

Community Board 1, Queens – Board Meeting Minutes

November 19, 2019

Meeting opens with Chairperson, Marie Torniali at 6:30 p.m. – Pledge of Allegiance followed.

Observed a Moment of Silence for Mr. Prabir Mitra.

Chair, Marie Torniali introduced the representative from the Fire Department of the City of New York (FDNY).

Presentations:

Fire Department of the City of New York (FDNY)

Fire Fighter Rojas introduced himself and said that he works in Far Rockaway and works for the Fire Safety Education Unit which goes all over the 5 boroughs like schools, nursing homes, board meetings etc. He stated they remind everyone of reminders to prevent fires as well as answer questions. Mr. Rojas said the # 1 tool that we all have at home for fire safety are smoke alarms. A lot of people do not know they need them, people do not know what they do, and people do not know the different beeps/sounds. He demonstrated the combination alarm, Fire vs Carbon Monoxide. Carbon Monoxide is called the silent killer, the symptoms are: you feel dizzy, tired and sleepy but you will not wake up. FDNY has a program with the Red Cross to setup alarms, you can call: 1-877-REDCROS. Right now, they are behind with scheduling appointments about 1 ½ months. A new program will start with retired fire fighters and will assist the Red Cross. Retirees will install them, will give you a combination detector with both smoke detector and carbon monoxide and place them where needed in the home. They will give you a lecture on fire safety. They stopped giving them to people because they did not know where they put them or put them in a drawer. He stated that 50% of all fires end up with fatalities and do not have a working alarm. Change the batteries when we change the clocks/time change, he said. Fires start when people are multi-tasking in the home and one of the most common is when a person is multi-tasking and cooking. Another big problem at this time of the year are portable heaters in apartments/houses, they can over heat. People also use the oven to heat up the home which you risk a gas leak. Extension cords are a hazard, they overheat, and can cause a fire. They should be used temporarily not for permanent use. Do not leave the air conditioning or appliances on at all times especially if you are not home, only while you are home. You can use portable heaters to heat up the room and turn off/unplug it before you go to bed, don't leave it on all night. Do not use two extension cords, they are dangerous. If there is a fire, close the door to contain a fire, do not leave door open or open it, the fire will spread. He recommends you know your building, is your apartment/building fire proof? You can stay in your home if the fire is not in your home/apartment. If so, wet a towel put it at your door so smoke does not enter, also keep windows closed. Do not leave your home. Place a wet towel at the door base. Fire escapes in a building are a sign to leave/get out. Fires in those buildings can spread pockets of fires can skip floors as well as in a private house. In schools' kids do fire drills, you should also do fire drills at home. Fire drills require preparation. Be careful in case of a fire or an emergency as well as being prepared, have a place to meet. Planning is important, being careful.

Evie Hantzopoulos – Asked where should Carbon Monoxide detectors be installed. She recently read they should be installed down low/at knee height.

Mr. Rojas, FDNY responded the combo should be installed high. The Carbon Monoxide only alarms can go down low/knee high.

Tony Meloni – Asked what cords can be used.

Mr. Rojas, FDNY responded the UL cords can be used.

Tony Meloni – Stated that alarms go off when cooking, can the manufacturers do something, so they are not as sensitive.

Mr. Rojas, FDNY responded alarms last 10 years and the newer ones are less sensitive to steam, placement is important. The alarms are usually positioned close to the kitchen, but they should also be placed 15 feet from where you sleep.

Rod Townsend – Asked if they promote stove knob covers.

Mr. Rojas, FDNY responded, yes, that they do support knob covers especially after a fire in 2018, there is a law that if there is a child 6 and under landlords are supposed to provide them. He explained how they function.

Nancy Silverman – Asked if landlords have to place detectors in hallways.

Mr. Rojas, FDNY he responded that he does not know about hallway but yes for the apartment. By law, they do not have to maintain them, residents should.

