MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY BOARD MEETING
HELD ON DECEMBER 9, 2014
FOUNDERS AUDITORIUM
MEDGAR EVERS COLLEGE
1650 BEDFORD AVENUE, BROOKLYN, NY 11225

Board Members Present

Fred Baptiste
Simone Bennett
Warren Berke
Augustine Blackwell
Josette Coicou-Brioche
Ben Edwards
Milton Ellis
Shelia Foster-Golding
Rabbi Jacob Goldstein
Rabbi Nochum Gross
Tessa Hackett-Vieira
Sylveta Hamilton-Gonzales
Aron Hershkop
Laura Imperiale
Demetrius Lawrence
Avi Lesches
Michael Liburd
Denise Mann
Carmen Martinez

Board Members Present

Musa Moore
Patricia Moses
Beverly Newsome
Frank Nicholas
Dwayne Nicholson
Rosemarie Perry
Gerald President
Pia Raymond
Unella Rhone-Perry
Diana Richardson
Mary Rollerson-Blackett
Brenda Scott
Kenya Sollas
Rabbi Joseph Spielman
Ada Terry
Timothy Thomas
Jacqueline Welch
Evelyn Williams

Board Members Absent

Amy Albert
Patricia Baker
Stuart Balberg
Rev. Douglas Banks
Rev. Phyllis Brown – sick
Michael Cetera, AIA – sick
Veta May Clare
Daniel Ingvoldstad
Louis Johnson
Nacala Mitchell
Roosevelt Rose
Chanina Sperlin
Yvonne Straker – sick

Elected Officials/Agency Representatives

Brian McLaurin – Hon Letitia James
Dale DeGale – Hon. Yvette Clarke
Jamal Pollard – Hon Eric Adams
Karen Crawford – Hon Kenneth Thompson
Pierre Albert – Hon. Karim Camara

Zulema Blair – Hon. Karim Camara
Hon. Shirley Patterson
Hon. Olanike Alabi
Hon. Genine Edwards
Daphnee Champayne – Kings County Hospital

PUBLIC SESSION

Dr. David Stevens, Chief of Ambulatory Care at Kings County Hospital Center will speak about flu viruses, who should get shots, and proper health care

Chairman Nicholson calls the meeting to order and introduces the first speaker on the agenda: Dr. Stevens from Kings County Hospital:

There has already been one fatality from the flu this year. A 65-year-old man, who had not been vaccinated. What do we know about the vaccine? So every year the vaccine is usually three or four strains and one of the
strains turns out to be the strain that we are seeing H3N2. Unfortunately as the news has been breaking from the CDC as well as from all the news outlets, the dominant strain of H3N2 has some variation, from the strain that is in the vaccine. Which means that the vaccination is less protective than it would be had it been a perfect fit. So we are seeing about a 50% effectiveness from the vaccine. So, people ask, so why would you want to get a vaccine, when it only 50% effective. I think if you got a lottery ticket that had a 50% likelihood of winning, you would be happy to get that. The vaccine has been safe. I have seen personally no adverse effects this year or last year. I got it, my family got it, and my patients have gotten it. So, it seems to be pretty safe. How effective it will be will remain to be seen again, it is 50% effective against the flu that is going around now. But, we are early in the season, and it is not unlikely that later in the season, January, February a second strain of flu comes around. Even if you are not protected against the current one, you may be protected against the next strain that is coming around. Are there questions? Yeah

Question: I’ve heard that the particular flu of this year has yet to have discovered an antidote. You are going to need a flu shot. Answer: So you are 50% true. So, there are numerous strains of flu out there. H1N1 was the first one from a few years ago. There is type B. Then there are many strains of type A. One of the strains, H3N2, is the predominant strain going around now. In the vaccine, that has been given this year that actually is one of the strains. But the flu vaccine, especially for type A flu. The flu virus mutates very quickly. It is like a fingerprint and one small change in that finger print makes that vaccine less effective. Because we did get the right strain, just a slight variance, it is 50% effective against the virus that’s out; which means, if you get the vaccine and you get that particular virus, it’s highly likely that it will still help you. It just won’t help you as much. For most people who get the vaccine, it does not eliminate the flu. It just reduces the severity. That is what most people see. Instead of getting two weeks, they will only get two days. So, that is the answer, it is not a perfect fit. If we knew about the specific strain, six months ago, we could have put into the vaccine. It’s at least six months for the manufacturer to be able to produce this in the quantity that is needed. Does that answer your question? OK.

The flu is always a moving target. Every year the scientists predict what are the right strains, what are the right sub strains to put into the vaccine. Sometimes they nail it sometimes they miss it. This year it looked like it was close but not perfect. Other questions; any questions from the board?

