

**MINUTES OF COMMUNITY BOARD # 16
TUESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2025 - PUBLIC MEETING
MT. OLLIE BAPTIST CHURCH
1698 ST. MARKS AVENUE, BROOKLYN, NY**

Attendance

Donna Allen-Arnold	Tiffany Martin-Lobban (A)
Renee Archer (E)	Sabrina Massey
Mark Arthur (A)	Celeste Mathis (A)
Rhotochia Atkins Jones (A)	Elizabeth Mcilwain
Cynthia Bannister (A)	Gail McLeod (E)
Dwayne Barnes	Melanie Mendonca
Latonya Baskerville (A)	Tyra Mendonca (E)
Kevin Bond (A)	Genese Morgan
Margaret Brewer	Franklyn Patterson
Dr. Cleopatra Brown	Marie Pierre
Monica Cassaberry (A)	Joann Sexton
Adrainer Coleman	Tijuana Shropshire
Sahara Contaste (A)	Kamille Stewart
Byron Davis	Niani Taylor (A)
La Cherokee Dickens	Christopher Toomer (E)
Kashmere Fraser (A)	Rev. Miran Ukaegbu
Uriel Griffin	Jere Upsher
Chanel Haliburton (E)	Deborah Williams
Karlana Hamblin (A)	Kencina Nicole Williams
Zalika Headley	Patricia Winston
Michael Howard	Sydone Thompson, District Manager
Shanti Jimenez	Hawa Barry, Community Assistant
Joan Johnson	Orlando Ross for Hon. Yvette Clark
Tiffany Jones	Reverend Eddie Karim for Hon. Latrice Walker
Pamela Junior (Baptiste)	Dom Alexander for Hon. Sandy Nurse
Ivi Lewis	Bruno Daniel for Hon. Antonio Reynoso
Albion Liburd (A)	Connie Little for Hon. Darlene Mealey
	Jonathan Marable, Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce

HYBRID PUBLIC MEETING HELD IN-PERSON @ MOUNT OLLIE BAPTIST CHURCH & VIA WEBEX

Chairperson Genese Morgan called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m., welcomed the attendees, introduced the new District Manager Sydone Thompson and gave the invocation.

Chairperson Morgan recognized First Vice-Chairperson Margaret Brewer, acknowledged her service to the Board and presence in the community; and informed the attendees that Ms. Brewer would be chairing the meeting.

First Vice-Chairperson Brewer welcomed the attendees and opened the floor for public comment and announcements.

Ms. Sandra West, program director from “Workshops Plus” said she was accompanied by Community Coach Ms. La Cherokee Dickens. The program, located at 519 Rockaway Avenue, is contracted to work with five NYCHA developments. They offer trainings, employment opportunities, and are one of the only programs in Brownsville offering mental health resources. They conduct Mindful Monday workshops, have a financial advisor on premises to help individuals improve their credit scores, savings and possibly become homeowners.

Ms. Dickens said the program services Marcus Garvey, Glenmore Plaza, Howard Houses, Seth Lowe and Langston Hughes Houses. They offer mental health, wellness and financial literacy to participants.

Mr. Duane Frankson with “Black Men for Politics” stated the group was formed during the recent 2024 presidential election cycle to encourage Black men to engage in politics. The group meets on Mondays, added that a flyer would be provided and shared his telephone number (347)770-7063. He added that the group offers a 90-minute workshop periodically, entitled “Ignite Organizational Success,” which is geared toward non-profit organizations, churches and any organization with a leadership team. The goal is bringing the community together.

Ms. Tyisha Jackson, executive director of “Incredible Credible Messengers Inc.” stated, in November 2025, the organization hosted the first “Heal Her Journey” event, a brunch at the Brownsville Culinary Center. Approximately 30 young people attended. They will be hosting a Galentine event at 50 Belmont Avenue. Attendees were encouraged to join the Brownsville Youth Development Subcommittee.

Mr. Byron Davis greeted Board members and wished them a Happy New Year. He stated that his organization, “We’re Done Dying Inc.” will be hosting an event in Summer 2025 at Callahan-Kelly Park that will bring the community and organizations together.

Ms. Paulette Rolling from the non-profit organization “Rewrite [Corp.]” located at 425 Howard Avenue, Mount Ararat Church, stated that on the first and third Thursday of the month, they have food distribution, outreach and serve as a hygiene bank. They support the women’s shelter on Herkimer Street, host community baby showers, and in November, a Thanksgiving brunch for the unhoused.

