

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT FOR THE AGING
Office of Management Analysis and Planning
Summary of Bronx Hearing
October 30, 2008

GENERAL INFORMATION

Number Attending: 97

On Podium: Edwin Méndez-Santiago, Commissioner
Jorge Romero, Assistant Commissioner
Linda Whitaker, Assistant Commissioner
Karen Taylor, Senior Director Bureau of Senior Centers
Alan Hom, Deputy Director, Bureau of Long Term Care and Active Aging
Dr. Evelyn Laureano, Member, DFTA Advisory Council
Doris Williams, Member, DFTA Advisory Council

Number Testifying: 29 speakers, 14 of whom did not submit written testimony, 2 of whom submitted written testimony but did not speak.

SUMMARY OF TOPIC AREAS (Speaker list attached)

DFTA SERVICES/SERVICE NEEDS OF THE ELDERLY

DFTA Modernization Plan

Some speakers urged DFTA to take a closer look at restructuring plans and put off the Senior Center RFP until the other transitions are complete. One speaker stated that consolidation of contracts leads to less choice for clients. Many speakers expressed the concern that senior centers will close, especially those centers in NYCHA facilities. One speaker asked if bilingual staff will be included in the new senior centers.

One speaker expressed concern that 3,500 case management clients may have been undercounted, that there are waiting lists, and that too many case managers have either been fired or have too high a caseload. This speaker also expressed concern that there is a waiting list for home delivered meals, and that consumers don't like frozen meals.

(1, 3, 7, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 20, 22, 24)

Recommendations for DFTA:

- DFTA refrain from closing senior centers, especially those in NYCHA facilities.
- DFTA delay release of the senior center RFP.
- DFTA emphasize the hiring of bilingual staff for new senior centers.

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT FOR THE AGING
Office of Management Analysis and Planning
Summary of Bronx Hearing
October 30, 2008

Fiscal

DFTA was asked to increase funding, specifically for programs affected by the loss of Borough President (BP) funds and for senior centers. Most speakers expressed concern that their programs would either close or be unable to provide vital services if BP discretionary funds were not restored back to the Borough Presidents. Speakers also stated that they cannot provide more services with less money.

(1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 28, 29)

Recommendations for DFTA:

- DFTA increase funding for programs.
- DFTA restore the Borough President's Discretionary Fund.

Other

Grandparent Caregivers

One speaker stated the value of services for grandparent caregivers and asked that funding continue for these services, including keeping The Family Center open. (8)

Home Attendants

One speaker emphasized the importance of greater background checks on Home Attendants due to incidents of theft. (27)

JPAC

A speaker from JASA discussed the positive steps taken with their JPAC program. (15)

LGBT Community

One speaker asked that DFTA continue efforts to be inclusive of the LGBT community. (18)

Section 8 Housing

A speaker emphasized that Section 8 housing notices need to be advertised well before the deadline to apply. (4)

Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired

One speaker brought up a number of issues of concern for the blind and visually impaired, including asking DFTA for: an ongoing commitment to the NYC Coalition on Aging and Vision, as well as the creation of an on-going resource center; assistance with access to benefits, outreach, and inclusion of the blind and visually impaired community; the installation of audible pedestrian signals and modification of "quiet cars," in cooperation with the NYCDOT; and greater workforce development. (5)

Recommendations for DFTA:

- DFTA retain funding for the grandparent/caregiver program.

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT FOR THE AGING
Office of Management Analysis and Planning
Summary of Bronx Hearing
October 30, 2008

- DFTA increase requirements for background checks for Home Attendants.
- DFTA continue efforts to be inclusive of the LGBT community.
- DFTA commit to an ongoing resource center for the blind and visually impaired.

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT FOR THE AGING
Office of Management Analysis and Planning
Summary of Bronx Hearing
October 30, 2008

SPEAKERS

1. **Adolfo Carrión, Jr.** Bronx Borough President
2. **Sandra Boyle** Emerald Isle Immigration Center
3. **Eleanor Edelstein** Council Member Oliver Koppell's Office
4. **Alonzo Jordan** Office of State Senator Malcolm A. Smith
5. **Mark Bonés** VISIONS/Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired*
6. **Julia Schwartz-Leeper** Riverdale Senior Services
7. **Providencia Miro** East Concourse Senior Center*
8. **Peggy Lee** client of The Family Center
9. **Traci Lester** Reach Out and Read of Greater NY*
10. **Thomas Lifrieri** senior*
11. **Heather Waters** Intergenerational Program Director, Millennium Art Academy*
12. **Brad Silver** Executive Vice President, Bronx Community Jewish Council*
13. **Lydia Garcia** Casa Boricua Senior Center*
14. **Marcella Brown** President, William Hudson Senior Center*
15. **Cameron Geliss** Community Outreach Director, JASA/JPAC
16. **Ada DeCastro** Senior Center Director, Bronx River Senior Center
17. **Solomon Smart** Program Director, CAB East Concourse Senior Center*
18. **Doreen Bermudez** Services and Advocacy for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Elders (SAGE)
19. **Nicos Nicolaidis** HANAC Extended Services
20. **Gerri Lamb** Castle Hill Senior Center*

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT FOR THE AGING
Office of Management Analysis and Planning
Summary of Bronx Hearing
October 30, 2008
SPEAKERS cont.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 21. Dr. Evelyn Laureano | Neighborhood SHOPP and DFTA Advisory Council |
| 22. Elizabeth Sanchez
(on behalf of Sister Margaret McDermott) | Tolentine Zeiser Community Center* |
| 23. Marie Spivey | Bronx Community Pride Center (BCPC)* |
| 24. Olive Stewart | senior* |
| 25. Louisa Greco | Providence Rest Foundation* |
| 26. Judith Richburg | Aging in America Community Services* |
| 27. Doris Williams | DFTA Advisory Council |

* Speakers who did not submit testimony.

Submitted Testimony Only

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 28. Qiawni Micou, MSW Bruce | Mosholu Montefiore Community Center |
| 29. Ronald Kunik | Van Nest Community Association, Inc. |