Question: Does getting the vaccine affect your immunity? Yeah great question; Answer: So, getting the vaccine does not affect your immunity. It does not affect your ability to fight off another infection. But, if you are sick with like a fever, a strep throat with a high fever and you get the vaccine, the vaccine is less likely to work in you because your antibodies are busy fighting off another infection. If all you have is a runny nose or a common cold, but no fever, by all means, whether you are 3 years old or whether you are 70 years old you should get it. The vaccine

Question: I tried to get the flu shot and they said I can still get the flu. Answer: The vaccine does not protect against every strain of flu. So you may still get the flu. Or you get sick. Some of my patients say two days after I came to the clinic, I got sick, and I got the shot. Well maybe you got sick at the clinic?

Question: What can you do to protect yourself besides getting the vaccine? Answer: Washing your hands is the single most important thing you can do to prevent catching the flu, giving the flu. If you are sneezing, sneeze into your elbow. Kids know that, but the grown-ups don’t all know that. If you know somebody sick and you are pregnant, you’ve got other illnesses, STAY AWAY. The way the vaccine works. The way all vaccines work is you get a tiny amount of the inactivated form of the virus (the inactivated form does not spread; doesn’t grow; doesn’t replicate; it doesn’t cause disease) just enough of the vaccine for your body’s immune system to see it recognize it; build up an immune response to it so that when the real thing comes along your body is ready to attack it. But it is not a virus that can cause illness. It can cause a low grade fever. Certainly, a shot can make your arm hurt, but it does not cause the flu. Other questions? Yeah
Question: Is there a booster shot for the flu? Answer: Within a given year no, but, there is a bit of a booster effect, so say there is a vaccine for H1N1 and you got it 3 years ago and the current vaccine actually has H1N1 in it as well. If you got it 3 years ago and you get it again this year, your protection is so much better than just having it 3 years ago. So you do need to get it every year even if it is the same strain. But within a given year we don’t revaccinate. If there are any other questions, I will keep answering them.

Question: What ages can get the flu vaccine? Answer: Ages 3 and up and every age in between. The older you are and the younger you are the more likely you are to benefit. But if you are in the ages in the middle, one of the most important reasons for a healthy 30 year old to get the vaccine is that you probably know some people in your lives who are pregnant, who are infants, who are older, who have cancer or diabetes. You do not want to take the flu home to them. So the more the people in your community are protected the more it is going to help the sickest people in your community. This to me is the most compelling reason for a healthy person to get the vaccine to protect the other sicker people in their community. So, I put my email on the handout. It really is my email. If you have questions feel free to email me.

Question: Who should not get a flu vaccine? Answer: Newborns should not get it; people who have had a known allergy to the vaccine, not just egg allergies; in the past if you said egg allergy, but today egg allergy is not a problem. People who have had a known allergy to the vaccine or people who have had a disease called Guillain-Barre, which is a very rare disease. Pretty much everybody else should get it and the sicker people. The more sick you are; pregnant women tolerate the flu very poorly. They get dehydrated and put the baby at risk, so sicker people, pregnant women need it even more. Thank you.

Chairman Nicholson: Thank you Dr. Stevens from Kings County Hospital

Mr. Kwenci Jones, Artist and creator of the Mural at Flatbush and Ocean Avenues, will give the history behind the creation of the Mural and its recent restoration. Mr. Jones is bringing this matter to the community’s attention to garner support and to emphasize the need to protect and maintain this mural for the enjoyment of the residents and visitors to the community for generations to come.

Chairman Nicholson introduced the next order of business is Mr. Quincy Jones, the artist and creator of the mural at Ocean and Flatbush Aves. Will give the history behind the creation of the mural and its recent restoration. Mr. Jones is bringing this matter before us to garner community support and to emphasize the need to protect and retain this mural for the enjoyment for the residents and visitors to the community for generations to come.

Mr. Jones: First, I need to ask the elders permission to speak my mind. OK. Second, I want to thank the board. I am not going to take up a lot of your time. So, I am just going to read from what I have and you can either have questions for me or whatever at the end. Back in 1998, I came back from the Midwest, after doing some murals. I met Richard Green, Crown Heights Youth Collective, and after we talked and discovered we were both Marines, he gave me an assignment. At the time, back in 1998, the wall on the corner of Flatbush and Ocean was 120 ft. of blight, and he asked me if I could take care of it, and do a nice mural. Since then, I have been keeping up the integrity of that wall; restoring it and repairing it and keeping it nice. In the years that I have been working on this mural, I haven’t met or talked to or worked with anybody from any of the associations or agencies in this neighborhood. I’ve met people from all over the world. I have taken pictures with them. The community loves the mural. The people who come from other places to visit, they love the mural.

But, in my funding efforts, I have not spoken to any associations, other than Mr. Ben Edwards. He has been a staunch supporter since day one. So, I’m here before you, asking, what is the problem with the mural and, why I don’t get the support, the promotion, the referrals, the help that I need to keep this mural intact? Right now the
mural is 85% finished. It has taken us 3 years to get it done. I’ve included college students; people from the neighborhood; people from the DA’s alternative sentencing program. So, in all, I have used over 35 people as a community building effort to put this mural together and finish this mural. Right now it needs a protective coat. It needs 2 coats actually. It needs an isolation coat and it needs a UV sealing.