The Chair thanked him for the presentation and she then introduced the representative from the New York City Department of Sanitation.

New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY)

Allie Gumas, Outreach Coordinator for the Department of Sanitation introduced herself and talked about the fall leaves, especially with the cold weather. She indicated that the Department of Sanitation is offering 2 special collection pick up days. She mentioned flyers available in the back indicating of how to dispose of the leaves and the paper bags to be used which she has available for everyone to take free of charge. The pick-up dates are after 4 p.m. this Saturday and again on December 7th. Sanitation will bring them to Staten Island they will compost them everyone can get the compost in the springtime. She also mentioned decals that can be placed on bins which she has available. She also said she is available for any questions.

Elected Officials/Representatives:

Joe Nocerino, Community Coordinator, Office of the Queens Borough President – He stated that the Borough President sends her regards. He announced an award for Rose Anne Alafogiannis, Board Member, for 15 years of service. He announced the Borough President has is starting the Intern Program in January, if you know of any college grad who are interested and need hours of credit, please refer them. He added that this year they are taking high school interns. They are using them for weekend events so that they can receive community service hours. The Borough President and he wishes everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Michelle Hernandez, Office of Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez speaking on behalf of Daniel Bonthius. She said she was announcing a few updates. They had their monthly Town Hall in the Bronx at P.S. 71 earlier in the month. She spoke about the anti-poverty legislative pack “A Just Society” if you are interested, she encourages you to look on their Facebook page, they have a live stream of it, they live stream all their Town Hall meetings. Legislative Updates: Last week they launched the first piece of legislation that is tied to the Green New Deal Resolution, it is called, Green New Deal for Public Housing. It will improve the quality of life for residents of public housing, decrease car emissions for public housing with the goal of reaching of receiving zero carbon emissions. When the other tenants are providing economic stability for residents by ensuring that 90% high quality jobs that will be produced from this piece of legislation will go to the public housing residents. The Congresswoman recently joined the Quiet Skies Caucus she will be engaged in addressing noise pollution, related to air traffic and she recently co-signed a letter from the Caucus asking the FAA to have a Community Liaison. They are putting out their newsletter in the next couple of weeks. She strongly recommends that you sign up to receive it to see what they are doing. She brought sheets to sign up as well as suggested to sign up via their website. They have opened close to 700 cases, which are constituent cases for services related to the federal government, such as immigration, social security or veteran affairs. Please come to their office for assistance. She mentioned that she is one of the case workers. She thanked everyone and wished all a Happy Thanksgiving.

Nick Roloson, Chief of Staff for Council Member Costa Constantinides – He said he wants to go over a few updates. First, Astoria Park, they opened 3 months early, the first phase of the Anchor Park Program which includes the running track, the fitness equipment, and everything on the south side of the park. The next phase is Charybdis Playground

they are beginning construction on that right now. Their office is partnering with the Steinway BID for a Holiday Market on Steinway Street in the Municipal Parking Lot between 31st Avenue and Broadway from November 30th and December 1, 2019 running from 10:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Please come out if you are in the holiday spirit. On the Legislation side, at City Hall last month it was the 7-year Anniversary of Hurricane Sandy. They had a large number of hearings regarding what the city has done or not since the storm. In particular what is happening on the Astoria water front especially at Astoria Houses, due to all the damage (the community center, the lobbies, etc.). They have been speaking with the administration to see what they are doing about it. They are introducing legislation called the Five (5) Borough Resiliency Plan. Most of the fatalities took place in Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island. They will have a big push for this resiliency plan pushed. He announced that he will be available for any questions and/or comments. Mr. Roloson thanked everyone and wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Jessica Schabowski, Queens Borough Director, Mayor's Office – She stated that she wanted to highlight as part of their Vision Zero initiative the 4th annual dusk and darkness campaign. They want everyone to drive very carefully. They are partnering with DOT on this. She wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Victoria Leahy, Brian Barnwell's Office - Announcing a couple of events they are hosting. This Saturday they are partnering with ASPCA for a mobile pet adoption, the truck will be on 61st Street and Roosevelt Avenue, between 12:00 – 4:00 p.m. They are having a Turkey Drive at their office you can drop off frozen turkeys, (no live turkeys or cash donations accepted). On December 9th they have their monthly free legal service consultations call in regard to healthcare, housing, deeds and any legal issues. They have limited number of seats they have 6 seats in the office please call ahead of time to schedule. In December – January they are having their Coat Drive: coats, jackets, hats, gloves, and all winter wear accepted. Will be available for any questions/comments.

