



COMMUNITY BOARD 6, QUEENS

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Whitepot Settled 1653

ALEXA WEITZMAN
CHAIR

FRANK P. GULLUSCIO
DISTRICT MANAGER

GAIL M. GORDON
1ST VICE-CHAIR

PETER BEADLE
2ND VICE-CHAIR

MARK LASTER
VICE-CHAIR · SECRETARY

BRUCE GROSSBERG
VICE-CHAIR · FINANCE

PRAMEET KUMAR
VICE-CHAIR · LAND USE

SOUMALY KING
VICE-CHAIR · SCOPING

CB 6 MEETING MINUTES

MAY 13, 2020

PRESENT

A. WEITZMAN, CHAIR

P. BEADLE, 2ND VC

B. GROSSBERG, VC FINANCE

S. KING, VC SCOPING

G. GORDON, 1ST VC

M. LASTER, VC SECRETARY

P. KUMAR, VC LAND USE

N. ALTMAN

A. AYON

M. BERFAS

G. CARLSON

H. CHAIN

A. COHEN

C. COLLETT

J. DERESZEWSKI

A. DIAZ-HOUSTON

H. DIMITRIADIS

E. FELDER

G. FERRERAS

J. GOLANT

B. GRIFFITH

O. HORODNICEANU

M. JACOBSON

E. KALENDAREV

J. KEVELSON

N. LEIBOWITZ

R. MEHRA

Y. MEIROV

S. METZ

P. MORGAN

E. MURRAY

R. NEKTALOV

K. NEUMANN

E. NEWTON

S. ROLNICK

D. SCHNEIER

H. SCHONHAUT

J. SILVA

R. SILVER

M. SILVERSTEIN

S. WANDERMAN

J. WESTON

E. WONG

ABSENT

S. CHU

J. MAKIN

J. MEDINA

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

MELINDA KATZ

FRANK GULLUSCIO

J. PERRICONE

M. CARLIER

J. SCHABOWSKI

J. GOLDES

C. NO

S. BROWNING

QUEENS DISTRICT ATTORNEY

CB 6 DISTRICT MANAGER

OFFICE OF BOROUGH PRESIDENT LEE

OFFICE OF ASSEMBLY MEMBER HEVESI

MAYOR'S COMMUNITY AFFAIRS UNIT

OFFICE OF CONGRESS MEMBER GRACE MENG

NYC DEPT OF HEALTH & MENTAL HYGIENE

LIJ FOREST HILLS HOSPITAL

COMMUNITY BOARD 6

MAY 13, 2020

This meeting was held virtually using Zoom due to the Coronavirus COVID-19 Pandemic. It was also streamed on Facebook.

QUEENS DISTRICT ATTORNEY MELINDA KATZ

DA Katz reported that her office is working remotely in almost every aspect, including evidence, arraignments, intake, etc. There are onsite arraignments set up in case the technology doesn't work.

Ms. Katz warned everyone that there are a lot of scams out there. Don't give personal information to anyone claiming to be from the government related to your "COVID check". Don't give information to individuals claiming to be from airlines asking for bank information.

There is a big problem with Domestic Violence during this pandemic. Domestic Violence cases have gone down, but this is inaccurate. DA Katz feels that people aren't reporting domestic violence because they are afraid while being stuck at home and can't use the computer / telephone. People can report domestic violence or to get help / advice by contacting her domestic violence hotline at 718-286-4410.

In response to an inquiry about social distancing violations, DA Katz explained that she doesn't want to prosecute people for not wearing masks / social distancing. She would prefer if the NYPD distributed masks rather than giving summonses / DAT's (Desk Appearance Ticket) for not wearing them. People shouldn't have to be processed in the court system if they don't have access to a mask.

DA Katz announced that if anyone needs assistance, they can email her directly at katz@queensda.org.

NYC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

Chae No gave an update about COVID-19. He reported the following statistics:

- 4.2 million reported cases globally
- 340,661 cases in New York State
- 185,206 cases in New York City (49,307 hospitalized, 15,233 confirmed deaths and 5,083 probable deaths)
- 82 cases of Pediatric Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in NYC
- Queens has the highest number of cases within NYC

Mr. No reminded everyone to stay home as much as possible and to social distance while out. If you can't social distance, you must wear a face covering / mask. He also reminded people that if their symptoms are getting worse or if they have underlying medical conditions, they shouldn't be afraid to go to the hospital.

