

MINUTES OF COMMUNITY BOARD #16 – November 24, 2020

Attendance

David Alexander	Shemene Minter
Lorenzo Andrews (A)	Genese Morgan
Cynthia Bannister	Rose O’Neill (A)
Margaret Brewer (E)	Deidre Olivera-Douglas
Dr. Cleopatra Brown (E)	Busayo Olupano (A)
Kaseem Clark-Edwards	Ariel Perry-DeCamp (A)
Adrainer Coleman	Anita Pierce (A)
Norman Frazier (A)	Marie Pierre (E)
Danny Goodine (A)	Linda Rivera (E)
Chanel Haliburton	Shaneek Samuel (A)
Sarah Hall	JoAnn Sexton
Balinda Harris (A)	Dr. Sonia Smith
Zalika Headey	Keturah Suggs
Michael Howard	Beverly Tatham (A)
Carl Joseph	Rev. Eric Thompson (A)
Leticia Knowles	Brenda Thompson-Duchene (A)
Dr. Bettie Kollock-Wallace	Christopher Toomer
Charles Ladson, Sr. (A)	Rev. Miran Ukaegbu
Digna Layne	Deborah Williams
Kelly Lee-McVay (A)	Pat Winston
Albion Liburd (A)	Viola D. Greene-Walker, District Manager
Deborah Mack (A)	Jimmi Brevil, Community Assistant
Yolanda Matthews (E)	Mr. Ronald Baez for Senator Zellnor Myrie
John McCadney, Jr.	Malcolm McDaniel for Hon. Eric Adams
Andrew McCoy (A)	Assemblymember Latrice Walker
Melanie Mendonca	

PUBLIC MEETING VIA WEBEX

Chairperson Genese Morgan called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m., and an invocation was said by Dr. Bettie Kollock-Wallace.

Chairperson Morgan requested a moment of silence in memory of former Board member Ernestine Turner and mother of Council member Alicka Ampry-Samuel who passed away.

District Manager Viola Greene-Walker highlighted the following from her report:

In observance of Thanksgiving Day, The New York City Department of Sanitation has announced that there will be no trash or recycling collection, nor street cleaning on Thursday, November 26, 2020.

For questions about Sanitation services and holiday schedules, contact 311 or visit www.nyc.gov/sanitation . Also, please feel free to call the Community Board office at (718) 385-0323 or email us at bk16@cb.nyc.gov .

The season for homeowners to renew their property tax benefits application exemption has begun. All initial and renewal benefit applications must be submitted to the Department of Finance (DOF) by March 15, 2021.

If you have inquiries about the renewal application, please contact the Department of Finance at recertify@finance.nyc.gov or call 311.

The Clergy exemption must be renewed annually. Clergy property tax exemption renewal applications have been mailed to 1,321 clergy exemption recipients. Completed applications must be returned to DOF by March 15, 2021.

If you have question or need additional information, please contact Jennifer Brown, Director of Constituent Service at the New York City Department of Finance at (718) 431-5785.

New York Affordable Care Act marketplace is now open and will continue through January 31, 2021. All New Yorkers who are currently is a Qualified Health Plan through New York State of Health are encouraged to renew their coverage. Anyone without health insurance should also visit the website and take this opportunity to enroll. Due to ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency, consumers already enrolled in Medicaid, Child Health Plus, or Essential Plan will have their coverage continued automatically and do not need to renew at this time. For additional information, logon to www.nystateofhealth.ny.gov .

Governor Andrew Cuomo has launched a free online platform to help New Yorkers learn new job skills. Users will be able to earn certificates to help advance their careers. Users will have access to nearly 4,000 online free courses and certificate programs on Coursera. These courses focus on high-growth and in-demanding industries such as advanced manufacturing, technology, and healthcare. Free accounts are available at <https://labor.ny.gov/careerservices/coursera.shtm>

New York Drives is currently recruiting applicants for their next cycle which will begin January 11, 2021 with an application deadline of December 23, 2020.

New York Drives is a free pre-requisite training for those interested in Made in NY TV & Film production assistant training but do not have a driver's license, which is a requirement for Made in NY. New York Drive is 5-week full-time training program that includes 2 weeks for professional development and students up to 30 driving lessons over the remaining 3 weeks. The program includes job placement assistance. Applications cannot apply to only receive their driver's license but must be interested in the Made in NY Production Assistant training.