Problem is, I have always had to struggle with the funding to do this, which I don’t understand, because, if the neighborhood enjoys this mural and the neighborhood benefits from this mural, it should be something that we all take a part of. So, its 2400 square feet, I don’t have the money to cover this mural come spring. So, I’m trying to find out what do I need to do or what I didn’t do to get you all involved. Now, I’m not talking to the community, I’m actually speaking to NAMA and PLG, cause if you are the entities that keep this community going I don’t understand why I’ve never met one of you. Not one member has come up to me and shaken my hand, and said hey, I’m so and so from so and so. I appreciate what you have done. So, I will answer questions. Tell me what’s wrong with the mural; what’s wrong with me. It’s one or the other. I just need to know. Questions? Yes.

Question: I did not know. I would like to support you. Answer: That’s my issue. I have had my information on the wall from day one. I’ve had funding information on the wall from day one. So, it’s not like its …I’m working. I’m out there every day I appreciate that.

Question: I was not aware of it. What is the cost and the cycle for maintaining the wall? Answer: OK, its 2400 square feet, and like I said there are two coats. One is an isolation coat which protects the artwork. The other is a UV sealing which protects the wall from UV rays and water damage. Getting back to you saying you are not aware of it. The wall is on the corner of Ocean and Flatbush. OK, it is in the center of Brooklyn. You cannot miss it. I was out there every day this summer, and for someone to just come up to me and shake my hand and introduce themselves, that would let me know that you are aware of what’s going on and I can inform you of what needs to be done. But if you go to the website, you can go to the funding site, all that information is there. So you know. I’m not confused because I have an inkling of what it is. But we need to get past that because there are two facts you know, I did the mural and it is there. So I need to enlist the assistance of this community. Because the world looks at this mural and I had an incident where I was talking to someone and there was some people I was talking to from France, and a guy who walks by and speaks to me every day. He said to me you mean to tell me the city and PLG, and the community board is not involved? I had no answer for them. So, I am here to find out what we all can do to make this whole thing stay in place. The technology has changed. Now they have solvents that can make that mural last for ten or twenty years, and because of the lack of funds I have had to restore it twice. But if you put the proper materials on it, it will last twenty years.

Question: So how much? Answer: We are talking roughly, $2000.00. Question: Annually? Answer: Annually, if we put the correct solvents on the wall, it will last for twenty years. I’ve had to restore it every eight years. Which because of the lack of funding I’ve used inferior material. But, given the right materials, it will last twenty years.

Question: So could you moving forward create a proposal that illustrates the annual cost of the funds needed to maintain the wall? Answer: OK, yeah, No, but it’s not annual. What I’m saying is this; I painted the mural in 1998. I had to restore in 2006. I started restoring back in 2012. But I decided as a teaching artist to include people as a community project. So, it’s almost completely done, I just have some enhancements to do, things of that nature, in the spring. I need immediate funding in the spring, because once I put the solvents on it I shouldn’t have to do anything to that mural again until the next 20 years.

Question: Are you working on it now? Answer: Yes, all we are doing right now is curing. What will happen is there may be some spots that I may need to repair. Come the spring that’s when you put the solvents on. So, I am starting now, so come the spring, I have everything I need in place.
Question: Can you give the URL you are using online? You are still accepting donations, right? Answer: Absolutely. It’s “Go Fund Me”. Gofundme.com/7ir18

Question: What day? Answer: Well depending on the weather, we will start working in April. Thank you

Chairman Nicholson says thank you Mr. Jones for a wonderful presentation, and yes, you have a beautiful mural.

Ms. Megan Ahern, Organizing Director for the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG) will discuss financial literacy issues including basic banking, credit cards, and cyber safety

Next speaker Megan Ahern from NYPIRG (New York Public Interest Research Group) Ms. Ahern is here to discuss financial literacy issues, banking, and credit cards.

Hi everyone, thank you for inviting me. I am here to discuss some financial literacy issues. Again my name is Megan, and I work for NYPIRG, and we work on a whole lot of campaigns and consumer protection is one of them. I’m here today to give a primer on credit issues now that a lot of people are doing some spending for the holiday shopping season and also how to safeguard yourself. There is a bright yellow handout that has some resources on it to take home with you, because there are a lot of issues going into credit; access to credit and how to keep your credit score and reports clean.