He announced that the Governors PAUSE order is set to expire this week, but this doesn't mean we are back in business. Regions must meet 7 indicators before they can start reopening. New York City is working on these indicators but isn't there yet. The downward trends must continue for 2 consecutive weeks.

Mr. No spoke about Pediatric Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome:

- Rare inflammatory disease that may be connected to COVID-19 but the connection is not clear
- Symptoms: Fever, Irritability or sluggishness, Abdominal pain without another explanation, Diarrhea, Vomiting, Rash, Conjunctivitis, or red or pink eyes, Enlarged lymph nodes ("gland") on one side of the neck, Red, cracked lips or red tongue that looks like a strawberry, Swollen hands and feet, which might also be red
- NYS is working with CDC to develop a national criterion for identifying and responding to this syndrome
- NYS is also partnering with the NYS Genome Center and Rockefeller University to conduct a genome and RNA sequencing study to better understand the disease.

Mr. No announced that NYC implemented self-swap testing. New testing sites are being announced each week. In addition, the city is offering Antibody testing in the following locations: Morrisania, East New York, Upper Manhattan, Concord, and Long Island City. These tests are by appointment only through a dedicated hotline. These tests will take place for 2 weeks. For more information visit www.nyc.gov/coronavirus.

Mr. No spoke about the disparities related to COVID 19, specifically African Americans and Latinos are heavily impacted by the disease. To combat this, testing has been increased at NYCHA locations and addressing homeless individuals. The city has been providing personal protective equipment to Community Health Providers.

Last, if anyone needs social support, visit nyc.gov/helpnownyc. Also, anyone in need of emotional / mental health support during this crisis, visit www.nyc.gov/nycwell or call 844-863-9314.

LONG ISLAND JEWISH FOREST HILLS

Susan Browning reported that Queens was the most heavily affected area within the city. However, LIJFH Hospital has a robust emergency preparedness plan in place as well as the entire Northwell system. This has been a priority for the system for more than 10 years. Several employees are designated trainers with FEMA.

Ms. Browning gave the following statistics:

- 3/2/20 – First COVID-19 patient
- 3/9/20 – First COVID-19 patient intubated

- 4/7/20 – 3,500 COVID-19 patients hospitalized in the Northwell system, 270 patients in LIJ Forest Hills

In response to the Governor's orders, the Northwell system started executing their search plan to expand their capacity. Through this process, LIJFH hospital went from 1 ICU (18 beds) to 3 ICU's (49 beds). They opened 5 new areas in the hospital that don't usually service inpatients.

The emergency department went from seeing approximately 150 patients on a given day to 249 patients in the emergency room at the height of COVID pandemic. Normally, about 20% of these patients are admitted to the hospital, but during this pandemic, about 40% of the patients were admitted to the hospital. However, despite all this, the hospital will be discharging its 1,000th patient in the next few days and Northwell has discharged about 10,000. In the event that the hospital couldn't accommodate the patients safely, they would be transferred to another hospital within the system.

Ms. Browning said that the patients, their families and the community were all very supportive throughout this pandemic. She also acknowledged all the staff that supported the hospital (from staff in physicians' offices, staff from other parts of the hospital like surgical areas that were not allowed to continue surgeries and staff from all over the state and country that came to help).

The hospital is now in the recovery phase of Emergency Preparedness to begin bringing the hospital back to normal operations. However, they will still need to take precautions with cleaning, isolation, etc. Ms. Browning reminded people that the hospital is safe so if you need care, don't hesitate to come in.

In response to questions from the Board, Susan made the following statements:

- The hospital has adequate PPE and has been able to keep their staff protected throughout
- There are clinical trials at Northwell for Remdesivir and Convalescent plasma and these are available at LIJ FH if a patient qualifies.
- The hospital needed a safe discharge plan to educate patients about social distancing and isolation at home. Also, they are currently unable to discharge COVID+ patients to nursing homes. This prolongs the hospital stay

PUBLIC FORUM

Sheryl Fetik made the following comment:

I am happy to see that the need for PPE is being addressed, by our government. I believe that we should continue to inquire and to help, to make sure that our medical personnel, first responders and essential workers have the PPE and other equipment that will protect them. This Coronavirus may continue to be with us, in some form, for some time, as we try to move forward.