Eligibility requirements for the program include: Must be 18 years old of age, New York City resident, legally eligible to work in the United States, low income, unemployed or underemployed, must have full time availability Monday thru Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., must not have had a Driver's License previously, must have an interest in and qualify for Made in NY and must be ready to work in the field upon graduation.

New York Drives is hosting online information sessions on Mondays at 1:00 p.m. If you have access to a computer or smartphone: click the Zoom Meeting link or copy and paste into your browser: <https://zoom.us/j/3075592355>. If you do not have access to a computer audio: Dial 646-558-8656 and enter Meeting ID 307 555 9355. If you experience any technical difficulties, please email nydinfo@bwiny.org.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Deputy Inspector Terrell Anderson, Executive Officer of the 73rd Precinct, who stated that they are in the process of reforming and reimagining what their roles are to public safety. They're partnering with community-based organizations and other city agencies to provide resources to those in need.

They have seen an increase in grand larcenies through identity theft targeting seniors. They are in the process of reaching out to seniors and helping them protect their identity. There has been an increase in burglaries at construction sites and commercial businesses. Numerous arrests have been made, but burglaries continue to happen. They are outreaching to business owners along Pitkin, Belmont and Rockaway Avenues to make sure that they have good security cameras.

The Precinct will be starting a pilot program on Mother Gaston Boulevard between Pitkin and Sutter Avenues to be a resource within the neighborhood.

They partnered with the Kings County District Attorney where they can identify youngsters that have been arrested and need guidance. Through the DA's office, they place them into a community service such as street cleaning or paint graffiti with a stipend of \$15 per hour.

Despite Governor Cuomo's order, there are still gatherings of large crowds. They are canvassing the area to identify these locations. If anyone has any information, please let the Precinct know as they try to stop the spread of COVID-19.

On Saturday, November 21, 2020 at 1805 Pitkin Avenue, they broke up a large gathering of youth partying and 3 guns were taken off the street. They rely on the community for partnership, information, and build trust to keep the community safe.

The Precinct is aware that there is a homeless person living in a bus. They are in the process of getting the homeless person services and having the bus removed.

Chairperson Morgan opened the floor for questions directed to Deputy Inspector Anderson.

Someone stated that a vehicle has been parked illegally along Amboy Street between Pitkin and Sutter Avenues for an extended period. The Department of Sanitation's mechanical brooms can't sweep the street properly and one car is partially blocking her driveway. What can be done to have it removed?

Deputy Inspector Anderson stated that when the cars are parked legally, there is nothing the Police Department can do. He will have the Neighborhood Coordinating Officer (NCO) check the car plates to see if they are properly registered. If they are not, they can have the car towed.

Someone complained about their neighbor blasting music at 634 Sackman Street. What can they do to address it?

Deputy Inspector Anderson stated when it comes to loud and unreasonable noise, they can try to mediation which is to knock on the door and ask the individual to turn down the music, however, the music has to be at a certain level before a ticket is issued. If the person doesn't open the door, there is nothing that can be done.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Ms. Sharon F. Devonish-Leid from Brookdale Hospital and Dominick Stanzione, the Chief Operation Officer (COO) of One Brooklyn Health System.

Mr. Stanzione stated that One Brooklyn Health System (OBHS) began as part of the Governor's Vital Brooklyn Initiative to improve the health status of Brooklyn. It was established to preserve and enhance health care services in the communities of Central Brooklyn and is composed of three hospitals and their affiliated facilities, Interfaith Medical Center (IMC), Brookdale Hospital Medical Center (BHMC) and Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center (KJMC). All three hospitals have had historic ties in the communities they serve and are working together to build a system that will enable OBHS to provide the highest quality and widest breadth of healthcare services to those in need.

OBHS has an extensive network of primary, behavioral health and specialty care locations spread throughout Central Brooklyn. In addition, they are partnering with a number of Brooklyn-based Federally Qualified Health centers and pharmacies to reach the greatest number of Brooklyn residents. At the various locations, patients and their families can obtain a broad range of healthcare services, such as pediatric and geriatric care, behavioral health, sickle cell services, podiatry, and maternal health services. In addition, OBHS has two large nursing homes within its system, Schulman S. Schachne Institute for Nursing and Rehabilitation at Brookdale and Rutland Nursing Home at Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center.