Credit cards, most people have them these days. It is a big issue for all Americans. All people in this country, this credit card debt stands for the average household at $15,608 dollars. That is a lot of money. These are for the people holding debt right now. In total American consumers owe 11.71 trillion dollars in debt and 881.8 billion dollars in credit. So, obviously there are a lot of people using the plastic to pay for things and I just want to give you guys some safe credit use tips today. So we can stay out of debt as much as possible. When credit debt is large that is not necessarily a bad thing it means that consumer spending is up and that spurs the economy. And jobs. But, that may also mean, people are putting their daily expenses on their credit card because they are unable to pay debt with their income. So, it is a little bit of a give and take there. So, we all know how a credit card works, right. You spend; you pay it back; you don’t pay back all of it; you have interest and fees that might accrue. Pay for an item on your credit card and add to your balance. There is usually a maximum balance, and if you don’t pay your credit card balance off, interest rates can kick in. That means you are paying more for an item that was originally ten dollars you might end up paying fourteen dollars at the end of the day. So, I am going to go over some things to look out for.

The number one things to look for are credit card interest rates. They vary dramatically from company to company. Look out for the APR or average percentage rate. It is a measure of the cost of credit over the course of a year. You are also going to look for the fixed rate. This means it is the same interest rate for the life of the credit card. They send you a letter with the terms you have to agree to. Variable rate mean that they can change the rate to anything anytime they want to. This usually means they will start with a low rate and then go to higher and higher interest rates. Only paying the minimum balance on your credit card, you are racking up tons and tons of money just in interest. Look out for teaser rates which means you only have an APR for the first six months or a year then it goes to a different rate that is much higher, and also different rates for cash advances.

The second thing to look at is a fee attached to credit cards. Fees can be annual fees that vary from fifteen dollars to three hundred dollars. This is just to own the piece of plastic in your wallet, you may be charged an annual fee. One of my credit cards introduced an annual fee, ten years after I had opened it. I was able to debate that and get them to cut that out. That was going to be from a zero annual fee rate, to about seventy dollars a year. So, if you do have a card and they send you a letter stating that there is this new fee, call them and see if
you can get that waived. Since you are an old customer, ask if you may be grandfathered in. Cash fees, inactivity fees, late fees, that’s messed up right. You are not using your card and they charge you a fee for not using it. They get lonely; they have to bill you something.

If you are shopping around for credit cards don’t get one with inactivity fees; zero balance fees; another really weird one. You are not using your card so they charge you for that fact. Reward redemption fees, so if you have a credit card that gives you miles, there will probably be a fee to access those. Sometimes, that’s just reducing the number of points you have. The paper statement fees, now that everything is going digital, people should still have access to a paper, if they want it. Some companies are now charging you to get that service. I am sure they are going to be very creative now that online banking is increasing. So, look for any new digital fees that are now going to be popping up. A really important thing to do is look at the disclosure of terms. So this is the really small print at the bottom of your credit card bill or at the back of an offer. It is really dense information but it is really important to take a close look; under federal law, that disclosure has to be in every offer for a credit card and also for solicitations. Look out for things like universal default. That means, you have a Visa and a MasterCard, and you default on your MasterCard, Visa can penalize you for that. That’s no good. I just used those as a basic example. I am not saying that those two do that.

Bait and switch offers for example is when you get this really great offer in the mail and the terms are to be confirmed when you apply. After you apply they give you a whole new set of terms. That is a very popular scam.

Two-cycle billing, they charge you interest by two months, so even if you pay for an outstanding fee they will still charge you interest for a second month.

Mandatory arbitration, because of the lack of competition, credit card companies, this is something that shows up in nearly every credit card offer. It is pretty much taking people’s rights to sue away. This is problematic for a number of reasons. This takes away access to the courts when we need it. Secondly, credit card companies that get a lot of complaints against them can form relationships with arbitrators who see a lot of their cases. So there becomes this unspoken conflict of interest. So look out for that one and of course very high fees.

Just a few tips to build a good credit history:

- Good credit history can help you get loans, buy homes, and cars. Credit can affect your ability to get a job. Employers now are looking at credit histories to determine hiring and firing. It is about fifty percent of employers doing this now. Which of course, your credit does not mean you cannot be a good employee. This is sort of a catch 22, you can’t get a job to pay off your credit, and you can’t pay off your credit because you can’t get a job. So, don’t charge what you won’t be able to pay in the billing cycle.

- Set up a monthly spending limit. Shop around for the best credit card terms and look at those disclosure terms. Try to save money each payday for emergencies. It can be hard, but really try to prioritize that. If you charge day-to-day expenses try to pay them off at the end of the month.

- Keep credit card information in a safe place including the phone number of the issuer. This way you can easily cancel it if you lose your wallet or drop you bag in the subway or the street, or if it gets stolen. Keep copies and receipts to compare when the statement arrives. It is a good practice to keep a shoebox of your receipts. At least look at your statements in detail. If there are any weird charges, you can debate those with your credit card company.
If debt is becoming a problem don’t ignore it. Open that scary mail. There is a lot you can do if you contact the credit card company and ask for freezes on interest payments or lower payments. If you are active in pursuing a solution to debt, a lot of times there is leniency from credit card companies. So you can keep it out of collection.

Be careful about balance transfers to new cards. Sometimes that can seem like a good solution. You open at zero annual percentage rate for a year, but, sometimes that balance APR only does not account for the new charges. So, one half of your card is at zero percent APR and all of your new charges are at thirty percent APR, which is really high interest rate. Those are some tips on building a good credit history.