S Coleman, Director of Constituent Services, Office of Senator Jessica Ramos – Announced they are having a Thanksgiving Turkey Giveaway they placed cards that are in both in English and Spanish it is taking place on Friday at 7:00 p.m. at the East Elmhurst Community School. They are also hosting a Town Hall discussion geared up for the 2020 Session to discuss the Census. Also announced their Free legal consultations every Wednesday, please call their office at 718-205-3881 if you would like to schedule an appointment. He wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Jack Bernatovicz, Jimmy Van Bramer's Office, Representing Deborah Tharrington who is out today. Announced that he does not have any updated but if anyone has any questions/comments to please approach him.

The Chair, Marie Torniali requested a motion to adopt the October 2019 Minutes.
Motioned by Mitchell Waxman; Seconded by Vanessa Jones-Hall

Chair Report:

Chair Marie Torniali reported that the Borough President is supporting that the Community Boards to be on board as Census Ambassadors. She added that Tony Meloni is on the Committee and knows more about it. She went to a meeting and learned how to reach out to the business community and different ways that we can all push educating everyone that the Census is coming out and that we should all participate and know that it does not take long, that it benefits us. She suggested that education material on the Census should be at all events held. It is very important for many things especially for funding for roads, schools and hospitals. She then introduced Tony Meloni.

Tony Meloni - Hats off to Queens Borough President for pressing forward Susie Tanenbaum, Immigration Aide has been on the forefront with the Census Bureau of Queens. You can reach out to her. He announced they have over 120 representatives in Queens trying to help, feel free to join in. He hopes that the numbers will represent what they should.

Rod Townsend – Asked, would it interest anyone to create an Ad Hoc Committee.

Tony Meloni said it is a very good suggestion.

Marie Torniali, Chairperson suggested that the Committee provide materials so that everyone can have them and share with various organizations. We were undercounted the last time. She agreed that both Tony and Rod can organize a committee, which she thinks is great.

Rod Townsend asked/suggested anyone else can join or if they would like to join the Committee.

Chair Torniali – Asked Tony for confirmation that they have a monthly meeting.

Tony Meloni confirmed that they do have a monthly meeting at the Queens Borough President's office.

Maire Torniali, Chairperson – Announced the names of the Board Members that would like to join the CB1Q Census Committee, which are: Evie Hantzopoulos, Vanessa Jones-Hall, Dino Panagoulas and Kathleen Warnock. She said the meetings at Borough Hall are very informative and she thanked the members that are interested in joining the CB1 Census Committee.

Ann Bruno – She announced that next Tuesday night a Representative from the Census Bureau will be speaking at the 114th Community Council at 7:00 p.m. at Riccardo's.

District Manager Report:

Florence Koulouris announced that the office finalized the Capital & Expense everything went into the system on time and CB1 was the 2nd Board Office in the Borough of Queens to submit. There were a lot of glitches in the system this year with City Planning. The office had detailed conversations with City Planning which saved the other boards of a lot of aggravation. Everything went through successfully, we will see what they will produce for us when we get our booklets which are posted online. The District Manager announced Free Events taking place in the Community: The Greek American Homeowners Turkey Dinner fliers are on the table, the Steinway Holiday Market, the Woodside Annual Tree Lighting, Kiwanis Holiday Auction, Central Astoria LDC Holiday Festival and Tree Lighting in Astoria Park and the United Community Civic Association (UCCA) who will also be having a Tree Lighting. If anyone belongs to other civic groups that are having holiday events, please notify the office. Ms. Koulouris wished everyone a happy and healthy holiday season.

