



General Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 18, 2019

Present: Abunoman Rahman, Angel Martinez, Benigno Cuevas, Brandon Ganaishlal, Cesar Pagan, Daniel Porro III, Henry Pelayo Jr., Isabelo Adames, Juan Torres, Kwabena Gabay, Mitchell Halpern, Mohammad Mujumder, Nellie Santiago-Rivera, Nicholas Himidian Jr., Rosemary Ordonez Jenkins, Sarwar Jahan, Sharan Fernandez, William Rivera (DM)

Not Present: Cruz Garcia, Doralina Colon, Felipa Manaiza, James Tynan, Kevin Kiernan, Linda Brown, Lisa Diaz, Steven Ochoa

Meeting Start Time: 7:00pm

Note: The Chairperson asked the audience to stand and pledge allegiance to the flag, followed by a moment of silence. The Chairperson reminded everyone to please sign up to speak no later than 5pm the day of the General Board Meeting.

Note: The Chairperson entered into the Public Session.

Public Session

1. Patricia Tomasulo spoke about organ donation in recognition of April which is Organ Donation Month. Ms. Tomasulo is a 2 time organ recipient. As per Ms. Tomaulo, NY is 50th out to the 50 states in organ donation. One person can save 8 lives. Handouts were distributed at the resource table.
2. First Vice Chair Mohammed Mujumder spoke in opposition about the proposed Men's Shelter at 2008 Westchester Avenue. As per Mr. Mujumder, the Bronx has the most shelters in the city. Mr. Mujumder encouraged all participants to attend the rally hosted by Councilmember taking place in the near future in opposition to this site.
3. Mary Jobaida, Outreach Specialist from Urban Health Plan announced that Urban Health is a conglomerate of health care centers in the Bronx. Urban Health Plan provides community services in the Bronx and hosts events. An upcoming event, a Prom Drive will be taking place

on Saturday, April 27th at 1065 Southern Blvd. There will be dresses, shoes, bags, accessories for high school seniors. Last year 160 students were served.

4. Ifiti Chowdry spoke about the proposed shelter at 2008 Westchester Ave. With a background of working with the school district he is upset as to why this site was proposed within walking distance of 10 schools. Mr. Chowdry wants to know why other Communities only have 1 or no shelters yet CB9 is being proposed another shelter site. In addition Mr. Chowdry claims to represent the Bengali community in his opposition to the shelter. As per Mr. Chowdry, DHS claims that there will be a 10pm curfew for participants, however, who will enforce this? As per Chairman Himidian, thank you for your comments, they are well received and well taken.
5. As per former BM Jennifer Ellison-Lackard, this is her last GB Meeting as a Board Member. She launched the Race for Re-Entry in the district and would like to thank the community for their time and partnership. This past week Community Hoops was held, it is a partnership with NYPD, 43rd Precinct. The event has grown from a male basketball game to a middle school game, high school game, wheelchair game, and a women's and men's game. In terms of bringing the community together and building better trust building relationships with law enforcement it was a really good experience and is something that is hosted every year. Next year Ms. Ellison-Lackard will be attending meetings as a public member. Race for Re-Entry has been postponed due to the weather and has been rescheduled to Saturday, May 11th at Soundview Park. Acknowledgments were given to partnership individuals and organizations.

As per Chairman Himidian, all BMS to be sure to sign in to the sign in sheets and help recycle packets for upcoming Senior Connected Meetings.

Business Session

Note: The Chairperson put a motion on the floor to go into the Business Session. The motion was seconded by Sharon Fernandez. The vote was unanimous. The motion was passed.

1. Justin Sanchez from the Borough President's office, updated the community that the BP and other Community Leaders rallied together to try to stop the proposed jail site in Matt Haven. This site is being pushed by the Mayor by combining 4 land use items in the ULURP for the first time in the history of the city. All are encouraged to join the fight. BP has also called for a number of criminal justice reforms, including cash bail. BP also released the Bronx Annual Development Report. In 2018, the borough saw 3.4 billion dollars in investment, this is an increase of 25.6% from 2017. They are adding 8,885 total housing units in 2019 and 4,225 of those units were built with government subsidies. BP also denounced President Trump's comments on PR. Anyone interested in using DOE community space can apply through the BP's Office and BP will cover this expense at a first come first serve basis.
2. Josue Melendez from Councilmember Rafael Salamanca's Office announced that the Councilmember recently introduced 3 pieces of legislation. One will require the NYPD to report the number of arrests that they made that refers to false impersonation. The other legislation is Intro 1510 that requires DOT to create borough based traffic response teams to respond to traffic study requests. Intro 1511 will require DOT to create restrictions zones in terms of trailers and mobile homes. The office has immigration attorneys present twice a

week. Residents can also call the office at 718-402-6130 and the office is located at 1070 Southern Blvd.