I want to go for a few minutes into fraud, into keeping yourselves safe. Actually now on the online world, spending smartly is only half of it. Looking out for identity theft is incredibly important. The Federal Trade Commission’s top ten frauds list identity theft as the top one. American consumers lost over one point six billion dollars to fraud last year. Two hundred and ninety thousand were identity theft related.

Things to do to avoid this are: Don’t believe promises of easy money. Any emails that you are getting from princes in countries abroad are not real. Do not open those. Things that are saying a friend is caught in jail and you need to send bail money. Don’t believe those. Those are Phishing emails. Trust your gut. If it sounds fishy; if there are spelling errors in the email; if it says dear customer instead of your name; those are things to look out for. If it looks like it is coming from your bank logo it may not be real. These logos are very easy to duplicate. It is best to contact the person you are dealing with at your bank directly.

Guard your personal information and don’t give out information like your social security card or your address or phone number. This can lead to scam calls and email solicitations. Don’t give out your information. Try to pay with the safest way possible with a credit card or PayPal, which you can dispute the charges if something looks fishy. Checks or money orders or bank to bank, and use western union type wire transfers never mail cash. Visit retail banking sites directly, or go directly to the website for that bank. Do not use pop-up windows for banking sites. Make sure it starts with an https and there is a little lock attached to the address for the banking site. This means it is a secure site.

Passwords are commonplace now and have eight or more characters including letters numbers and symbols. Don’t use personal information in your passwords like your names or your family names. Use different passwords for different accounts. Lastly change your passwords regularly.

Last but not least. Social media is an area where people are gathering to share information. Information can be used against us. So don’t post any identifying information on your social media account. I have seen people who have gotten there first credit card and they take a picture of it and post it because they are excited. Then there name, credit card number and dates, and picture is all over the Internet. So tell your friends or if you are a first time credit card buyer, or have kids, let them know about that. Don’t post your address, your telephone number, bank information, dates, and things if you can. Think of it as a billboard everyone can see. Set your profiles to private. That way friends can see and those people in your network can see it, but not con artists or people you don’t want to see it in three states over.

I’ll just wrap up by again saying there is even more information about this and a list of safe shopping and reports that have listed safe toys and dangerous toys to look out for during the holiday shopping season. There are a number of links on here. If there are any questions I will take them otherwise thank you.
Question: Where do fraudulent wire transfers come from? Answer: It is hard to track where fraudulent wire transfers come from, and where they go to. Western Union is often the mechanism to pay by fraudsters. If this is someone you don’t know of have never worked with before. This is a red flag.

Question: (inaudible.) Answer: It should be but it is not. There is actually a bill in the city council, equal rights committee, it says, in the employment discrimination and employment act, Landers is the sponsor of it. There are about 40 council member sponsors of it. I have a lot of support and it would be practiced in NYC and it would pass the bill statewide too.

Question: Is it true you should make your password so that it is the same backwards and forwards? Answer: Oh, I am not sure. Not to reveal too many personal details, but my password is actually not the same backward and forwards. I don’t think that is the case. I think there are anti-fraud devices that ATMs use.

Question: Where can I get a free credit report? Answer: That is a good question. There is a resource. It is, www.annualcreditreport.com, this is run by the government and it is free to get one report annually. Creditreport.com is not free.

Question: (inaudible) Answer: They are a really great agency. It is a federal bureau. They were created after the financial crashes in 2008 we are still recovering from. They are really helpful in connecting you with resources when you file. They have a huge website with how to’s, and track complaints. There are trends that they need to look into more closely.

Question: The creditkarma.com site also offers one free credit report. Answer: oh ok, creditkarma.com has one free report.

Question: Are there any agencies that can protect you from identity theft? Answer: Like LIFELOCK? I have heard good things about them. The thing is they have access to the credit bureaus. Like Experian, Transunion. Lifelock has a relationship with them so when you report something to them you have someone who will contact the banks real fast to shut down your accounts and contact the credit bureaus. They will help fix any impact ID theft has had on your credit report. So it should be an action that credit bureaus are doing on their own. They are profiting from our personal information. But, if you want to be extra cautious a service like this does work.

Question: American Express card track fraud (in audible) great way to do business. Answer: Yes, better than the magnetic strip they use higher technology strip, I believe there was a piece on 60 minutes about this recently. Yes thank you. Also my contact information is on that resource sheet. So if you think of anything else later feel free to email me or call me. Thanks again.

Chairman Nicholson: Anyone else? Thank you Ms. Megan Ahern, thank you for a beautiful presentation. Thank you for coming out tonight. This concludes our public session. We are now moving on to the Business session. We have a roll call. Board members have you signed in? Please come forward and sign in. Have all board members signed in; board members signed in.