Through the Governor's funding, they will add 63 inpatients beds at Brookdale Hospital and replace the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) beds which is under construction and will consist of individual rooms, ventilators and all modern systems. In addition, they are updating their diagnostic medical equipment such as x-ray machines and ultrasound machines.

By summer 2021, OBHS will have one single medical record file that can be accessed by all members because they want to coordinate medical care across the One Brooklyn Health System.

OBHS is looking to work with Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) programs to make sure that local workers and vendors are included.

Mr. Stanzione stated that the Schulman S. Schachne Institute for Nursing and Rehabilitation at Brookdale has received a five star rating seven years in a row from The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) for nursing homes across the country. Brookdale Nursing home is in the top 5% in the country.

The Stroke program at Brookdale recently received a Gold Plus Status which is the highest achievement by The American Stroke Association and the American Heart Association.

US News and World Report released their annual Hospitals and Program list in the country, and for the first time, Brookdale Hospital is on that list.

They also received a recognition for one of the top hospitals in the United States for the treatment of prostate cancer.

Ms. Sharon F. Devonish-Leid stated that Brookdale Hospital has been the community hospital for the Brownsville community.

In 2021, they are planning to schedule town hall meetings virtually to keep the community updated on the merger of One Brooklyn Health System.

Chairperson Morgan agreed to keeping the community posted on what is happening and to better understand the services that are being offered. The floor was opened for questions.

Mr. Malcom McDaniel asked if the additional 63 beds are designated for COVID-19 patients or will they be used for other patients? When the first COVID-19 wave hit, many patients that have underline illness were sent home and people were unhappy about it. Is it a strategy for Brookdale to be more open to handle other cases beside COVID-19? Does OBHS have a plan or strategy to service people who are sick but doesn't have COVID-19 who might need oxygen?

Mr. Stanzione stated that they are planning to increase their capacity at Interfaith Medical Center (IMC) and Brookdale Hospital Medical Center (BHMC) to care for all patients.

At the peak of the first wave, they had 271 COVID-19 patients at Brookdale hospital. At OBHS they had 512 patients. Lately, Brookdale has a decrease number of COVID-19 patients.

He stated that they have 4 months' worth of equipment such as new oxygen machine and Protective Personnel Equipment (PPE) to make sure that the staff, patients and visitors are protected. They have done everything that they can to make sure that they care for everyone during the second wave.

Someone asked what is the financial benefit that OBHS offers?

Mr. Stanzione stated that in addition to the grant money they receive to provide better services, each of their 3 hospitals has a large number of under insured patients which the insurance pays for a fracture of the medical cost and uninsured patient. The State subsidized the difference. In order to receive the subsidies, the 3 hospitals must work together, that's the financial benefit OBHS offers. When the 3 hospitals were individually operating, they were competing for resources, staff, etc.. By coming together, they are eliminating the competition.

Chairperson Morgan requested that Secretary Zalika Headley conduct roll call, but due to technical difficulty Jimmi Brevil conducted the roll call. A quorum was not present.

Chairperson Morgan advanced the agenda to the reading of work group reports.

Ms. Adrainer Coleman, Chairperson of the Land Use, Planning, and Zoning Committee, reported that the Equity Planning Work Group met on Tuesday, November 11, 2020 via WebEx. A copy of the report is on file in the Community Board Office.

Mr. David Alexander, Chairperson of the Youth Services Planning Committee, reported that the Community Resident Planning Work Group met on Wednesday, November 18, 2020, via WebEx. A copy of the report is on file in the Community Board Office.

Chairperson Morgan noted that a quorum was present and requested a motion to accept the Fiscal Year 2022 Statement of District Needs and Capital and Expense Budget requests. A motion was made by Rev. Ukaegbu, seconded by Digna Layne and carried with all in favor.

Ms. Zalika Headley, Chairperson of the Transportation and Franchises Committee, reported that the City Services Planning Work Group met on Thursday, November 12, 2020, via WebEx. A copy of the report is on file in the Community Board Office.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Amy Chapman and Dan Wagner from the Department of Transportation (DOT) Pedestrian Unit.

Ms. Chapman stated that DOT is proposing quick improvements for pedestrian safety and accessibility on Livonia Avenue from Strauss to Junius Streets.

