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Anatole Ashraf
Chairperson

Debra Markell Kleinert
District Manager

May 12, 2025

Health and Human Services and Education and Unhoused & Shelter Committee

Meeting Minutes

This meeting was teleconferenced using Zoom

Committee Member Attendees:

Lauren Springer, Chair
Amparo Abel-Bey, Vice Chair
Dr. Rosamond Gianutsos
Phugelzen Sherpa
Leticia Vasquez

Committee Member Absentees:

Nellie Afshar
John Bahia
Warren Davis
Benjamin Lucas
Alyssa Sawicki

Health and Human Services Public Members Attendees:

Andrea Thomas

Health and Human Services Public Members Absentees:

Olivia Jackson Lewis
Robert Wohner
Judy Zangwill

Community Board Member Attendees:

Community Board 2 Staff:

Debra Markell Kleinert

Guest

Steven R. Jackson, Principal of Aviation High School

Adriana, PEP Member for Queens CECs

Camille Dee, Provided support for NYC Retirees Bill – Intro 1096-2024

Lauren Springer, the committee chair, welcomed everyone to the Health and Human Services and Education and Unhoused & Shelter Committee meeting.

Lauren Springer introduced Steven R. Jackson, the principal of Aviation High School. Principal Jackson provided a presentation about Aviation High School, beginning with an overview of the school's history and focus. He shared the following points:

- Aviation High School has been located in Queens since 1958.
- The school's focus is to prepare students to become aviation maintenance technicians who inspect, maintain, repair, and build airplanes.
- As a FAA Part 147 School, Aviation High School is able to teach all the requirements for free to NYC students, so they can receive an airframe and/or powerplant license, which are needed for maintenance to work in airlines.

Principal Jackson continued his presentation and provided information on the school's funding request to elected officials to renovate the school's test cell engine power plant classroom. He shared the following points:

- When Aviation High School opened in Queens, it had a test cell engine power plant classroom, which allowed students to safely run and test engines.
- A renovated classroom would allow students to safely run engines of various sizes and types, such as Continental Engines, and would require \$5 to \$6 million dollars to complete.
- Aviation High School is reaching out to elected officials to request funding. Principal Jackson noted that he does not expect one elected official to fund the entire renovation, so he is contacting representatives from all levels of government to provide financial assistance. Additionally, the school is reaching out to City Council Members who do not represent the school but represent areas where a notable segment of its student body population lives.

The following additional discussion points were shared:

- Some Aviation High School students have received internships in the airline industry.
- Principal Jackson noted that a wide range of career paths are available to Aviation High School graduates, including becoming aviation maintenance teachers. He added that some graduates have pursued careers in fields that interact with aviation, such as law, business, and insurance.
- Lauren Springer, Rosamond Gianutsos, and Andrea Thomas expressed interest in visiting Aviation High School.
- Principal Jackson shared that Aviation High School set up a 501 C3 foundation under the name Aviation High School Education Foundation, so companies, foundations, or individuals can provide donations.

Lauren Springer introduced Ms. Dee. Ms. Dee spoke about a Medicare Advantage bill, discussed its origins, and shared her perspective on the proposed legislation. She shared the following points:

- She previously supported a similar bill and presented it to the Health and Human Services and Education and Unhoused & Shelter Committee. That bill was later brought before the community board, where it received unanimous support.
- Ms. Dee noted that money was taken from the Health Insurance Stabilization Fund and used to pay for raises. To pay for those raises, retirees would be placed on a Medicare Advantage Plan. She added that Medicare Advantage causes delays, denies care, limits provider networks, and overcharges taxpayers.
- Advocates opposing the transition of retirees to Medicare Advantage are pursuing a two-pronged approach: litigation and legislation. She added that opponents of the plan have secured 11 unanimous victories in court and that an upcoming case will be heard this Thursday in the New York State Court of Appeals. Ms. Dee said that even if the case is won, legislation is still needed to protect retirees' healthcare.
- She noted that Council Members Christopher Marte and Robert Holden introduced a Bill, Intro 1096, which aims to preserve and codify the healthcare of NYC retirees. Ms. Dee is asking the community board to support the bill by either passing a resolution, endorsing it, or writing a letter to Council Member Julie Won to encourage her to support it. She added that 15 Council Members have already signed onto the bill, including Council Member Shekar Krishnan, who represents some areas within Queens Community Board 2.
- Lauren Springer discussed with Ms. Dee that the Health and Human Services and Education, Unhoused & Shelter Committee had discussed Intro 1096. The committee chair noted that since the community board previously provided unanimous support for a similar bill, the committee will reference that prior support in any communication regarding Intro 1096.

Ms. Dee spoke about another situation impacting NYC retirees. She explained that in 2023, retirees were about to be required to pay copays, but a court issued injunction stopped the charges. However, following a renegotiation between NYC and Emblem Health, retirees have since begun paying copays at the beginning of January 2025. Ms. Dee noted that city retirees never had to pay copays.

Ms. Dee provided the following information:

The website of the organization [Nyc retirees.org](https://nycretirees.org)

The email of the organization: retirees@nycretirees.org

The organization has an account on YouTube as well: NYC Organization of Public Service Retirees

The committee shared information on other issues in the community and potential future initiatives. The following points were shared:

- Leticia Vasquez spoke about the potential need to add a crossing guard at the intersection of 48th Street and 39th Avenue due to an anticipated increase in sixth-grade students around the area and because many cars speed there.

Amparo Abel-Bey made a motion to adjourn, and Lauren Springer seconded it.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by,

Rafael Nava