BUSINESS SESSION

Ms. Alicia Boyd is shouting in the room. Chairman Nicholson: Ms. Boyd you are out of order. Please call the roll

Board Secretary: Calls the roll. Ms. Alicia Boyd is still shouting in the room. Chairman Nicholson: There are 38 members present. We have a quorum.
Minutes of the November 18, 2014 meeting

The minutes for the November meeting are not ready. We will need a motion to table the November minutes. Can I get a motion to table the November minutes? Stuart Balberg made a motion to table the November minutes. Ada Terry seconds the motion. All those in favor say Aye. All. Any Nays? No Any abstentions? No The motion carries.

Chairman Nicholson has a sidebar with Councilwoman Cumbo. I am going to read a statement from our zoning resolution. "As you may already be aware… (see attached statement)

Pearl Miles: Can I just add to that? I said that I would apologize to Kenya and to Ms. Rhone-Perry for recording their votes incorrectly. Ms. Perry, my apologies; Kenya, my apologies.

More outbursts from Alicia Boyd

Jacob Goldstein: Good Evening everybody. For those of you who don’t know me, my name is Rabbi Jacob Goldstein. I was the chairman for this board for 34 years. Let me say something to you now. OK You know I have been listening to you can you be courteous enough to listen to me. Yeah I am talking to you. We are talking about zoning. I want everyone to know how important this is. As we sit here and bicker and snicker, and disrupt and it goes on and on and on a developer or developers can move on with what is at hand. They can assemble the land; they can buy the property and one day you wake up and you find out someone has the land and the air rights to put up huge buildings. You know why because we sat here and did nothing.

The way we can do this going forward is to deal with what we have at hand tonight. Not next week, not two weeks from now, we are going to talk about a resolution it is important that that begins the process to move this forward as expeditiously as possible. Because while we are sitting here having a good time screaming and shouting and not allowing each other to be heard the people you would like to deal with are sitting back and watching and having a good time assembling property and parcels of property and then you wonder what the term as of right means. As of right is simple, you now have assembled a large tract of land, with adequate square footage, and up goes the building. That is how 26 and 18 story buildings are built. Thank you.

Chairman Nicholson: Thank you Jake.

District Manager’s Report:

Pearl Miles: Good Evening everyone. I just want to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Happy Chanukah, Merry Christmas. Happy Kwanza, and all the other celebrations we do this month in lieu of my report thank you.

Chairman Nicholson, Thank you Ms. District Manager. We have committee reports next. Economic Development Committee, Warren Berke.

Committees’ Reports

Economic Development Committee – Warren Berke

Warren Berke: Hi, we had a great kick off on the Shop Local program last weekend. We had the press conference. We had a lot of local officials attend. We had a lot of people from the neighborhood. We are having the actual days this Saturday and Sunday, on three avenues, Flatbush, Nostrand, and Utica. We will need
volunteers. We are having some good stuff a lot of stuff for the kids. We will be having balloon people, face painters, and I think we will have trolleys that will take shoppers to all three avenues. This is all based on the sponsorship by PLS financial and Carver Bank, and American Express kicked in some materials. I know some of you spoke about volunteering. Just let me know, after this meeting because we will be assigning the positions tomorrow. Thank you.


By-Laws Committee – Warren Berke

Warren Berke: Our temporary By-Laws committee met and it was a difficult meeting but we got through about a third of the by-laws easy parts. So we are going to be pursuing right now the suggestions that were made at the first meeting and integrating them into the existing by-laws. Thank you.

Chairman Nicholson: Thank you Warren. Next is the Education Committee, Mr. Baptiste

Education Committee - Fred Baptiste

Good Evening everyone. I want to thank the members of the education committee, Warren Berke, Ada Terry, Ms. Denise Mann, and Sheila Foster-Golding. We had our committee meeting on Monday November 24th. It was very productive in all of the items we covered. Co-locations are still an item we are covering in District 17, which is the school district that shares community board 9 along with community board 8. Recently there was some discussion in terms of possible co-location being done at MS 61. Proud to say the school itself got mobilized. They got parents involved. They spoke to our committee as well. They went before the panel for educational policy and were officially removed from the table as a candidate as a co-located school. So, we are very proud of them. That principal is doing a lot of great work at that school. A lot of our schools are doing great work and we really push in our schools and our children throughout the district. Additionally, in terms of things we are going to look out for as committee is the charter school laws are going to be coming up. What we want to do is start educating in terms of the community. In terms of what the issues are and what is at stake, and how communication should flow. You can really get a sense in terms of where the community stands on this and possibly advocate for that as well. We will come up with some sort of a resolution that we can put forward as a community board at some point. So there will be additional conversations on that and we will invite the community to come in and speak on that. We are going to be doing some additional outreach as well. We are going to invite community organizations that deal with education, including CEC17, Presidents Council for district 17 as well.