“Ms. Carobella” (inaudible) with Catholic Charities, stated the two programs they administer are in partnership with DYCD and located in Osborne Towers, 440 Watkins Street. The healthy families program provides case management services to the community. They assist with social services applications, housing applications, translation services to clients, and seniors, referrals. English as a Second Language (ESL) classes are also offered Monday to Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

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Ms. Shyanne Walker from [Teens Helping Each Other] (THEO) stated that, on January 30, 2025, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m., the program will be holding an open house at Downstate Hospital, 50 Clarkson Avenue, for individuals ages 14-24 who are interested in public health and community work.

Following questions from the audience, the public hearing was closed.

First Vice-Chairperson Brewer proceeded to the next agenda item, 97 Glenmore Avenue, Fusion East LLC, State Liquor Application (SLA). She informed Board members that documentation for the application was emailed previously.

Mr. Andrew Walcott, owner of Fusion East Caribbean and Soul Food restaurant, presented his application before the Board. He stated that his first restaurant is located in East New York Brooklyn near Gateway Mall. The second restaurant, slated to open in December 2025, will be located at Glenmore Manor on the corner of Mother Gaston Boulevard and Glenmore Street. The hours of operation will be 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m., seven days per week and feature Caribbean, soul food, karaoke Mondays, a live band and speed dating. The restaurant is expanding and may open a location at JFK Airport. He asked if there were any questions.

- › *Question/Comment from Community:* Unknown attendee commented that Fusion East had a food truck in Brownsville on Pitkin Avenue during the pandemic.
Response from the applicant: In April 2020, they operated a food truck after the shutdown took place. The business operates its food truck in all five boroughs and now has a second food truck.

Chairperson Morgan asked if there were any further questions.

- › *Question/Comment from Community:* Inaudible – Unknown attendee
Response from the applicant: The authorization for the build out of the restaurant should be given in July 2025, but that may be pushed to 2026.
- › *Question/Comment from Community:* Inaudible – Unknown attendee
Response from the applicant: They have had interns from the Boys & Girls Club of Queens at the restaurant for the past four years.
- › *Question/Comment from Community:* Inaudible – Unknown attendee
Response from the applicant: The prices are very affordable. They feature a five-dollar meal.
- › *Question/Comment from Community:* Inaudible – Unknown attendee
Response from the applicant: Mr. Walcott said he had business cards and handouts.
- › *Question/Comment from Community:* Inaudible – Unknown attendee
Response from the applicant: Mr. Walcott said he had business cards and handouts.

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There was a roll call of Board members. A quorum of 27 were present. The quorum was later changed to 28 when an additional Board member arrived.

The minutes from December 17, 2025, were tabled.

First Vice-Chairperson Brewer proceeded to the next agenda item.

Detective Gary Allen from the 73rd Precinct introduced his partners Detectives Shirma Daniel-Spires and Rodriguez. He provided announcements and crime statistics. On January 30, 2002, at the precinct, 1470 East New York Avenue, a blood drive will be held from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. On February 20, 2025, the community council will meet at the Heritage House, 581 Stone Avenue from 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. On February 24, 2025, the Clergy Council will meet at 1403 Eastern Parkway, 6:00 p.m. There will be events for the kids during winter break. On February 18, 2025, there will be a basketball game at Kappa V, 985 Rockaway Avenue starting at 11:00 a.m. On February 20, 2025, there will be a basketball game at Teacher's Prep, 223 Bristol Street, slated to start at 11:00 a.m. Detective Allen informed anyone interested in hosting an event this Summer to submit their permit requests as soon as possible as the permits issued are limited and they already received fifty. You can access SAPO, Street Activity Permit Office online via Google search, the fee is \$25.

- › *Question/Comment from Community:* Dr. Brown asked if the children have to attend the school in order to go to the basketball game and if they needed to register.

Response: Detective Allen stated that anyone who comes will be allowed to play. He hopes to get permission to live stream. There will be activities for anyone who does not want to play basketball such as board games.

- › *Question/Comment from Community:* Inaudible – Unknown attendee

Response: Detective Allen stated they were working with the school to see if food would be provided.

- › *Question/Comment from Community:* Unknown attendee commented that he could offer a chess instructor for the event.

Response: Detective Allen thanked the attendee.

- › *Question/Comment from Community:* Unknown attendee commented that he could offer a chess instructor for the event.

Response: Detective Allen thanked the attendee.

- › *Question/Comment from Community:* Unknown attendee commented that offering cheerleading could be inspiring and motivating as a part of public safety.

Response: Detective Allen told the attendee that if she had anyone in mind they were more than welcomed to come.

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- › *Question/Comment from Community:* Unknown attendee asked if she could donate food or start a donation drive for the event.

Response: Detective Allen welcomed the offer and provided his contact information (917) 689-2297.

