

**Community Board #1 Virtual Full Board Meeting, January 11, 2022 -
6:00 PM**

Nicholas Siclari, Chairman

Members

Vincent Accornero
Joseph Ahlstrom
Ali Mir Masum
Anjail Amen-Rice
Larry Beslow
Joseph Bird
Telee Brown
Celeste Bute-Holmes
Loretta Cauldwell
Sandy Carles
Anthony Cosentino
Megan Delmar
George Doyle
Claudette Duff
Linda Eskenas
Timothy Forsyth, Excused
John Guzzo
Robert Holst
Sunny Jain
Lisa Lattanzio
John McBeth
Friday Ogbewele
Olaf Olsen, Excused
Ernest Paige
Catherine Paradiso
Amy Poirier
Francine Reali
Chris Rooney
James Samuels
Anthony Scutari
George Sona
George Turner
Kevin Washington
Daniel Williams
Steven Williams
Camille Zarrelli
Nicholas Zvegintzov

Office Staff

Joseph Carroll, District Manager
Lisa Crosby, Community Coordinator
Linda Maffeo, Community Associate

Guests

Councilmember, Kamillah Hanks, 49th District
Antoun Sawires, Councilmember Kamillah Hanks
Assemblyman, Michael Tannousis
Hanane Dbajat, Michael Tannousis' Office
Donald DeRosa, NYC Comptroller
Elena Brady, Rep. Councilman Carr
Frank Fontana, DOB
Agnes McBeth, Richmond City District Atty Office
Nicole Brooks, Parks
Adam Beckerman, DCP
Jermaine Williams, NYPD, SI Ambassador
Joan Cusack, Exec. Director HRA
Mary Bullock, Pres. Port Richmond Strong
Neil Berry
Cathy Berntsen
Matthew Calicchio, Troop 41
J. Facciponti
Jack & Owen Fruchtman
Lillian Lagazzo
Lucas Landor
Mario Buonviaggio, Port Richmond Strong
Andy Levison
Bruce Lauria
Michael Lodispoto
Michael Morrell
Matthew Nichols
Jason Price
Miriam Arnold
Marsha Russell
Shelise Rogers
Raymond Tam
Teriv
Rose Uscianowski
Mark Harmon-Vaught, Wagner
Patricia Walton
Everett Wattley
Troy McGhie
Eileen W.

Chairman Nicholas Siclari called the meeting to order.

Pledge of Allegiance

Secretary Loretta Cauldwell took roll call attendance, quorum present.

Motion made to accept December Full Board minutes; minutes accepted.

Chairman Siclari asked to have a moment of silence for the passing of Norman Light.

Public Session

Ms. Agnes McBeth is the newest member of the Richmond County District Attorney's Office, Community Partnership Unit. It is my pleasure to be with you tonight at my first Community Board meeting. We have a few other staffers that will be joining our unit very soon. If you have any questions from our office, please feel free to reach out to me. I'm sure you have been hearing about some of the policies that have been put forth by the Manhattan District Attorney's Office. Our DA, Michael McMahon, wants to assure this board and all of Staten Island that he does not intend to follow those same policies. He will continue to operate the office in the way that he has so far. He is committed to following our laws and legislating with compassion. We will review every offense on a case-by-case basis to see if they are eligible for some of the diversion programs that our office has become known for. Here's one statistic. 40% of Staten Island cases, that's 2 out of every 5 have been offered some type of diversion program for various offenses. Serious cases will be dealt with seriously. Thank you and I look forward to working with you.

Mr. Jermaine Williams is the new NYPD Ambassador. Welcome to 2022. There are talks about getting these home tests for Covid. We are trying to find locations where we can send the Covid tests to have them distributed. We need to make sure the location has staff that can help register and give out the tests.