We do have a new superintendent in the district. I have had the opportunity to talk to him. He has a lot of great ideas for the district. What we are looking to do is bring him in to talk to the committee. Hopefully, have him come in to introduce himself to the board as well. In terms of some action items we have coming up. We have Ms. Terry, I thank you for all the work you have been doing. She is working on an education calendar. This is something that will be a community resource in terms of things that are going on and deadlines that are approaching. This is a resource to parents and community members who want to know more about their community. Additionally, we are working on getting a networking roundup. We are trying to get principals and parent coordinators involved as well. We want to make sure as a community board we are well informed and we understand the issues in the schools. This way as we go through the next round of budget recommendations we can advocate for what our schools need, so we want to make sure we establish those relationships. So, that’s all we have. I will defer to the Chair. Do we need approval from the board to proceed with the calendar and the networking forums? That is my report for informational purposes.
Chairman Nicholson: Thank you Mr. Baptiste. That will conclude the committee reports. We are now moving on to the Chairman’s Report

Chairman Nicholson acknowledged local politicians and their representatives that are present.

**Council Member Laurie Cumbo**

Councilmember Laurie Cumbo: Good Evening everyone. I see many people in the audience today who were out with us today at 770 Eastern Parkway. It has truly been an emotional day. As the young man was stabbed in the temple, he is now at Bellevue Hospital. He is, I believe critical to stable condition. His mother is coming in from Israel to be with him. He has no family here. At the same time, simultaneously, we are very concerned about a forty-nine year old African American man who was the attacker. He suffers from a condition of bipolar illness. He is also a husband, and has two children. So, today is a very tragic day in terms of no wins today. The community is certainly grieving and mourning over the fact that this has happened. Given the climate that has consumed our city as well as our nation, it has been very impactful. The city council has stepped up and made a lot of actions toward what is happening. Simultaneously, we a recognizing that legislation is going to be our greatest tool in our tool belt to change the dynamics as well as a culture change. Thank you all for all you have done during this challenging time because while we recognize that the rallies, the protests, and the marches are very exciting and invigorating. It is inspiring young people to stand up and talk about these issues, and to be that voice that we have been missing. So, it is very important that they have stepped up in a very remarkable way.

I wanted to bring a few items to your attention very quickly. Assemblyman Walter Mosley, is really leading the path on this, call for Informational Session on the New York State Education Department Proposal, Multiple Pathways to Graduation, with an in depth presentation by New York Regent, Lester Young, That is going to Thursday, December 11th, 2014, 6:00 to 8:00 pm, at The Shirley Chisholm State Office Building, 65 Hanson Place and that flyer is here as well.

Just want to let you know about our Housing Legal clinic. It is going to be the second Thursday of the month at my office at 1 Hanson Place, 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM. This has everything to do with if you have legal issues, rent stabilization, overcharges, rental apartment issues. I also want to invite you to the NYS Health Marketplace Let’s Get Covered from Nov 15th to February 15th. So, please get all of this information in the back. Please use this time to get covered. It is an important time right now please utilizes the time to get covered.

Also I wanted to let you know in the city council one of the bills that is up is highly controversial. I would appreciate your input and discussion that this is being discussed and I would like your opinion and feedback. It is going to be the plastic bag bill. Many of you may of heard of it in an effort to reduce plastic bags which are not biodegradable impacting our community legislation has been put for in terms of a ten cent charge placed on plastic bags for individuals still using them. Some cities have just eliminated plastic bags all together. Some have charged a ten-cent fee some have not. There’s a number of different ways. I would like your opinion and feedback because this is going to be coming up with the city council. I just want to say on another note there have been many discussions and presentations here today and it is very important for me as a city councilmember to hear all of your voices. I look forward to doing that moving forward.

I have a complicated situation in community board 9, there is a need for affordable housing but there has to be a balance as to how that happens. For me, attending the meetings gives me an opportunity, to hear your voices and to formulate an opinion in terms of how we are going to collectively move forward. I recognize that there have been a lot of challenges, new leadership, but, I believe in my heart that the individuals who are assembled here, that everybody has the best interest of the community at heart. How we go about getting there has been the challenge. In my heart born and raised in Brooklyn New York, raised in East Flatbush across the street from
Downstate, where I have lived for my entire life. This is something important to me because I want to make sure we move in an equitable way. As a councilmember at this time, to read those articles as they come about how expensive Brooklyn has become one of the most expensive places to live in the United States shows that we have to be united and on the same page because I am doing my best with a staff of six. In order to have challenges whether it is Brooklyn Jewish Hospital, or a homeless situation, or Schenectady Avenue with their landlord situation moving all around the district with all Tivoli Towers and the downsizing that is happening in our NYCHA developments. I am on your side. The other elected officials who are representing you are on your side.