Detective Allen provided the following crime statistics: Murder from last year to this year, we are at zero, last year, three. Robberies, currently 14, last year 20. Felony assaults are currently 47, last year 50. Burglary, currently 6, last year 8. Grand larceny, currently 18, last year 31. Grand larceny auto, 7 currently, last year 18. There is a 26 percent drop in the crime rate, and we are ranked 19 in the city.

First Vice-Chairperson Brewer introduced Mr. Orlando Ross for the Honorable Congresswoman Yvette Clark's office.

Mr. Ross stated that Congresswoman Yvette Clark put out a statement condemning President Trump's freeze of federal funding to different organizations as unlawful and illegal. Congress has already authorized and approved this funding and the president does not have the power to supersede congressional authority and pause any payments. On February 6, 2025, at 6:30 p.m., the office will be having a "Know Your Rights" which will cover different issues such as ICE who is going to schools and churches. Information will be sent to the community board office.

Mr. Ross continued that the Congresswoman also issued a statement condemning Trump's executive order, including birthright citizenship, under the 14th amendment. The Office is here for you. If you have any issues regarding immigration, SBA or any of these issues, we encourage you to call our office at (718) 287-114. They handle small business (SBA) issues, education and nonprofits. Please keep your eyes open for knowing your rights event; highlighting that this is Human Trafficking month. A link for Congresswoman Clark's website was added to the chat. Participants can sign up for their newsletter and press releases.

- › *Question/Comment from Community:* Mr. Davis asked if Mr. Ross would be lobbying.

Response: Mr. Ross said that he is a staffer. However, the Congresswoman is the Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus and will be holding these agencies accountable.

- › *Question/Comment from Community:* Dr. Brown asked that when disseminating information, the Department of Homeless Services should be included because the information being provided does not align with the "Know Your Rights" for clients and what staff are to do when ICE goes on site to a shelter.

Response: Mr. Ross said that he will ensure that it is echoed.

First Vice-Chairperson Brewer continued to the next agenda item, workgroup reports.

Ms. Adrainer Coleman, Chairperson of the Land Use, Planning, and Zoning Committee, read the Equity Planning Work Group report. A copy of the report is on file at the Board's office.

- › *Question/Comment from Community:* Ms. JoAnn Sexton stated there was a different opening date and (inaudible) about hiring in the community.
- › *Response:* Mr. Walcott said they should get the “white space” in August.
- › *Question/Comment from Community:* Unknown attendee said the Boys & Girls Club internship program is like Summer Youth Employment, so they get paid by the City to work certain hours throughout the year.
- › *Question/Comment from Community:* Unknown attendee said there was a discrepancy because you [Mr. Walcott] did not mention hiring during his presentation.
- › *Question/Comment from Community:* Unknown attendee, “So I just wanted to clarify, so the question was whether or not he'd be willing to partner with local schools, and he said, “We do that now with the school in Queens.” So that's how the Queens portion came up, so I don't know that everyone's recalling.”

Additional inaudible comments ensued.

Chairperson Morgan called for point of order.

- › *Question/Comment from Community:* Mr. Davis stated that we are looking for a commitment from you telling us that you will be hiring our local residents.
- › *Response:* Mr. Walcott stated he cannot provide an exact number of jobs that will be created. It is in his best interest to employ people who live in Brownsville and East New York.

Chairperson Morgan called for point of order.

- › *Question/Comment from Community:* Unknown attendee stated that we want local residents to have the first opportunity for jobs in the community.
- › *Response:* Mr. Walcott explained that he partnered with Boys & Girls Club of Queens because they approached him. He is open to hiring locally.

Ms. Pamela Junior Baptiste asked that a written commitment be provided to the Board and Mr. Walcott could return next month for the vote.

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Ms. Coleman suggested that Mr. Walcott partner with people from the community who could provide the names of adults, young adults and students. He in turn could state which groups reached out to him.

Ms. Michelle Bostick commented that she has worked with Brooklyn EDC and will be a tenant at 97 Glenmore Avenue. Mr. Walcott as a Summer Youth Employment site. (Inaudible content).

Dr. Brown commented on the culinary kitchen in Brownsville and the opportunity for high schoolers to participate.

Unknown attendee, inaudible comment

Motion to accept the Equity Planning Work Group report. First by Ms. Kencina Williams, seconded by Ms. Deborah Williams. No abstentions, motion carried.