3. Destiny Cruz from Congress Member Alexandria Ocasio Cortes' Office is the representative for CB9. The Congresswoman is in district due to April recess. The Congresswoman is in the district for the next 2 weeks and will be attending local events. Yesterday she was in a school at the United Nurses District Town Hall. Notification and flyers of meet and greet opportunities with the Congresswoman will be shared with CB9 to be shared with the community. As per Ms. Cruz the office is available to help with immigration and other federal related matters. In addition, the office is really closed to securing a Bronx Office.
4. Frankie Mercedes from Senator Biaggi's office announced that there will be a rain barrel giveaway tomorrow from 12-2pm, RSVP required. First come first serve after 12:30pm. Senator Biaggi's Office is very dedicated to the safety of children especially in relation to the sexual safety of children. As a result, the Senator sponsored Erin's law which mandates that children learn personal body safety in school so that they are aware of consent. In regards to affordable housing, there are currently 9 bills in the Affordable Housing for all that will change the way that tenants live in NYC. In relation to the 2008 Westchester Ave shelter, this will not be a SARA complaint site. SARA, Sexual Assault Reform Act, does not allow anyone who is released to be within 100 feet of the school as a level 3 sex offender. This information was shared to help share facts on this site based on the recent discussions on this matter.
5. Daniel Guerrero from Senator Sepulveda's Office gave out the office location which is 900 Rogers Place. The office phone number is 718-991-3161. Constituent Services are offered including issues with SCRIE & DRIE, as well as housing related concerns. Constituent hours are Mon-Thur 9am-3pm and Friday 9am-12pm.
6. Justin Westbrook-Lowery from Assembly Member Karines Reyes office reported on the proposed shelter at 2008 Westchester Ave. The Assembly Member attended the notification meeting last Friday and based on community concerns based on the vicinity of this location to 2 schools, a library and senior site, the Assembly Member is distributing a petition both online and at the office in physical form in opposition to having any sex offenders at this proposed site.

In addition this past month the office hosted their first Annual Easter Egg Hunt along with Senator Sepulveda. There were over 100 children in attendance. In addition, this month Assembly Member Reyes voted on her very first budget. The member got on the budget a study regarding safe staffing at hospitals and nursing homes. This study will look into what will be a good ratio of patient to hospital employee in order to provide better care. There is also \$618 million for foundation aid for schools and the elimination of cash bail for most offenses that are misdemeanors and no sexual offenses. Also, there is automatic open discovery in all cases and trials and an extension to the excelsior scholarship which provides families that make in between 80K-125K free tuition as long as they meet certain requirements when it comes to attending SUNY Colleges. There is also capitol and expense funding increases in SUNY and CUNY Schools. In addition, there is 20 million for Census funding and 8 million for increases for reinforcement of rent laws and a restoration for 500 million dollars for Medicaid Cuts that were proposed in Executive Budget and 1.6 million for

veteran services in the budget. Parking calendars were shared at the resource table and information regarding scams.

As per BM Mujumder, the residents want no shelters in the district specifically, not just not having sex offenders at the proposed shelter sites. As per BM Torres, what is the Assembly Member's position on the shelter? As per Mr. Westbrook-Lowery, the Assembly Member is opposed to the shelter in its current form.