Ms. Mary Bullock wished everyone a Happy 2022. I am speaking about the Naloxone Vending Machine. Port Richmond Strong Civic Association zip code 10302 is concerned about rising overdose deaths in NYC and Staten Island and saving human lives. Zip codes 10306, 10312, and 10301 are prioritized as neighborhoods to have these vending machines. We have two concerns. Though Port Richmond zip code, 10302 is not included in the statement above, somehow Port Richmond always seems to become a priority neighborhood. There are ways to meet the need for Naloxone other than just putting it out in a vending machine. This way is not necessarily secure and may invite congregation around a machine that isn't good for the community. Treatment sites which Port Richmond already has don't pose risks to the community in a public safety way. This proposal is not needed in our 10302 area. Since 10301, 10305, 10306, 10308, 10309, 10312 and 10314 areas are hardest hit, we support with the concerns noted above the proposed pilot program on Staten Island for the placement of the vending machines in the hardest hit neighborhoods for those who can benefit it the most.

Councilwoman Kamillah Hanks mentioned she is at RUMC, her daughter just had a baby girl. Councilwoman wanted to pop in the meeting. The FY23 applications for funding are coming out. Our offices will be meeting with people who are interested in receiving funding. Mr. Antoun Sawires who is working in our office and will remain on the meeting for any questions you may have. I want to thank you all very much and I

look forward to going to many more meetings and I will see you soon. Have a great evening.

Assemblyman Michael Tannousis is in Albany on their second week of Legislative sessions. I want to welcome Ms. McBeth to the Richmond County District Attorney's office. Though I don't work there anymore, I still consider it my home. Congratulations on your position. I want to give an update on my office and what we have been doing. We have a good amount of Covid testing self-kits. We had an event in South Beach where we gave out 1,000 of them. We are hoping to get more and will be able to give them out. Please call my office if you have any questions or if you need a kit, you can put your name on the list. The office number is 718-987-0197. In the second week of Legislative session, we sent a bipartisan letter out to the state delegation, State Senators and Assembly Members asking for the Governor, Speaker of the Assembly and the President of the Senate to help us with the property tax reform. The report came out recently Staten Island and Brooklyn have been unfairly targeted with property taxes and has been an unfair system. We are asking that and will also get involved with the state. Even though it is a NYC issue, we ask that the state get involved and help us pass meaningful Legislation with reform this once and for all. My office is always open, 9-5 everyday. Hanane Dbajat, the Chief of Staff is on the meeting. Feel free to call us with any constituent issues you may have. Happy New Year. Stay safe and take all precautions. Thank you.

Chairman Siclari thanked both the Assemblyman and Councilwoman for taking the time to join us. We really appreciate it.

Telee Brown there will be a street naming called Little Liberia Way at Park Hill Avenue and Sober Court. I want to thank former Councilwoman Debi Rose for having the City Council approve it. I also want to thank the new council member that is working with us to make sure this a great success in February.

Jason Price had a question about the Rapid Antigen tests. Certain areas are getting the tests and others are not. Are they going to distribute the tests in all the areas? Especially in Stapleton.

Joe Carroll said the information is on the City website. It has all the locations of every test. Lisa Crosby mentioned that The Family Life Center and Vanderbilt has it.

Mr. Price will leave his email in the chat and Lisa Crosby will get him the information he needs.

Chairman Siclari said a lot of questions were answered. Janet Dugo put everything in the chat. I would officially like to get that letter out from the Community Board.

A letter had been previously sent to NYC EDC for the ferry to Brooklyn.

Officers' Reports

First Vice-Chairman, Anthony Cosentino - No report.

Second Vice-Chairman, Timothy Forsyth – No report.

Third Vice-Chairman, Friday Ogbewele - No report.

Secretary, Loretta Cauldwell - No report.

Treasurer, Larry Beslow - The report is in the packet.

Chairman, Nicholas Siclari - There was a moment of silence for Norman Light, our Parks Chairman, in the beginning of the meeting if you came on late. I want to share a story about him. The Community Board is a family. Everyone sent emails regarding him. We took it hard, and it was a shock. One day Norman, so quiet and soft spoken, we were at Snug Harbor and had a contested debate. I don't remember what it was about, but it was going on for an hour, two hours. It was one of the latest meetings I ever had. I was flustered and Norman pulled me aside and in 5 minutes he summed up a perfect point that would have satisfied both sides of the argument. I said Norman, you are a Community Board member, why didn't you say something, and we could have all went home. He said he didn't want to get involved. I said you could have ended the two and a half hours we just wasted. That was the type of guy Norman was. He was quiet and soft spoken but still waters run deep. He was a great man. I thank him for all his service, and he was there when we needed him. We are a family, and he will be missed.

