



Donovan Richards
Queens Borough President

Community Board No. 2

43-22 50th Street, 2nd Floor
Woodside, New York 11377

(718) 533-8773

Fax (718-533-8777

Email qn02@cb.nyc.gov

www.nyc.gov/queenscb2

Anatole Ashraf

Chairperson

Debra Markell Kleinert

District Manager

May 13th, 2024

Health and Human Services and Education and Unhoused & Shelter Committee

Meeting Minutes

This meeting was teleconferenced using Zoom

Attendees:

Lauren Springer, Chair
Warren Davis, Vice Chair
Amparo Abel-Bey
Dr. Rosamond Gianutsos

Andrea Thomas -Public Member

Absentees:

John Bahia
Danielle Brecker
Nellie Afshar
Benjamin Lucas
Thomas Mituzas
Leticia Vasquez

Atanu Majumdar – Public Member

Julie Chou – Public Member

Guest

Felix Gonzalez, Director of Community Outreach, The Fortune Society
Tony – Boy Scout, working on his merit badge

Community Board 2 Staff

MaryAnn Gurrado, Community Board 2

Lauren Springer, Chair Health & Human Services and Education and Unhoused & Shelter Committee welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Lauren Springer introduced Felix Gonzalez, Director of Community Outreach from The Fortune Society.

- The Fortune Society's main office is located at LIC at 29-56 Northern Blvd.
- The Fortune Society has been around for 54 years.
- It is one of the nation's leading re-entry service organization. They serve over 10,000 individuals annually.
- They are the leading advocate in the fight for criminal justice reform and for alternatives to incarceration.
- Their mission is to support successful re-entry back into the community.

“Serving the Communities of Long Island City, Sunnyside, Woodside, and Maspeth”

- The Fortune Society works with those that are on parole, probation and those that have had some contact with the justice system.
- The Fortune Society does this work through partnerships and advocacy.
- They provide services in housing, employment, education, family services, alternatives to incarceration, mental health and substance abuse treatment, health services, food and nutrition, creative arts, and digital equity.
- Those individuals getting out of the justice system have multiple challenges.
- The Fortune Society has job readiness workshops.
- An employer can no longer ask an applicant on the application if they have had a felony conviction.
- The Fortune Society works with a lot of vendors. They connect those looking for a job with these vendors.
- They also have internship and fellowship programs.
- The Fortune Society works closely with LaGuardia Community College.
- A suggestion was made to connect The Fortune Society with the Small Business Committee as far as jobs are concerned.
- The Fortune Society has Freedom Houses. There are 4 of these. One is in Queens located at 38-58 12th Street.
- The Freedom Houses are not shelters and they are not permanent housing. It is a clean safe environment until participants find their own housing. There are rules and regulations to follow. Meals are provided as well as resources.
- The Fortune Society gets their participants through walk-ins, word of mouth and referrals.
- They serve 12,000 – 13,000 participants annually.
- The Fortune Society offers family services.
- As of January 1, 2024, the new CEO is Stanley Richards. He has been with The Fortune Society for 34 years.
- Felix Gonzalez mentioned the Queens County Task Force. He stated it would helpful if someone from CB2 attended their bi-monthly meetings. They partner with the Queens District Attorney's office and Queens Parole to help those coming home from being incarcerated. The next meeting will be in June 2024 from 10am to 12pm via zoom.

New Business:

- Try to get a representative from The Northwell School of Health Sciences to present at a Health & Human Services and Education and Unhoused & Shelter committee meeting.

Lauren Springer thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

Kim Waber