Committee Reports:

Ed Babor on behalf of RoseMaire Poveromo, Airport Committee – He reported that they attended two (2) meetings. The first was on October 17th hosted by the Port Authority they dealt with noise reduction and trying to streamline the flight paths to avoid residential areas. The 2nd meeting was on November 16th which was the Access Improvement Project which deals with the Air Train from Willets Point to Delta and the Main Terminal. Once again per RoseMarie Poveromo as in the past she has strongly spoken out in opposition to any efforts to place the Air Train down 31st Street, 19th or 20th Avenues or Astoria Boulevard because it will disrupt the neighborhood and condemn a lot of private property.

Rod Townsend, Community & Economic Development Committee – He reported they will be having a meeting with Tom Grech, President & CEO, Queens Chamber of Commerce in January. They will also be looking at the impact and possibilities of the De Niro movie studio in the northern part of the district. They will be looking at what they are planning, how it will fit into the neighborhood and the context of it.

Judy Trilivas, Health & Human Services Committee – No report but reminded everyone of getting the Flu Shot because people are getting the Flu.

Pauline Jannelli on behalf of Andy Aujla, Consumer Affairs Committee – She asked everyone to review the Consumer Affairs spreadsheet in the folders. She said the entities with stipulations are marked, please note there was 1 Enclosed Café renewal application for Tierras Colombianas now d/b/a Barzola. The Committee recommend approval since this is a long-standing establishment. The committee respectfully requests approval of the stipulations entered as listed on the spreadsheet. Motioned by Tom Ryan; Seconded by Dino Panagoulas.

The Chair asked if everyone is in favor, no one opposed. Unanimous.

Pauline Jannelli announced the next meeting will be in December, date/time to be determined. She wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Evie Hantzopoulos, Housing Committee – Reported they are meeting on Monday, November 26th at 6:30 p.m. at the Board Office with a guest speaker from the New Economy Project to talk about community land trusts. If you are interested in learning more about community land trusts particularly with the closing of Rikers as well as the Sanitation garage on 21st Street being moved, please attend. Open to everyone and the public is welcome to join them and observe.

Elizabeth Erion, Land Use & Zoning Committee – Reported on a couple of ULURP items voted on recently the 44-01 Northern Boulevard has been passed by the City Council however they did modify it so that the MIH option that they chose was not 2 as requested by the applicant but 1 which affords lower cost apartments and also opens it up to incomes that are lower than the 60% AMI. The other issues are the application that the Community Board voted on last month Mega Pan Cyprian Rezoning that is going to City Planning for Public Hearing on Wednesday, December 4th. It will be held at 120 Broadway in the Lower Concourse at 10 a.m., go early to sign-up to speak. Discussed about 2 applications that will be coming in December or January. The 1st is the Mapping action for Rikers Island. There is a proposal to close the jails on the island in order to assure that the island is not used ever again as a detention center they are taking a step to map it as a public place. It is a mapping designation that holds it/secures it for a public purpose in the future. It is currently zoned C8, they have general service, any uses, anything can go there. You cannot build condominiums right now; no housing is allowed. The point is that the focus of this application is very narrow it has nothing to do with future use that will be determined over a number of years, this island will not be vacated until 2026. There is a 5-year period which they are told there will be a robust outreach to the community for reusing the island. The Land Use Committee have discussed how they will deal with this as our community it is the only way that anyone can get on and off the island. The application does not focus on the future use. When they do have public hearings, they will have it in the local area of Ditmars because they are impacted by Rikers Island. They were told the target date is December 2nd for certification. The hearings can very well happen after the 1st of the year. In regard to the 21st Street Sanitation garage, the City is getting ready to do the disposition/acquisition, they will certify it very quickly. It may happen in January or February for our public hearing. She wished everyone to enjoy their holidays.