Another pressing problem that I am hearing about during this crisis, is access to food. I have been helping to refer those in need to those who are helping with delivery of food. If this health crisis continues for a time, we should be thinking about alternate ways to get food and crops to the community, from farmers and producers. Maybe we should be discussing, as a community, how this can be accomplished.

Carol Blatt made the following comments:

This is a summary of Ms. Blatt's comments.

1. There is a lack of supermarkets in the community. She feels that the Community Board and local elected officials should get together and speak to the landlords and supermarket chains and try to get a supermarket. She heard that Walgreens/Duane Reade is going out of business next month. Maybe the CB can start the conversation about getting a supermarket at that location.
2. The Community Board meetings should consist less of the CB Members talking and more information from the elected officials and their reps. They may have important information for the people.

Jeannette Morales made the following comment:

Due to COVID-19, I see discarded face masked and gloves all over our community. I would like to know if the city is putting a plan in place to sanitize our streets as they are the subway system. Countries such as Italy, Berlin, Brazil, France, Ethiopia, Turkey, London, Korea, Bogota, Syria, Ukraine, Moscow just to name a few, are ALL enacting sanitation measures to help combat the spread of the coronavirus. What is Our borough, Our city planning?

MINUTES

The minutes of the April 7, 2020 meeting were accepted.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Weitzman thanked the members of our community that are working on the frontlines and asked that we keep our community members in our thoughts as we move forward in this process.

She also reported that she and Frank speak all the time and the board office is conducting business as usual. She thanked the staff for their hard work during this time. In addition to the Queens Borough Board, there is a meeting once a week for CB Chairs and District Managers with the Mayor's Office and City Agencies. They are able to answer questions that have come up from the board and community.

Ms. Weitzman has been updating the CB 6 Resource document and will email an updated version out to the board along with community updates from Captain Cappelman, and the Census Bureau. She reminded everyone to fill out their census. The self-response rate for Forest Hills is 56.87% and for Rego Park is 50.25%.

Ms. Weitzman reminded the committee chairs that they can schedule a remote committee meeting if they wish. They can contact her and she can set it up via Zoom.

Ms. Weitzman reported that the Mayor's Office and DOT have an Open Streets Plan, which seeks to identify 100 miles of streets to allow for greater social distancing during the COVID-19 crisis. CB 6 is a dense community and needs this open space. However, none of our suggestions were approved and the DOT also announced that Phase 4 of Queens Boulevard Safety Redesign has been stopped indefinitely. Hopefully DOT will consider adding streets in our Community Board in the future, but Chair Weitzman proposed a motion to pass the following resolution:

Whereas Queens CB6 sits in a very dense area of Queens with many parks currently closed; and,
Whereas Queens CB6 community members deserve ample outdoor space to recreate safely while maintaining social distancing; and,
Whereas members of the community are desperately looking for alternate modes of socially-distanced friendly transportation and require safe, protected bike lanes; then,
Be it Resolved that Queens CB6 requests that that the expansion of the Open Streets program implemented by the DOT and Mayor's office be distributed fairly and equitably throughout all districts in the city, including the provision of Open Streets and protected bike lanes within CB6.

This motion was seconded by Peter Beadle. This motion passed on a roll call vote (39 In Favor, 2 Opposed, 2 Abstain).

Last, Chair Weitzman encouraged everyone to look forward to the future of our community. We will need to work together to ensure that upcoming budget cuts don't have too much of an impact on our schools, senior centers, and housing programs.

DISTRICT MANAGER'S REPORT

District Manager Gulluscio announced that he is always in contact with the staff and the chair. The staff takes turns going into the office.

The Queens District Managers will be having a virtual meeting to discuss the Budget Consultations for the Fall. The Office of Management and Budget announced that all city agencies (including Community Boards) must decrease their budget. The magnitude of these cuts is unknown, but it will likely last several years.

All land use applications are currently on hold until further notice.

Mr. Gulluscio offered his condolences for the family of Darnley Jones (DFTA) and Chairman Joe Hennessy who passed away from COVID-19.

