive. Before the month is out, make sure to either attend an event, watch a documentary of our success and lastly say thank you to the women in your lives."

There is ongoing enrollment at the SONYC BIZ Entrepreneurial Program for middle school students as well as the Youth Community Ambassador Program, in addition to the GED program for ages 17 and over. For additional information, call Central Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation at (718) 498-4513.

For enrollment information about the CAMPUS Afterschool Tech and Arts Program for middle school students at 85 Watkins Street, call (718) 284-4700.

To obtain the date and time of the Fathers and Mentors meeting, call William Rochford at (718) 284-4700 or (917) 428-0647.

Applications are being accepted for N.E.D. Merit Scholarships for graduating high school students in areas of Ocean Hill-Brownsville and East New York until May 1, 2018. For more information, visit [www.nehemiahed.org](http://www.nehemiahed.org) or call Mawuli Hormeku at (718) 640-0159.

The Senior Citizens Affairs Committee will sponsor a conversation on the signs of a "Stroke" on April 18<sup>th</sup>, 12:30 p.m. at the Mt. Ararat Senior Center, located at 1630 St. Mark's Avenue.

The next meeting of the Community Resident Planning Work Group will be on Wednesday, April 11, 2018, 6:00 p.m. at 444 Thomas S. Boyland Street.

In a roll call vote, members of the Board voted 22-in favor, 2-against, and 0-abstentions to provide a letter of support for the Ivy Hill Prep Academy with the following stipulations: 1) that 60% of the students come from the Ocean Hill – Brownsville community and 2) that the curriculum provide a STEM component.

In a roll call vote of 6-in favor, 16-against, and 2-abstentions, members of the Board elected to deny the request by ACI for a letter of support to accompany their application to the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services to move their inpatient services from Manhattan to Brooklyn.

District Manager Viola Greene-Walker, in behalf of Ms. Margaret Brewer, Chairperson of the Public Safety Committee, reported that the Committee met on March 7, 2018, to discuss and plan the following:

Where to report what – Knowing the nature of the concern and the functions of the office or agency will better serve the complainant.

Ms. Brewer has put together a basic directory to begin. The Committee will work to update and expand the resource information as time goes on.

- 911- Theft or damage to person or property. If you feel in immediate danger of someone you believe will harm you or someone else.
- 311- Complaints regarding city services, rental property, and public issues. The Neighborhood Coordinating Officers (NCO) also serve as a direct contact for many of the "Quality of Life" issues.
- 707- Public Housing repair (718) 707-7771 or (718) 707-7777
- Community Board – Issues having to do with operations, processes, and projects concerning the public, as well as to follow-up on prior reports to City agencies and investigate concerns that have no clear process.

These are guidelines for reporting, however, you are at liberty to contact 311 and the Community Board with questions, while leaving 911 for emergencies.

- Public Safety Forum – she has put together a Project Committee for the forum and the members are: Sydonne Thompson, Scholanda Miller, Min. Prince Issachar, and Kevin Henderson. This will help with a broader outreach and work sharing. The Committee will be used to gather and organize questions. Once the Committee has the line of questions, they will provide them to the panelist to prepare for the forum. Please email any questions that you would like to have asked publicly to [bk16@cb.nyc.gov](mailto:bk16@cb.nyc.gov) or you can call them into the Board's office at (718) 385-0323.
- Beginning of Summer Celebration - for our children. Highlighting children who have managed themselves exceptionally well throughout the year.

She envisions an outdoor event with guest speakers and presenters. Certificates and some sort of token of appreciation from the community acknowledging the child's success.

She is looking for partners to make this event happen, as we need a "Feel Good Moment".

Discussion will be continued on the topics at next month's meeting.

In commemoration of Women's History Month, she'd like to mention some of our local historic "Sheros": Shirley Chisholm, Jeannette Gadson, Hazel Younger, and Daisy Jackson. She thanks each of them all for setting a path.

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

Ms. Adrainer Coleman, Chairperson of the Land Use, Planning, and Zoning Committee, reported that the Equity Planning Work Group met on March 13, 2018 with representatives from Catholic Charities regarding their proposal to develop housing on the former Our Lady of Loreto site. Because the presentation did not include several suggestions made by the Land Use, Planning, and Zoning Committee at a previous meeting, no action was taken on the proposal. The Work Group will continue their discussion with Catholic Charities.

The Work Group also met with representatives from People's United Bank which is headquartered in Connecticut and offers services at Stop & Shop supermarkets in New York City.