I would like to do a reverse roll call. I would like to temporarily suspend Functional Committees on an as needed basis. Parks, Youth, Health and Hospitals, and Labor until the end of the year. Between the Pandemic and everything else, it has been tough. I reached out to the newly elected officials. We are running lean. Our committees are not staffed as fully as they should be. In June, we will have an influx of new Community Board members. With the surge of Omicron, we weren't able to meet in person this month.

Chris Rooney said there is a couple of committees you can't suspend. Land Use, Budget, and Youth. I'll have to look up about Youth, not sure.

George Doyle asked about term limits on board members. How will we know when our term is up? Chairman Siclari said it was 4 two-year terms. Mr. Carroll said they were meeting with the Mayor's office on Wednesday and will ask that question.

Nicholas Zvegintzov said what about Transportation? I think we are functional.

Nick Siclari said not Transportation. Transportation has two public hearings planned already. Parks, Youth and Health and Hospitals. Ernest Paige did a terrific job with Youth. He took Kelly Vilar's place. He has a lot on his plate this year and can't do it. Essentially it is February to June, 5 months. Hopefully we have an influx of new members. Everyone burns the candle at both ends.

Joseph Carroll said plus the Ad-Hoc Committees.

Loretta did a reverse roll call. Passed unanimously.

District Manager, Joseph Carroll - I want to say a couple of words about Normal also. For the past two years, he has debriefed me after every full board meeting. He would spend an hour on the phone. I'm certainly going to miss that. He was a very interesting

guy. He was a Statewide PEF Treasurer, Treasurer for the Retirees, and member of the Staten Island Sports Hall of Fame. He knows every park on Staten Island. He was very politically active but most of all, a wonderful storyteller. He will be sorely missed, and I will miss those phone calls. God bless you Norman.

Tony Cosentino said he will tell a story sometime in the future. Norman's nephew in Tennessee is preparing an Obituary for the public. Mr./Carroll said we are getting pictures from Parks to share with them.

Functional Committee Reports

Land Use, Vincent Accornero - Ms. Crosby said there was no Land Use meeting. We had a public hearing that Loretta Cauldwell will speak about. Minutes are in the packet.

Health and Human Services, Amy Poirier - No report.

Waterfront, Ole Olsen - Excused. Chairman Siclari said he had a wonderful Waterfront meeting. Minutes are in the packet. Loretta Cauldwell said they talked about the Esplanade from Bay Street Landing to Stapleton. There were some questions and concerns because part of the area is privately owned. They are speaking to Bay Street Landing about that. It will be a nice passageway where you'll be able to bike, walk and stop at certain points and take a rest. Very good presentation. There are more details in the minutes.

They will repair the revetments and tidal pools. It's going to be a nice project. EDC has agreed to stay in touch with us. We have a PowerPoint on this presentation. Very extensive and thought out. The money is funded for the first phase. The construction money is not yet allocated.

Public Services, Sunny Jain – Chairman Siclari said we had our first snowstorm. Mr. Jain said he was on Victory Blvd. and saw a lot of trucks. Sanitation did a good job in preparation. I was out in the morning and saw the streets cleaned up by Sanitation. If there are any issues, please update us and we will highlight it to Sanitation. Mr. Beslow said he would like to thank Mr. Jain because he received calls about Sanitation. Mr. said he spoke to people on difficult streets, but they said they were taken care of.

Youth Services, Ernest Paige - No report. I want to thank you Chairman Siclari for your leadership and support. We should take this time as a community board and continue to strengthen our resolve and be determined to come back better in the future. Thank you again.

Chairman Siclari said he wants to remind everyone that Mr. Paige took over for Kelly Vilar. He did a terrific job with Youth Services. Everyone had a rough year including Ernest. He wants to take a breather and it's not too much to ask for someone that is so valuable to the board. I want to thank Mr. Paige again for all his leadership with the Youth Committee.

Rules and Legislative Affairs, Christopher Rooney - No report.

Budget & Finance, Anthony Cosentino - No report.