7. Robert Spencer from the Office of District Attorney Darcel Clark announced that in collaboration with NYPD, FDNY and Safe Horizon they will be hosting their 3rd Annual Bronx Safety Fair for Children ages 3-13 on April 27th at 11am-3pm at 1914 Morris Ave. There will be music, workshops, and more.
8. Antirson Ortiz from the Comptroller's office talked about immigrants who contribute over 100 million dollars to the City of NY yet they are unable to do their everyday routine because they are afraid to get deported. Since Obama's Administration, deportation has increased over 150%. Deportation for individuals with no criminal records went from 300 to 1100. Administrative arrest by ICE increased from 1800 to 3400. In NYC there are almost 20,000 immigration cases. Contrary to popular belief a lot of immigrants do not receive city benefits due to not being documented. What the Comptroller wants to secure is that ICE is no longer in the courts, that there are funds available to protect individuals when they go to court, and that we establish funding for bonds for those individuals who can still stay in this country. As per BM Torres, is it to be understood that the Comptroller intends to disregard federal law regarding ICE? As per Mr. Ortiz, the Comptroller is making recommendations in support of a population that is not committing any crimes or violations. As per BM Torres, he would argue that by entering the country illegally these individuals are already violating federal law.

As per Chairman Himidian, a PSA Announcement regarding Congresswoman Ocasio-Cortes' Office, they hosting mobile office hours at the Parkchester Library Friday April 26th from 10am-12pm. The Congresswoman will be present to meet with constituents.

Chairperson's Report

- As per Chairman Nicholas Himidian, his report will be consolidated with the DM Report because he is aware everyone is anxious to hear updates on the proposed shelter.

District Manager's Report

- As per DM Rivera, the office renovation is going well and office plans have been shared at committee meetings
- Senior Symposium and Seniors Connected will be next Friday at 10am at ShopRite
- CBMS is piloting, DM Rivera has met with Councilmember Cabrera and staff and he will be pushing this along with DOITT to offer this service citywide.
- DM Rivera finished all quarterly meetings with elected officials.
- Packet was distributed that was shared at Notification Meeting on April 12th, it includes a timeline of when CB was notified of this proposed site and following actions. Around 500 people attended the public meeting hosted by CB9 and/or filled out the Questionnaire that was distributed.

- Councilmember Diaz's Office hosted a meeting this afternoon to organize a press conference on April 25th at 12pm in front of 2008 Westchester Avenue. This conference is to inform the public of a rally he will be hosting in opposition to the proposed shelter site on April 29th at 6:30pm in front of the location.
- DM Rivera is getting a tour at another Samaritan Village Employment Shelter in BK to see how they operate next Tuesday.
- On May 7th, DHS will present at the Social Service Committee Meeting and a conversation will be had then.
- On May 16th, the next GB Meeting DM Rivera will have an update on the press conference, rally and visit. In Addition, BM Ordonez-Jenkins will have a report on the committee meeting and Chairman Himidian will most likely have a report regarding the executive committee. This is an As of Right project, therefore the board has no recommendation, however, the board is here to advocate on behalf of the community and a response will be drafted and shared along with local elected to the Mayor's Office and DHS; a factual, comprehensive and ethical response.
- There are 60K people in the shelter system currently, in the Bronx there are 20K people. In CB9 there are 2,017 in the shelter system. Out of the 2,017 individuals 837 are in a facility in CB9 and out of these, 509 are in cluster sites. As per the Mayor's Initiative of Turning the Tide, which is 140 pages long, cluster sites will be closed. DM Rivera will be sending an email to BMs regarding this matter in bullets.
- As per DM Rivera, there is a concern as to why we are receiving a male shelter in CB9 when more family shelters were closed in our community and there seems to be more of a need for a family shelter.
- As per DM Rivera, the reasons why this site may have been selected could be due to real estate value, zoning and political power.
- Level of sex offenders is concerning even though it is legal, it is not the ideal site for this shelter.
- The Bronx has 35% of the shelters, therefore, no new shelters should be coming into the Bronx. Regardless, if there is a shelter coming to the Bronx, before CB9 gets its 9th shelter all the other Community Boards should get their 8th shelter.
- As per ADM SanAndres-Alonzo, the Turn the Tide on Homeless Initiative is a plan that hopes to reduce the number of people in our shelters by 2,500 over 5 years. Part of the plan is to get out of all 360 cluster sites and commercial hotel facilities and replace them with much smaller number of shelters. To accomplish this, the city plans to open approximately 20 new shelters annually for the next 5 years to get to the goal of opening approximately 90 new shelters. These new shelters will open with the objective to house individuals in their community and close to schools, employment and health care or houses of worship as these are seen as the "kinds if support that can help families and individuals stabilize their lives after losing their homes, which can in turn help them move out of shelters more quickly."
- When possible, newly constructed shelters will include community amenities, such as meeting spaces or childcare facilities, and combine permanent and temporary housing.