People's United Bank offers conventional products, affordable lending products, financial literacy workshops, construction and rehab loans, and other services. The Work Group will continue a conversation with People's United Bank as we advocate for additional banking services to come into the community.

The next meeting of the Equity Planning Work Group will be on April 10, 2018 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.

District Manager Viola Greene-Walker, in behalf of Ms. Marie Pierre, Chairperson of the Legislative Committee, reported that the Fiscal and Policy Work Group met on March 19, 2018 with Ismene Speliotis, Director of MHANY, Inc. In this presentation, the Work Group was informed about the use of the Area Median Income and its impact on affordable housing in our community. A second session will be held in May.

The next Fiscal and Policy Work Group meeting will be on Tuesday, April 17, 2018, 6:00 p.m. at 444 Thomas S. Boyland Street.

A motion was made by Mr. David Alexander, seconded by Ms. Adrainer Coleman, and carried to accept the report of the Fiscal and Policy Work Group.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Mr. Reginald Belon, representing the Office of Congresswoman Yvette Clarke, reminded the audience that Congresswoman Clarke continues to hold Brownsville Constituent Service Days on Fridays, at Assemblywoman Walker's office at 400 Rockaway



Avenue by appointment. Persons who have questions or concerns regarding federal government issues may call their office at (718) 287-1142.

Congresswoman Clarke's 2018 Congressional Art Competition is now accepting submissions. The Competition is open to all students in Grades 9-12 who are attending a high school within the Ninth Congressional District. The 2018 Congressional Art Competition will celebrate the brilliant work of our talented students. The deadline for submissions is May 2, 2018.

The first-place winner's work will be displayed in the nation's Capitol for an entire year and the winner will be sponsored by Southwest Airlines for a trip to Washington, D.C. where they will be honored at a ceremony.

If you would like more information on 2018 Congressional Art Competition, please visit [Clarke.house.gov](http://Clarke.house.gov) or call the office at (718) 287-1142.

Congresswoman Clarke has met with the Postmaster of the United States Postal Service, expressed the concerns of her constituents to them, and called upon the Postal Service to take immediate action to address the concerns. She will continue to work with the Postal Service to follow-up on these issues.

Lastly, Congresswoman Clarke introduced legislation to provide public housing, foreclosure mitigation, and rental assistance grants through the United States Housing and Urban Development (HUD) with supplemental funding for state public housing authorities.

The Hardest Hit Housing Act of 2018 will allocate \$4 billion a year in supplemental funding to the Public Housing Capital Fund Grant Program for public housing authorities.

Ms. Cynthia Moices, representing the Office of Councilmember Alicka Ampry-Samuel, reported that Councilmember Ampry-Samuel has received over 1,800 applications for Expense Budget items. She was able to allocate funds towards 110 organizations and for the police precincts and community boards in her district. The Capital Budget applications, which had a deadline for submission of March 26, 2018, are currently under review.

Councilmember Ampry-Samuel had a budget meeting with the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) and now has a good idea of their budgetary needs.

They have moved into their new office on the First Floor of 400 Rockaway Avenue. Their telephone number is (718) 953-3097.

Councilmember Ampry-Samuel and Assemblywoman Latrice Walker host a collaborative Advisory Board Meeting on the third Saturday of each month from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and invite everyone to attend.

Ms. Adrienne Felton, representing the Office of Public Advocate Letitia James, reported that Public Advocate James, with assistance of Congresswoman Yvette Clarke, is seeking to reverse the Trump Administration's cuts and changes to SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits. Over 1.6 million New Yorkers take part in the program. Under the proposal, most SNAP recipients would lose much of their ability to choose the food they buy with their SNAP benefits. Public Advocate James is working with fellow elected officials in New York to find ways that will allow the State and City to block it.

Last month, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) implemented a new policy allowing ICE to capture and detain undocumented immigrants in federal, state and local courthouses. This new policy gives ICE the authority to detain anyone present in court including victims, witnesses, or even family members. Many of these individuals are at the courts to report crimes, testify, or support others, but themselves are not being charged with a crime. Public Advocate James, together with Bronx, Brooklyn, and Manhattan District Attorneys, are calling on ICE to rescind this new policy. The policy is an attack on immigrants and the pursuit of justice, as it discourages victims of crime and critical witnesses from coming forward.

Public Advocate Letitia James called on the City's Corporation Counsel to defend a constitutional challenge to the Victims of Gender-Motivated Violence Protection Act (VGMVPA), a law that gives victims the right to sue for damages and relief. The VGMVPA allows an individual to file for relief and damages if they are the victim of a gender-motivated crime.