Vanessa Jones-Hall – Stated that she has a question regarding Rikers Island. She mentioned that she has been to a few meetings, one with Vocal NY and with other community-based organizations regarding vacating the Island. Right now, the talk is about its future use. She said Councilman Costa Constantinides has been speaking about how he wants it more environmentally friendly with Solar Panels and such. Her concern is when it is vacated by 2026. How much guarantee will we have that with all the underhanded developers making their way in and being approved, like what they did with Amazon, it is a very large piece of property. Also, a big concern on how it will impact our community. We must keep a watchful eye for the property. She stated that she is so happy to hear about the Sanitation garage being moved. She said that area of Ravenswood has been impacted by the smell, the dirt and it is in front of the playground, the residents endured a lot over decades.

Elizabeth Erion – Asked if any representative from City Planning has anything to add.

Gerry Caliendo added that they will Map Rikers Island as a public place. He added as an example, Fort Totten which was Mapped as a public place when it was demilitarized from the Federal Government.

Nancy Silverman, Parks/Recreation/Cultural Committee – Reported that they met last week and discussed an idea they received in the arts district near the waterfront had an excellent conversation regarding revitalization vs gentrification concerns about the impact of arts institutions involvement of developers. They discussed what they always proposed more of continuing the meeting over a couple of meetings including in January when they would invite the stakeholders people mentioned in the proposal they were given. The person who brought the idea to them asked for this to be tabled and discussed in the future. They discussed the sponsored events they participated in over the past year, the last will be a cosponsor of the Flux Factory in Socrates Sculpture Park in October her committee members told her it was a great event a lot of people came to the Community Board table to learn more about what we do and about other city services. They have not yet decided what they will be co-sponsoring in the coming year, but they will be co-sponsoring some events encouraged by fellow Board Members. She wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Tony Meloni, Public Safety Committee – No Report and wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

George Alexiou, Board Member – Announced the Free Thanksgiving Luncheon that the Greek-American Homeowners Association hosts for the past 30 years. He said it is a full meal, salad, dessert, coffee, and music. Mr. Alexiou said everyone is welcome. He announced that they service more than 2000 portions every year. They also donate over 500 free turkeys given out to underprivileged families every year. He shared that their funds are privately raised with no government support.

The Chair told him that they host a wonderful event, they should be proud of what they do every year and the community appreciates it.

Public Comment:

Dino Panagoulis, Dutch Kills Civic Association – There was a Citi Bike bike rack on 38th Avenue and 28th Street on the sidewalk someone moved it on now taking half the block on 29th Street and 38th Avenue. Trying to find out who authorizes the moves, without consulting the community.

Florence Koulouris, District Manager – Stated that she can answer his question because this was one of the issues the office handled. She explained that there is going to be a capital project that will take a couple of years therefore this is a temporary move, they have to relocate the bike rack it is the most viable location to place it. They do not have to notify the community board office or the community. DOT has the right to place it there. When the bike racks came in DOT was very thoughtful to our community, out of 58 we only received 13 racks in the street. This is the second time they had to move a rack. It is a temporary move after the project is done it will be placed back in its original location.

Dino Panagoulis said we need to work on involving the communities that it would potentially affect.

Ms. Koulouris responded that they would have to contact their elected officials to change policy.

Neil Herdan, Co-Chair for Whitey Ford Field – Wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving. Friends of Whitey Ford Field had a very successful summer they launched their first digital marketing campaign and their 2nd Annual Ford Family Day. In June they were featured in OANA's event summer on the waterfront, in July they held the largest softball competition on their field with over 300 participants. Mr. Whitey Ford's daughter threw out the first pitch. They partnered with OANA, Monster Energy, and Modell's. They want to thank Brooklyn Bagel who donated food and they have been very generous supporter of their group, they have also made donations to some of their other events. He also thanked Durst who made a very generous donation to their group and it will be used as needed for summer events. Blair and he were guest speakers at the City Parks Foundation. They have been featured in a lot of the local and national press. In September they expanded their advisory board. He also shared that Richard Khuzami joined their Advisory Board.