Mr. Gulluscio reminded everyone to vote in June. All NYS residents are eligible to vote by Absentee ballot. Ballots can be requested online.

Last, Mr. Gulluscio acknowledged that the Borough President and Fresh Direct have been distributed to food pantries all over Queens.

112th PRECINCT REPORT – CAPTAIN JOSEPH CAPPELMANN

- Over the last four (4) weeks, the 112th Precinct has seen an overall decrease in major crimes, down 15 crimes or 36%.
- The 112th Precinct has experienced a slight increase in Assaults, 3 vs 2. Two (2) of the Assaults were Domestic in nature. All three (3) Assaults have an associated arrest.
- Grand Larceny of Auto complaints have increased significantly over the last four (4) weeks, 7 vs 3 compared to 2019.

- Honda vehicles and vehicles w/ keys left in the vehicle are being targeted
- Three (3) were Honda CRV's (All three (3) were 2019 Models)
- Two (2) were older model Honda Civics (1997 and 2000)
- Two (2) were vehicles stolen were left unattended with the keys in the vehicle
- Although Larcenies from Autos are down from the same period last year, it still continues to be an issue in the confines of the 112th Precinct.
- Crime Prevention Tips for Grand Larceny Auto / Larcenies from Auto
 - Remove ALL valuables / keys from your vehicle and lock your doors. We generally see people pulling on door handles until they find an unlocked door. If you leave your key / key fob in your car, it will be stolen.
 - During the pandemic, vehicles are being used less frequently. Park in a well-lit area and check on your vehicle frequently.
 - In several of our Grand Larceny Auto and Larceny from Auto incidents, the victim had not been to their car in several days and in some instances, weeks. This delays the investigation and reduces the chance of video or forensic evidence being recovered.
 - Consider using additional anti-theft measures including installing an alarm or using a steering wheel lock

CONSUMER AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT

Elizabeth Newton, Chair of Consumer Affairs Committee, reported that the Board received 1 new liquor license application

BLVD 93 - 61-18 93rd Street, RP

The Committee motion was to approve the application. The Committee motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

Ms. Newton reported that we received an alteration application. The alteration is the addition of an outdoor area on their private property with tables and chairs. Since this is on private property, it doesn't require a sidewalk café license.

QUEENS BULLY - 113-30 Queens Blvd, RP

The Committee motion was to approve the application. The Committee motion passed on a roll call vote (38 In Favor, 1 Opposed).

CB 6 received the following liquor license renewals:

1. Rosalia Pizza, 103-15 Queens Blvd., FH
2. Avellino Restaurant, 97-01-97-03 64th Ave., RP
3. The Dinerbar, 97-45 Queens Blvd., RP
4. Austin Public House, 70-28A Austin Street, FH

5. The Bund, 100-30B Queens Boulevard, FH

The 112th Precinct reported no issues with these establishments. The Committee had no objections, and a motion to approve these applications passed unanimously on a voice vote.

GOOD & WELFARE

LEGISLATIVE REPORTS:

MAYOR'S COMMUNITY AFFAIRS UNIT

Jessica Schabowski announced that the Mayor has been advocating for the federal government to provide NYC with more testing supplies and stimulus funding. There is a bill in the house right now.

Ms. Schabowski has also reported that the city is currently trying to have a 90 day reserve of PPE to be prepared for any increase in COVID-19 cases that could come in the future.

The Mayor's Office has distributed masks to elected officials and community organizations and 100,000 masks were distributed in Parks in the first weekend. These events will be continuing as long as supplies are available. Visit nyc.gov/facecoverings for more information about hours and locations. They can also partner with the Community Board or other community organizations to assist in getting masks to our community.

The city has been monitoring three indicators: hospital admissions, ICU occupants and percentage of residents that are testing positive. These have generally been moving in the right direction.

Ms. Schabowski also announced the following:

- All public events have been cancelled for June
- Alternate Side Parking will be back on from May 18 – May 24 and then will be suspended again from May 25 – June 7
- Rolling out additional testing sites
- Antibody testing has been made available in Long Island City

QUEENS BOROUGH PRESIDENT LEE

John Perricone gave an update on Operation - 5 Borough Food Drive. This began in March and will continue until July. 500 grocery boxes per day are prepared by FreshDirect, supplemented with beverages generously donated by Liberty Coca-Cola Beverages, will be picked up by participating Queens non-profit community-based organizations (CBOs) to distribute amongst their clients, including seniors, low-income families and other vulnerable populations across all 14 Queens Community Districts. More than 11,000 boxes have been distributed. For more information, www.queensbp.org/5-borough-food-drive.