- DHS will notify communities at least 30 days in advance of when a shelter needs to be opened and take into account reasonable community concerns and input.
- DHS will form community advisory boards for each shelter to ensure open dialogue around shelter issues directly after new sites open.
- The NYPD management team is helping manage safety in homeless shelters and will work with local precincts to ensure safety for both shelter residents and the community.
- The City will also continue its plan to provide more affordable and supportive housing...”
- As per DM Rivera, we want the board to come across as intelligent and making an informed decision that this is a horrible idea based on the numbers.
- As per Chairman Himidian, everyone should email DM Rivera all the questions or suggestions to be shared with DHS.
- As per BM Torres, aside from these numbers from the city, what other entity have these types of shelters in our borough, i.e. state, federal, private, etc? As per DM Rivera, in regards to DHS sites, it is only city based, therefore, we should not get any other surprises.
- As per Chairman Himidian what year is this information from? As per DM Rivera, these numbers are from the last 2-3 months.
- As per DM Rivera he has been working on getting a lot of information from DHS and put a summary together for the public.
- As per BM Rosemary Jenkins questions that were raised at the meeting were, how can the city ensure that there is no crime? Does anyone study the shelter after its opening and if so can it be shared? As per DM Rivera he doesn't think they can give an answer to this but they probably have an idea. This shelter is not an SRO. DM Rivera has to make sure this won't create a quality of life issue moving forward. If this this shelter comes in DM Rivera states he has to prepare for the worst and hope for the best. DHS notified the community board that this shelter is coming, not that they are thinking about it.
- Rosemary Jenkins states city keeps all reports inside and outside of the facility.
- DM Rivera stated that in the Executive Committee they will discuss how to reform for General Board meeting so too much time won't be taken up in the beginning. Elected Officials probably will be asked to submit a report, the Chairperson will decide.
- DM Rivera stated he asked DHS if they will come out to a Town Hall meeting. As per Chairman Nicholas Himidian if this can happen it should happen in the evening so everyone can attend.
- BM Juan Torres asked if the possibility of a lawsuit has been brought up because other communities do that. DM Rivera stated that if we have the ammunition and justification this can possibly be a next step.
- As per Chairman Nicholas Himidian don't try to stick something in our community because it is an “as of right” project, we have to discuss why they are targeting our community every time.
- As per DM Rivera if anyone wants to speak at next General Board they have to call before 5 PM on May 16th. Time will be capped for Elected Officials and Public at the next General Board meeting.
- As per DM Rivera questionnaires are being databased by CB9 staff.

- As Per DM Rivera, Councilmember Diaz will be having a rally on April 29th at the proposed location.

Committee Reports

1. Executive & Operations minutes were submitted as is by Chairperson Himidian.
2. Youth & Education Committee Minutes submitted as is by Chair Cesar Pagan
3. Land & Zoning minutes were submitted as is by chair Mohammed Mujumder.
4. Parks Kwabena Gabay stated that he spoke to the Parks commissioner Iris Rodriguez about redoing the wetlands for Harding Park and fixtures for Haviland playground. Minutes were submitted as is by Chair Kwabena Gabay.
5. Public Safety Minutes were submitted as is by Vice Chair Isabelo Adames.

Street Renaming

-On April 4th, the Public Safety committee voted in favor for the Street renaming of Stickball Boulevard to Gladis De La Cruz, the Principal of Stevenson YABC. Chairman Nicholas Himidian put a motion out for Stickball Boulevard to be renamed to Gladis De La Cruz, the motion was seconded by Rosemary Ordonez-Jenkins, the vote was unanimous the motion was passed.

-On April 4th, the Public Safety committee voted in favor for the Street renaming of Noble Avenue to Pandit Vishnu Sukul Way. Chairman Nicholas Himidian put a motion out for Noble Avenue to be renamed to Pandit Vishnu Sukul Way, the motion was seconded by Rosemary Ordonez-Jenkins, the vote was unanimous the motion was passed.

6. Social Services minutes were tabled and submitted as is by Chair Rosemary Ordonez-Jenkins. Rosemary Jenkins stated that the senior symposium will be on April 26th.

*Chairman Nicholas Himidian stated that NYCHA committee meeting will be moved to next Friday.

Meeting adjourned: 8:30 PM

OFFICE INFO

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