Laura Ware, Art House Astoria Conservatory for Music and Art – They have been part of the Arts Community in Astoria since 2009 when they opened their doors with 5 children. They are celebrating 10 years, they have now had almost 200 kids as part of their musical theater instrumental individual art programs they also support in school arts programs currently have programs in Q300 middle school, PS 166 elementary school. They will be at the Steinway Holiday Market with their musical theater kids and their art house Astoria carolers they have also done a lot of things with the Central Astoria group, tree lighting and Halloween celebrations. Their mission is to bring quality Arts education to the Astoria and surrounding communities at affordable price.

Alex Maffe (inaudible) – Spoke about a theater group at Queens Community College and various unrelated topics.

Elyes Berrates stated he lives in Astoria for 20 years recently moved to Steinway Street lives on top of a Hookah Lounge. He said all the Hookah lounges play music but put it down at midnight. He mentioned a couple of local Hookah lounges that serve alcohol and don't have people who live above them. He said he lives above Eastern Nights they are a Hookah lounge, their music is on until 4 am and it is very loud, from the speakers. Fridays and Saturdays, they have live music. He said the whole place vibrates and mentioned that he has spoken with them. He said he has called 311 and spoke with the landlord. The landlord also threatened him.

Marie Torniali, Chairperson asked him to call the office at 718-626-1021 and speak with Florence the District Manager to address the problem with this establishment.

Mr. Berraies added that they are serving alcohol at late hours and have had a lot of police action.

The Chair wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and thanked the Board Members for all that they do to keep the Community great. She asked for a Motion to Adjourn

Motioned by Vanessa Jones-Hall; Seconded by Dino Panagoulas

Meeting Adjourned: 8:00 p.m.

Full Board Meeting

DATE 11/19/19

Community Board Member	Yes	No	Abs.	Community Board Member	Yes	No	Abs.
Rose Anne Alafogiannis	✓	✓		Jerry Kril	✓		
George Alexiou	✓			Joel Lock		✓	
Daniel Aliberti	✓			Hannah Lupien	✓		E
Loren Amor	✓			Jeffrey Martin	✓		
Avninder Aujla			E	Antonio Meloni	✓		
Edward Babor	✓			Prabir Mitra	Passed away		
Jose Batista	✓	✓		Eric Mouchette	✓		
Ann Bruno	✓	✓		Stella Nicolaou	✓		
Edwin Cadiz		✓		Norma Nieves-Blas		✓	
Gerald Caliendo	✓			Mary O'Hara	✓		
Jean Marie D'Alleva	✓			Dino Panagoulas	✓		
Antonella Di Saverio			E	Robert Piazza		✓	
Katerina Duarte		✓	E	RoseMarie Poveromo		✓	E
Katie Ellman			E	Yawne Robinson		✓	
Elizabeth Erion	✓			Thomas Ryan	✓		
Mackenzi Farquer	✓			Rodolfo Sarchese	✓		
Dean Feratovic			E	Nancy Silverman	✓		
Evie Hantzopoulos	✓			Dominic Stiller		✓	
Amy Hau	✓			Andre Stith	✓		
Helen Ho	✓		E	Marie Torniali	✓		
Pauline Jannelli	✓			Rod Townsend	✓		
Vanessa Jones-Hall	✓			Judy Trilivas	✓		
George Kalergios		✓	E	Kathleen Warnock	✓		
Richard Khuzami	✓	✓		Mitchell Waxman	✓		
Nancy Konipol	✓						
Number Board Members Present <u>29</u>							
Present <u>29</u>				Absent <u>11</u>			
				Excused <u>8</u>			