Transportation, Nicholas Zvegintzov - We will be having two public hearings this year. One is on the transportation infrastructure. The question there is, what could we use dollars for to help transportation on the North Shore? And How do we get those dollars? I would like everyone's input to that. We hope to have this hearing in February. I'm trying to get that organized. The Staten Island Advance, Councilmember Kamillah Hanks and others have been making noises about getting these dollars.

A second public hearing that I want to do in March is about the Ferry. I logged all the notices where it said the ferry would not run at certain hours. This is becoming dreadful. I would like to get your input on what the ferry could do about its public image on giving better notice on these cancellations. We are going to have the meetings on Zoom. I feel Zoom works very well.

Mr. Carroll mentioned about the stories out there regarding bike paths on the Verrazano Bridge. Our board voted for this many years ago. It's only recently that other people are beating the drum for it. When we first made the proposal to the MTA, they said it would cost \$25 million dollars. Last week they said it would cost \$400 million dollars. Something has gone awry there. Mr. Zvegintzov, maybe your committee can make an inquiry where the truth lies with that. Mr. Zvegintzov said yes and he remembers it and will try to follow it up. Chairman Siclari said the expansion of the fast ferries is going to be a major topic.

ADHOC Committee Reports

Labor, Robert Holst - No report.

Parks and Recreation, Norman Light - May he rest in peace.

Area Committee Reports

West Brighton/St. George, Loretta Cauldwell - The minutes are in the packet. We did have a meeting with Waterfront. We had a presentation with HPD. This was concerning the West Brighton houses. They are going to be completely renovating all the housing that is there presently. However, there are "senior" bungalows along the front and on the side on Alaska Street. There are two on Alaska Street that they want to do a demolition of and put a high-rise building for 120 families. I expressed concern of that much more density. They said they will have more communication with the community about that. At some point they will have to do a ULURP process for the zoning change. We will hear more about this in the future.

Mr. Carroll said we tried to make it clear to NYCHA, who is the applicant, that it would be preferable for the people living in the complex, to have a community center. We went over that time and time again. They are just looking for easy money from HPD so that's going to be a problem. Loretta Cauldwell said they called it affordable housing to get the housing pushed through. I can't imagine that the residents want another 120 families because there's so little open space for them. They need somewhere for indoor recreation. They have a community center on Broadway with specific programs. John McBeth said the plan is for a community center on the ground floor. Mr. Carroll said we don't feel that would be sufficient. They need something on the scale of the Garcia Center because of the size of the West New Brighton Complex. Mr. McBeth said there is still a lot of open discussion that can take place including that type of discussion because there's a lot of room there that is unused that can be put to use such as that. Not necessarily in the area they are building but in other areas. Larry Below said his question is affordable to who? Mr. McBeth said it will not be affordable as we

know it in the past and more likely to be low-income housing. Loretta Cauldwell said the Markham homes which are very close to this complex, was taken down and made for less housing so people can enjoy open space. More discussions to be had. I would love to hear the conversations they have with the community.

Silver Lake/Sunnyside/Westerleigh, Timothy Forsyth & Camille Zarrelli - No meeting. Everything is status quo.

Rosebank/Fort Wadsworth, John Guzzo – No meeting, no report.

Marine's Harbor/Port Richmond, John McBeth - We skipped the December meeting. We will be back in business next week. I invite anyone that is available to come to the Tuesday meeting and the community board members that are assigned to this area.

I want to take the opportunity to congratulate Mr. Everett Wattle, Port Richmond Strong and anyone else that was involved for their efforts to getting a sidewalk put in on Trantor Place. Persistence paid off so to speak. Congratulations on that work. Thank you.

Clifton/Concord/Stapleton, Larry Beslow - No meeting, no minutes or report.

Old Business - None.

New Business - Mr. Beslow said he would like to request Mr. Paige to call him. I have questions with regard to the Youth Committee.

Mr. McBeth said he still has a paid Zoom account that is open to everyone if they want to use it for their meeting. Please reach out to him or to Lisa Crosby. We cannot give you the logon information but we can set you up and get you going. To date, not many people have taken advantage of it. If you don't want to meet in person, please reach out to us.