Lastly, Public Advocate James is calling on the de Blasio Administration to create a Chief Diversity Office within the Department of Education to oversee all diversity efforts, including a more comprehensive culturally responsive education program citywide.

Ms. Felton can be reached by calling (212) 669-7683 or ((646) 942-1663.

Mr. James Moutrie, representing the Office of Assemblywoman Latrice Walker, stated that he is the Community Outreach Coordinator for Assemblywoman Walker.

Assemblywoman Walker is seeking the support of the community as she goes through the process of having a child care center named in memory of a one-year old child who was recently murdered.

Their office is located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of 400 Rockaway Avenue and the telephone number is (718) 342-1256. The office is open Monday through Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Mr. Melvin Faulkner, representing the Office of Assemblyman Charles Barron, announced that he has applications for 83 affordable homes that are available for sale near the Gateway Mall. He is also available to assist in completing the applications.

Mr. Carlos Soto, representing the Office of Councilmember Rafael Espinal, Jr., announced that Councilmember Espinal has recently introduced a bill known as the “Right to Disconnect” which would make it unlawful for private employers in the City of New York to require employees to check and respond to email and other electronic communications during non-work hours.

As he mentioned at last month’s meeting, their District Office has moved to 1945 Broadway (between Conway Street and Stewart / Somers Street) near Broadway Junction. They are available to assist with resources such as housing attorneys, immigration attorneys, assistance with completing Medicaid applications, etcetera. Their telephone number is (718) 642-8624.

Mr. Devon Thorpe, representing the Office of Senator Roxanne Persaud, reported that Senator Persaud is sponsoring a bill for a state funded research group dedicated to understanding mental health and gun violence.

Senator Persaud is offering free rain barrels to homeowners to help reduce water bills, conserve drinking water, and help prevent hazardous sewer overflows into our local waterways. The deadline for registration was March 16, 2018. If you have not registered to receive a rain barrel, you may still contact their office as there may be a limited number of extra barrels.

She is sponsoring a Senate District 19 College Fair to take place on Saturday, April 14, 2018 from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the South Shore Educational Campus, located at 6565 Flatlands Avenue.

Senator Persaud’s District Office will be open for constituent services on the first Saturday of the months of April, May, and June, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Senator Persaud is inviting anyone interested in disposing of their unwanted consumer electronic devices to an E-waste Recycling event on Saturday, April 21, 2018 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the John Malone Community Center, located on Bergen Avenue at Avenue W.

Senator Persaud’s office can be reached by calling (718) 649-7653 and is located at 1222 East 96<sup>th</sup> Street.

Mr. Richard Nelson, representing the Office of Senator Jesse Hamilton, III, announced that they will host a Constituent Mobile Office event at the Van Dyke II Senior Center, located at 430 Dumont Avenue on Wednesday, March 28<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Should you not be able to attend the event, constituent services are also available at their district office, located at 1669 Bedford Avenue. Their telephone number is (718) 284-4700.

Mr. Nelson stated that he left some voter registration cards on tonight’s distribution table.

Mr. David Alexander asked if there was any update on Senator Hamilton’s bill concerning Black history?

Mr. Nelson stated that the bill was introduced in the Senate (S5454) for Black history to now be taught throughout the year.

Mr. Nicholas Perry, representing the Office of Comptroller Scott Stringer, announced that Comptroller Stringer is inviting all New York City-based Minority and Women Owned Enterprises (M/WBEs) to participate in his M/WBE University, a series workshops designed to increase access to citywide opportunities for M/WBEs. Flyers with additional information about the workshops were placed on the distribution table.

Additionally, Mr. Perry announced that Comptroller Stringer's office conducted a new audit of the Department of Education (DOE) that reveals massive breakdowns that could jeopardize the safety and welfare of homeless students. Among numerous systemic failures, the DOE fundamentally violates its own rules requiring outreach and follow-up efforts when homeless students are absent from school without prior notice. That inaction by the agency leaves the safety and welfare of thousands of vulnerable homeless students at risk.

Comptroller Stringer's audit included an in-depth review of DOE's records regarding 73 students that DOE identified as residing in homeless shelters and chronically absent during the 2015-2016 School Year.

Copies of the audit can be found on the Comptroller's website at [comptroller.nyc.gov](http://comptroller.nyc.gov).

District Manager Viola Greene-Walker announced that the Department of Housing Preservation and Development, in collaboration with Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams, and Community Boards 5 and 16, will host a Tenant Resource Fair on April 19, 2018 at the Riverway Senior Center, located at 230 Riverdale Avenue.

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