The Pedestrian Unit worked with the DOT Street Ambassadors to conduct an outreach along Livonia Avenue over 4 days in September 2019.

A total of 119 surveys were completed at 3 sites: Livonia Avenue and Rockway Avenue, Livonia Avenue and Saratoga Avenue, and Livonia Avenue and Powel Street.

A majority of the participants mentioned that they would like to see Enhanced Crossing on Livonia Avenue. Also, 60 % said that issues such as vehicles failing to yield make it difficult for them to cross the street.

On October 28th, 2020, they conducted a community walk through with several community-based organizations. Attendees were positive about the proposed safety improvements such as raised crosswalks and curb extensions.

A summer program adjacent to the Powell Street Community Garden and other activations along Livonia Avenue were requested.

Existing condition at Strauss Street: lack of crossing, Betsy Head Park reconstruction, with new entrance design. Pedestrian volume: 81 in the peak hour and 36 feet crossing distance.

Existing condition at Thatford Avenue and Osborn Streets: the service road creates a double-crossing condition, there is a lack of pedestrian ramps and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) amenities. Pedestrian Volumes: 99 at the peak hour crossing at Thatford Avenue pedestrian path and 255 at the peak hour crossing at Osborn Street pedestrian path

Existing condition at Powell Street: they upgraded the stop control in July 2020, high pedestrian volume transferring between IRT-3 and L train. Pedestrian Volumes: 176 at the peak hour

Ms. Chapman stated that at the previous presentation with the Board, there was discussion about the use of speed signs. They spoke to their engineer to review Livonia Avenue and they stated that there are a number of speed signs listing the speed required limit along Livonia Avenue. No additional signs will be placed.

The additional improvement toolkit that can be made are: High Visibility Crosswalk, Painted Curb Extension with Flexible Delineators, Concrete Curb Extension, Parking Regulations, Stop Sign, Raised Crosswalks, Compliant Pedestrian Ramps, 15 feet of Daylighting Ahead of Crosswalk, In-Road Paddle Sign and Pedestrian Warning Signs

At Strauss Street, they are proposing to install a concrete extension with ADA pedestrian ramps, add enhance crossing with signage and install raised crosswalk.

At Thatford Avenue and Osborn Street, they are proposing to install 2 sets of enhance crossings with signage and ADA pedestrian ramps, painted curb extensions, crosswalk will be installed at either end of the concrete island that can be used as a place to more easily reach the crossings. In addition, they will extend the concrete island and rebuild the tips.

At Powell Street, they are proposing to install a concrete extension with ADA pedestrian ramps, raised crosswalk, and a restrictive right turn from Powell Street to eastbound on Livonia Avenue for vehicles over 30 inches.

Ms. Chapman stated that their proposal requires 11 parking spaces to be removed.

She stated that on this project, they are proposing to expand pedestrian network, provide safer and shorter pedestrian crossings, calm traffic and increase accessibility.

Chairperson Morgan opened the floor for questions.

Ms. Deidre Olivera asked how often has the raised crosswalks been used and in what neighborhood?

Mr. Wagner stated that raised crosswalk box has been used sparingly in New York City. There are about 30 citywide. They are common nationwide.

Ms. Deidre Olivera asked if there have been any studies or safety protocol about raised crosswalk because it doesn't seem safe when it rains or snows?

Mr. Wagner stated that raised crosswalks are safe and increase pedestrian safety because they are like a speed hump which is not slippery and it makes the pedestrian more visible.

Mr. John McCadney stated that there is a need for a traffic signal on Livonia Avenue at Powell Street which is utilized for people who are trying to go to the Jackie Robinson Parkway. When pedestrians are crossing from the north bound and cars are coming from the south bound, it causes traffic to back up in the intersection. A traffic light needs to be placed there as oppose to a stop sign.

Ms. Chapman stated that their ability to install traffic signals or stoplight is limited. They have to get a warrant and there aren't enough cars to allow that to happen.

Ms. Chanel Halliburton stated that in the next few years, Livonia Avenue is predicted to have a lot of residents and there will be a need for parking. Also, at the walkthrough, there was a discussion about putting planters along the intersection at Powell Street and Livonia Avenue to discourage people from crossing midway. What happened to that idea?

Ms. Chapman stated that they try to keep parking space loss as minimal as possible.