Vincent Accornero wanted to discuss two items. He said regarding the NYCHA Proposal, I think it's important to get an early feel of how Councilmember Hanks is considering this. As we seen from the recent St. George Proposal, we may not be on the same page. That final ULURP vote ends in the City Council. I think it's important to find out her thoughts on it. I know it's preliminary but to at least get a foundation to build on.

Second, I was just at a meeting of the New Staten Island Ferry Park at the Stadium in St. George. They are enthusiastic in incorporating much of the community in the park as possible, both for baseball and non-baseball activities. They want to get a lot of usage out of the park. They want to bring in people to do very different events, schools, churches, and community-based organizations, we have an open dialogue with them already. They made a presentation with the board. They are working diligently on getting people in the community involved in the park.

Sunny Jain said, reading a lot of the Real Estate reports in NYC, it seems the new governor is focused exploring high density areas in order to solve the housing issues. I see more and more of that coming. I don't know how far they will go, and would it require a state approval? Secondly, they are putting the Brooklyn/Queens railroad project back on

track. Is there a way we can put our North Shore railroad in a discussion? I saw the article in the Advance. Joseph Carroll said the state electives have already reached out to the governor about that issue.

Jermaine Williams said that National Grid is doing a pipeline test. They are putting notices on the door saying they came by. They can charge up to \$100 dollars. I was home and a person claimed he was there. You have to go online and actually make an appointment for them to come in and inspect the line. This is from the street to the house. It's something to be mindful of about fraudulence with someone trying to get into their home.

Frank Fontana, Buildings had nothing to report. He just wanted to wish everyone a Happy New Year. I put my contact information in the chat section. Like Jermaine Williams said, I believe National Grid comes to check the meters inside the house. This is not related to Local Law 152 that requires a periodic Gas Inspection. They just check the meters itself.

Celeste Bute-Holmes had something to say about Norman Light. Norman was a really nice guy. I believe it was Norman Light to be one of the first to come up and welcome me to the board. I'm sorry that he is gone.

Fran Reali spoke of Norman Light. He would pop up at my office. I would offer him coffee or tea. The staff knew him. He would just stop by and say hello and talk about whatever was going on through the day. He would take a bus to get here. It was an amazing type of relationship. I was very blessed to have known him. He was a caring individual and couldn't do anything more for you. I had to reiterate all the wonderful things that were said about him. He will be missed just as a fellow human being. Mr. Carroll said he bused everywhere and left his car in the garage.

Chairman Siclari suspended the rules and allowed the following to speak:

Antoun Sawires said he wanted to introduce himself. He works in Councilwoman Hanks' office. Happy New Year. I will put my information in the chat. We are still in a transitional phase but if anyone wants to reach out please do. My contact maybe subject to change. I have written down all the issues everyone was talking about. I'll get in touch with Vinny about the West Brighton renovations and Mr. Zvegintzov. Chairman Siclari said thank you and we appreciate it.

Neil Berry wanted to speak about the serious situation in Stapleton with families who don't have gas. This is not acceptable. NYCHA is going into privatization. It's been 8 months without gas. That is inhuman. They are given supplementary hot plates. There are 100 families and senior citizen home. If this was done in the South Shore or other communities, it would not be acceptable. We cannot punish people for poverty. Where is the community about this? Mr. Carroll said we have reached out the prior administration about this. We had no results from them. That's as far as we can push it. It's for those who have the leadership power. We did reach out to the various levels of government between October, November, and December. There were a lot of people who volunteered to bring gas and hot plates to try to help the residents out. While NYCHA has been uncooperative, the community has rallied to try and help the residents of the complex. Hopefully the new administration will be able to help.

Rose Uscianowski from Transportation Alternatives. I want to clarify what was said about the issue of the old North Shore rail site. It would be fantastic to raise this issue. Mr. Zvegintzov said it came up in the Staten Island Advance recently. I don't know if anyone has officially probed the state government. One of the things we would like to discover at this Public Hearing is what are the ways that money gets into the system. Everyone is vague about it. We need to know exactly how this all works. I will follow it up, for instance with Transportation Alternatives because they know a lot more than I do.

Motion made to adjourn.
Meeting adjourned at 7:14 P.M.