Mr. Perricone also announced that Queens BP Lee partnered with Queens Elected Officials, Community Organizations and Labor Union Leaders to secure and facilitate the distribution of

Personal Protective Equipment to Frontline / Essential workers and the vulnerable and disproportionately hit populations in Queens. This was made possible by donations from the Greater NY Automobile Dealers Association and the Coca Cola Company.

Mr. Perricone reminded everyone of the importance of filling out the census. Visit my2020census.gov. He also said that the Queens Borough President's office is checking emails and taking telephone calls. Someone will answer the phone at 718-286-3000.

Last, Community Board appointments will be made by the end of May. The term of the new community board members will begin on May 31.

CONGRESS MEMBER GRACE MENG

Jordan Goldes announced that the Congress Member has been working on many things including the following:

- Helping nursing homes residents
- Assisting students in obtaining internet access for remote learning
- Calling for hazard pay for frontline workers
- Combating coronavirus related hate crimes
- Food Assistance programs
- Assisting small businesses
- Rent and Mortgage Assistance
- Legislation to have Coronavirus related materials translated into many languages
- Stimulus payments
- Securing additional PPE and Testing

Mr. Goldes also reported that Healthcare Providers in this district received \$50.7 Million under the Cares Act.

Last, Mr. Goldes reminded everyone that although the office is working remotely, you can still call or email the office, and someone will be available to help.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ANDREW HEVESI

Michael Carlier reported that the office has been distributing PPE and hand sanitizer to local nonprofits such as Queens Community House and Forestdale. They are taking suggestions for other nonprofits that need this assistance.

Mr. Carlier also reminded everyone that there is a Primary on 6/23/20. He stressed the importance of getting an absentee ballot. You can apply online at www.nycabsentee.com. There will be a Virtual meeting on May 20 at 7:00pm sponsored by the Queens County Young Democrats and One Queens Indivisible regarding COVID response on a budget level. Assembly Member Hevesi and Congress Member Meng will be speaking. To sign up, visit AM Hevesi's social media page.

CB MEMBERS:

Mark Laster reported that the Aging / Social Services / Disabilities Committee had a virtual meeting and they proposed the following resolution:

“Queens Community Board # 6 Aging Social Services Disability Committee is concerned about the recently changed rule regarding the look back period for Medicaid home care. If this rule is implemented on October 1, 2020 as currently planned it would have serious effects to our community members who would be seeking Medicaid Home Care. We encourage all community members to inform their neighbors regarding this change and all relevant providers to encourage their clients to consider applying for Medicaid Home Care prior to the implementation of this new rule”

Motion passed on a voice vote (41 In Favor, 2 Opposed)

Heidi Chain announced that the 112 Precinct Community Council and the CB 6 FH RP Cert Team will be hosting free practice remote interview panels. Community members will be volunteering their time to give job seekers the opportunity to practice before a remote interview. For more information, please email remoteinterviewpractice@yahoo.com.

Renee Mehrra announced that the Aging / Social Services / Disabilities Committee will be rescheduling their presentation that was cancelled in March, as a virtual presentation. They are still figuring out the details but are hoping to have it in the last week of May. It will be a presentation on Behavioral Health Issues & Mental Health Issues and COVID-19.

Pat Morgan spoke about an issue with the MTA. Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, the MTA announced that riders should board from the back of the bus. However, disabled individuals may still need to board the bus in the front. Many of the drivers are not aware of this and not accommodating these individuals.

Anisia Ayon announced that the CB5/CB6 Subcommittee of the Complete Count Committee in conjunction with Queens Community House will be having a Census Town Hall Meeting on June 11, 2020. A flyer will be sent to the Community Board.

Edwin Wong thanked the NYPD and the 112th Precinct for responding and dealing with harassment of the Asian Community during the Coronavirus pandemic.

Meeting adjourned at 8:49pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Nolan
Community Coordinator