

**Brooklyn Community Board 9**  
**890 Nostrand Avenue Brooklyn, New York 11225**  
**Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes**

February 15th, 2024  
Meeting ID: 824 4280 6395

**Attendance** (Board Members): Ethan Norville, Committee Chair; Felice Robertson; Benny Rosenberger; Lorianne Wolseley

**Attendance** (Community Resident Members): Paco Abraham; Valerie Fleming; Jeffrey Grannum; Andrew Magnus, Calista DeJesus

**Absent** (Board Members): None

**Absent** (Community Resident Members): Stanley Greenberg;

**Guests:** Zach Youngren; Theresa Westerdahl; Su Sanni (Dollaride); Taji Morris (Dollaride), Sasha Robertson, Ryan Lamberg, James Ellis (Perch Advisors), Aarti Mehta (Perch Advisors), Barry Carr

**CB9 Staff:** Dante Arnwine, District Manager

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1. Welcome/Greetings
  - a. Committee Chair, Ethan Norville called the meeting to order at 7:10pm
2. Presentation – Dollaride
  - a. Representatives spoke about the company as a mobility company based in Brooklyn and focused on improving access to reliable transportation options in underserved communities. Specifically, they spoke about CTAP – the Clean Transit Access Program: An initiative to help transition existing commuter van drivers in Brooklyn and Queens to electric vehicles.
  - b. The aim is to support commuter vans and reduce carbon emissions. There was no particular action item they had for the committee to entertain so it was then opened to questions.
  - c. Theresa Westerdahl asked where the fleet is stored and if drivers can buy in rather than just be employees.
    - i. Su Sanni responded that they currently have 3 trial vehicles which currently are charged at and based out of the New Light Cathedral church in Brownsville. There is also a charging station in Floyd Bennet field. He then also noted that drivers can indeed pursue the path of vehicle ownership. Dollaride wants drivers to lease and ideally purchase the vehicles from them after 5 years.
  - d. Committee Chair Ethan Norville asked how they find existing drivers and approach them.
    - i. Su Sanni responded that they estimate there are about 1000 current commuter van drivers, but many are not insured or regulated. Through Dollaride, they would be, and they have a waitlist of 80 drivers who expressed interest in the program. They see it as an opportunity to create jobs in the neighborhood.
  - e. Follow up question was about the company's model for profitability.
    - i. Su Sanni responded that they are a “for profit” company and currently make money through partnership agreements with government agencies and eventually through a software program they’re building.
  - f. Valerie Fleming asked what the cost of the rides would be on these new electric vehicles they aim to introduce in the district.
    - i. Su Sanni responded that it is determined by the drivers. They keep 100% of the fares and so it is their decision whether or not to change prices. Overall, it’s been \$2 a fare for about last ten years, despite rising cost of vehicles and fuel. Su Sann also said some may say the current price should frankly be higher for a more sustainable business. On average, he estimates drivers make 65K on the high end... but a lot make only 30-35K a year under the traditional model. Both hours on the road and how many passengers they find throughout the day affect their salaries.
  - g. Felice Robertson said she commends this idea but did have a suggestion that in the new vehicles, the glass shouldn’t be so dark as is often seen now on existing fleets. When one can’t see inside, it may make people more hesitant to jump aboard.

- i. Su Sanni responded that the 3 vehicles currently in the Dollaride pilot have visibility through the windows.
    - h. Benny Rosenberger asked long the vans go on with a single charge & if there is a plan for any van which may run out of charge.
      - i. Su Sanni responded that it is temperature dependent. About 80-90 miles on a single charge in cold weather & 120 miles in warm weather. Usually, drivers do 100 miles a day if it's a full 8-hour day and all Dollaride drivers go through extensive training about how to operate an electric vehicle to avoid losing charge.
    - i. Paco Abraham asked if the fleet is still operated under permits by the TLC to ensure penalties for reckless driving.
      - i. Su Sanni said yes.
    - j. Committee Chair Ethan Norville noted there is a cap on hire vehicles and wondered if Dollaride was planning to seek out people who want to get a license but can't because of limits.
      - i. Su Sanni noted that commuter vans are a different class and license than For hire and not affected by that cap. He also said their goal is to focus first on commuter van drivers who do this work already so that they can be the first to get this opportunity
3. Community Fair Planning
- a. Committee Chair Ethan Norville recapped the general idea that the Transportation Committee will be involved in the annual CB9 community fair in which city agencies gather in the district.
  - b. Theresa Westerdahl commented on her past experiences at CB9 community fairs. She said they were good but not well attended. The location used, Ronald McNair Park, is accessible by subway and near the Brooklyn Museum so it gets some foot traffic but overall, it is the northern edge of CB9 and hard for local residents to reach.
  - c. Felice Robertson noted that the CB needs much more outreach to gather community attention.
  - d. Benny Rosenberger noted that when selecting a date for this year, Saturdays would not work for the observant Jewish community within CB9.
  - e. Andrew Magnus asked for clarification about who the audience is that we'd want to target and questioned if the CB had a budget for our committee to work from.
  - f. Committee Chair Ethan Norville suggested we vote on a plan of action.
  - g. Valerie Fleming discussed her own tabling at the past events for the Major Owens Center and suggested we have a theme and clarify the "What's in it for me?" angle for any passersby.
  - h. Suggested ideas included a shredder truck, giving out bike helmets, having NYPD engrave bicycles with an ID, inviting local community groups like Riders Alliance, Dollaride, and Citibike (such as their program that helped teach people bike mechanics), as well as bringing in the MTA to discuss CB9's likely changes in the imminent Brooklyn bus redesign.
  - i. **Committee Chair Ethan Norville calls the question if we approve inviting the above-mentioned groups to the spring fair. Hearing no opposition, it is approved by unanimous consent.**
  - j. Conversation moves to other items we may want to have with the Transportation Committee. Loose discussion on options including a large map with push pins for passersby to note concerns of theirs and gather feedback. We could also note the things our committee has already tackled or discussed.
  - k. **Committee Chair Ethan Norville calls the question if we approve using maps & pins as a potential activity for our table to use during the spring fair. Hearing no opposition, it is approved by unanimous consent.**
4. Adjourn
- a. **Chair Norville makes a motion to adjourn.**
    - i. Paco Abraham asks for the next meeting to discuss illegal sidewalk parking within CB9, in particular the FDNY station on Rogers Avenue which residents have brought to the committee's attention in the past.
    - ii. Ethan noted our CB may not have any power to remedy the situation, but understood the need for us to discuss it in future meetings.
  - b. Motion to adjourn is seconded by Felice Robertson
  - c. **Motion passes by unanimous consent**