It was suggested that they reach out to NYCHA to see if there is a possibility for parking spaces to be allocated to the community from NYCHA parking spaces. The Borough Commissioner has reached out to see if there is a possibility and they are waiting for a response.

Mr. Wagner stated that they will continue the conversion on the planters.

Chairperson Morgan opened the floor for questions or concerns?

Ms. JoAnn Sexton stated that it's her understanding that Betsy Head Park was not supposed to open until March 2021. As of Friday, November 20th, the unfinished park is left open and every day, she has seen 50 maskless children and their parents on the field. They are hosting football games in spite of the Governor's order.

Chairperson Morgan stated that the Board will report it to the Parks Department.

Ms. Deidre Olivera stated that she believes the park is open because the football team was contacted by the Parks Department. She thought it was wonderful to see the kids out in the field. Our kids shouldn't be penalized. They should have Community Affairs out there in the park to hand out masks and make sure that they adhere to the protocols.

Chairperson Morgan stated that the Board is presently working with the Department of Health and elected official to get masks and distribute them throughout the community.

The Parks Department has reached out to us and asked what are the appropriate hours for people to utilize the park. If the community prefer earlier or late closing? The Board wants to make sure that the park is available to people who work different hours.

Let's continue to be the eyes and ears of the community. For any concern, report it to the District Manager.

Chairperson Morgan requested a motion to accept the Equity Planning Work Group report for October 27, 2020 as well as November 24, 2020. A motion was made by Mr. David Alexander, seconded by Ms. Pat Winston and carried with all in favor.

The vote for the liquor license application at 622 Chester Street was 12 in favor, 4 against and 3 abstentions.

Chairperson Morgan requested a motion to accept the City Service Planning Work Group report for October 27, 2020 as well as November 24, 2020. A motion was made by Mr. David Alexander, seconded by Mr. Christopher Toomer and carried with all in favor.

The vote for the changes to Livonia Avenue was 18 in favor, 3 against and 0 abstentions.

Chairperson Morgan requested a motion to accept the Community Resident Planning Work Group report for October 27, 2020 as well as November 24, 2020. A motion was made by Ms. Digna Layne, seconded by Dr. Bettie Kollock-Wallace and carried with all in favor.

Chairperson Morgan requested a motion to accept the Fiscal and Policy Work Group report for October 27, 2020 as well as November 24, 2020. A motion was made by Mr. David Alexander, seconded by Mr. John McCadney and carried with all in favor.

Chairperson Morgan requested a motion to accept the District Manager's report for October 27, 2020 as well as November 24, 2020. A motion was made by Mr. David Alexander, seconded by Mr. Christopher Toomer and carried with all in favor.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Assemblymember Latrice Walker.

Assemblymember Walker stated that the number of COVID-19 patients are increasing in Brownsville as it is increasing across the country. They have face masks available at her office. She wished everyone a happy holiday and asked them to stay safe.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Ronald Baez from Senator Zellnor Myrie's Office.

Mr. Ronald Baez stated that starting on December 1, 2020, their office will be closed due to the increased number of COVID-19 cases. They are no longer doing in person constituent services. They will continue to service from home.

He stated that Senator Myrie is surveying small businesses across our district on their experience during the COVID-19 pandemic and how the government can support businesses during this hard time. He encourages the community to reach out to their office to fill out a small business survey.

They are hosting a small business town hall meeting on December 10, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. to get some idea and information regarding their experience in order to know what type of legislation and what type of help they can offer the small business owners. If you know any entrepreneur, they can contact the office at (718) 284- 4700 or email: myrie@nysenate.gov or you can reach out to Mr. Baez directly at rbaez@nysenate.gov or by phone at (347) 395-3079.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Malcom McDaniel from the Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adam's Office.

Mr. Malcom McDaniel urged everyone to keep practicing social distancing, wear a mask and check on your friends and family during this difficult time. The office at Borough Hall is closed. For any information, please reach out to him at (347) 942-1692 or visit www.Brooklyn-usa.org.

Mr. Ronald Baez stated that anyone who needs Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) or face masks can reach out to their office.

Chairperson Morgan opened the floor for questions, comments or concerns.

Ms. Shemene Minter stated that phone call scams are in effect. They are claiming to be from Social Security and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). If anyone calls you, don't answer any question nor confirm any information. Be aware of the scammers.

Chairperson Morgan wished everyone a happy holiday and encouraged everyone to stay safe.

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