The committee has recommended supporting the application. In a roll call vote of 26-in favor (D. Allen-Arnold, D. Barnes, M. Brewer, C. Brown, A. Coleman, L. Dickens, U. Griffen, Z. Headley, M. Howard, S. Jimenez, J. Johnson, T. Jones, I. Lewis, S. Massey, E. McIlwain, M. Mendonca, G. Morgan, F. Patterson, M. Pierre, J. Sexton, T. Shropshire, K. Stewart, M. Ukaegbu, D. Williams, K. Williams, P. Winston; 2-against (B. Davis and P. Junior-Baptiste) and 0-abstentions, members of Community Board #16 elected to support the application by Fusion East LLC, located at 97 Glenmore Avenue, for a beer, wine, cider and liquor license with the condition that the applicant provide a written response concerning employing Brownsville residents at the establishment.

Ms. Deborah Williams, Chairperson of the Parks and Recreation Committee, read the report of the City Services Planning Work Group and third reading of the resolution establishing the CB16 NYCHA Committee. A copy of the report is on file in the Board's office.

An attendee asked about the status of the lighting at Livonia Park.

Ms. Williams and Ms. Brewer stated they are working with the mayor's office to address the matter.

Motion to accept the City Services Work Group report. First by Adrainer Coleman, seconded by Marie Pierre. No abstentions, motion carried.

In a roll call vote of 28-in favor (D. Allen-Arnold, D. Barnes, M. Brewer, C. Brown, A. Coleman, B. Davis, L. Dickens, U. Griffen, Z. Headley, M. Howard, S. Jimenez, J. Johnson, T. Jones, P. Junior-Baptiste, I. Lewis, S. Massey, E. McIlwain, M. Mendonca, G. Morgan, F. Patterson, M. Pierre, J. Sexton, T. Shropshire, K. Stewart, M. Ukaegbu, J. Upsher, D. Williams, K. Williams, P. Winston; 0-against and 0-abstentions, members of Community Board #16 elected to support establishing the NYCHA Committee.

Ms. Melanie Mendonca, Chairperson, read the report for the Community Resident Work Group. A copy of the report is on file in the Board's office.

Motion to accept the Community Resident Work Group report. First by Ms. Marie Pierre, seconded by Mr. Dwayne Barnes. No abstentions, motion carried.

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Ms. Pamela Junior Baptiste, Chairperson, read the report for the Fiscal and Policy Work Group. A copy of the report is on file in the Board's office.

Motion to accept the Fiscal and Policy Work Group report. First by Ms. Deborah Williams, seconded by Ms. Patricia Winston. No abstentions, motion carried.

First Vice-Chairperson Brewer continued to the next agenda item, reports from elected officials.

Reverend Eddie Karim with the Office of Assemblywoman Latrice Walker provided updates on transportation to Albany for the caucus weekend. He stated that the assemblywoman is working to provide security and safety considering the current climate. On February 8, 2025, the office will be working to provide opportunities for small businesses to develop their marketing strategy. He added that the assemblywoman will also be offering "Know Your Rights" trainings.

Mr. Dom Alexander, director of outreach and events, with the Office of Councilmember Sandy Nurse stated they are partnering Assemblywoman Walker's office for the "Know Your Rights Training" as sweeps can impact anyone. They are offering free tax preparation every Friday from January 31, 2025 to April 11, 2025. They will be starting a youth cohort for high school students, ages 15 to 18, 11th and 12th grade who will learn about civic engagement, community service and local government. The application closes on February 7, 2025. The office has secured discretionary funding; on February 3, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom, there will be a briefing on how to apply. On February 11, 2025, there will be a sanitation town hall 127 Pennsylvania Avenue from 6:00-8:00 p.m. rsvp is required. Anyone needing assistance with HRA cases, SNAP, housing support, legal assistance, public benefits, 311 complaints, rent freezes, and more; the office is located at 56 Pennsylvania Avenue, Monday to Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (646) 856-4343.

Mr. Bruno Daniel with the Office of the Borough President Antonio Reynoso stated that community board applications close on February 14, 2025. The capital funding application period is open. Local organizations may qualify and should apply. Staff from the constituent affairs office will be at the Cortelyou library until May 12, 2025. On January 31, 2025, there will be an event for TLC with questions and concerns. A homeowner's workshop was also held with the department of buildings. There is an upcoming deed theft workshop as well.

Ms. Connie Little with the Office of Councilmember Darlene Mealey stated that immigration assistance is available at the office Monday to Friday 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., call (718) 953-3097 to make an appointment. A housing specialist is available Monday to Friday 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday to Friday 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. The office is open to the public from Monday to Thursday, Fridays are only by appointment. The councilwoman also has a newsletter.

Mr. Jonathan Marable from the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce provided information regarding the February 8, 2025, small business workshop at 519 Rockaway Avenue.

Chairperson Morgan provided closing remarks.

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Ms. Cleopatra Brown, seconded by Ms. Adrainer Coleman, and carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:42 p.m.