It becomes very difficult when we are fighting on your behalf and you are fighting against us, and we are fighting against multi-million dollar developers who have an array of legal teams that would fascinate you and blow your mind. So, I want to make sure that our new leadership, we have new individuals on the board: We have to give this a chance. Because if we don’t give this a chance, I really don’t know what the future of this community will be. But I do know if this continues we will not move forward. So, I am committed to this. I want to work with the community and I want to bring everybody together and I want everyone to have a voice. So, I am committed to making sure that you have a voice, that you have a voice; that you have a voice. But we have to be respectful of one another. We have to be respectful of each other’s time; of each other’s opinions and differences of opinions. Just today, with this shooting that took place we have representatives that will say the police did an awesome job. Then we will have another faction of the community who will say why did that interaction with an African American have to lead to a death?

As a local city council member you have a police department who will understand that the decisions that they made believe were the right decisions to make. We have all of these different opinions and I have to represent all of these different opinions, and I have to give all of them equal measure and equal voice in the equation to formulate how I function as a leader. So I am open to all of these opinions, but at the same time we have to be respectful because the dynamics in our district are very diverse. It is not always going to be perfect, and more often than not, It will not be perfect. Thank you for your time and thank you for coming back meeting after meeting although it has been challenging. That is an example of your time and commitment to this community. So I thank the community board, I thank the executive board, I thank all of you who have come here. I thank everyone who is bringing their opinion, because all of these diverse opinions together are going to yield the best possible result. So thank you.

Chairman Nicholson: Thank you Councilwoman Cumbo

Chairman’s Report

Warren’s event, Shop Local, was a great success. Do we have enough volunteers for this weekend? Shop Local needs ten more volunteers and two Santa’s one for Saturday and one for Sunday. Do we have anyone here tonight who is interested in being a Santa this weekend if you are interested contact Warren after the meeting. We also have someone being volunteered. Chairman Nicholson agrees to be Santa on Saturday.

Beverly Newsome, will come up and speak about a petition she is working on for the Associated Supermarket on Nostrand Avenue.

Beverly Newsome - hello everybody as you know my name is Beverly Newsome, I am the president of the Ebbets Field Tenant Association and a member of community board 9. A month and a half ago we heard a rumor that Western Beef and Associated were being sold. As you know, if this were to happen it would put this part of our community in a very serious situation for grocery shopping and a few other things, because of how densely populated we are. So we asked the Assemblyman to approach these two individuals to see if there was anything the community could do. The assemblyman spoke to the powers involved and we learned that Western
Beef is not being sold. They are looking to possibly upgrade their space. They are definitely going to renovate the space without closing their doors. On the other hand, Associated Supermarket, at the time we had this conversation, they had two years remaining on their lease. We have had a number of conversations with them. Now they have five years on their lease. What has happened is the property has a new owner. The new owner is looking at the building directly across from Associated on Sullivan and Nostrand, to build. What I learned at my meeting with Associated last week is that when you look at Associated where it is located now it always appears full. But it is not. This is a major plus. The cost of that commercial space is thirty thousand dollars per month.

Just so you know what the community is facing. So when the councilmember talks about all of us being on the same page, it also means being aware of the kinds of development going on in our community. We need to be aware. Every flyer that is being passed around, every poster in a tree or board in our community we must read it. For the average commercial space in our community to be thirty thousand dollars a month, even speaking to Associated, they were approached about renting that space and they said that was far beyond their price point. Please understand, once you have a business paying that kind of rent, the prices they charge must cover the price of the product, the overhead, and a profit. We cannot be delusional, and we do have to work together as the councilwoman said. So, we put together a campaign and in addition to collecting signatures, we are going to be “flyering” the community. We will be making the community even more aware. Many members of our community were unaware Associated was at risk of losing its lease.

Like Ebbets Field, people are unaware that this is private property and many tenants are now going at market rate. This is one of the largest properties in the community and for that to be happening means a large number of people are going to be displaced. Thank you.

Chairman Nicholson: Thank you Beverly. This is a great example of some of the positive things that can be done in our community. I few work together we can do so much together.

Pearl has a quick announcement about the Christmas Party. Pearl Miles: I just wanted to let the board members know I sent an email about four o'clock this afternoon and everything is confirmed with Bluebird. I sent you guys the whole menu with appetizers, the dinner, and dessert, and red and white wine. The price fixed menu that we have. So anyone who would like to let me have the funds for the price per person tonight is fine. You have this week up until Monday morning. Thank you.

Chairman Nicholson: Thank you Pearl

The Borough President is showcasing the manuscripts of St Francis of Assisi. This is the first time in over seven hundred years these documents have been outside of Italy. The showing will continue until January 14th 2015. Reservations are suggested. Calling (718) 802-3900 can make reservations. If you have a group of ten or more please call: (718) 802-4042 or email: events@brooklynbp.nyc.gov

We have a board member who was appointed in June 2014, by the name Nacala Mitchell. This person has not attended any board meetings, and has not attended any committee meetings. This person has not answered any phone calls, letters or emails. The executive committee took a vote and we recommend that Nacala be removed from the board.

We made a request for volunteers for the GIS mapping project. We currently have two volunteers and we need more. The volunteers are Carmen Martinez and Beverly Newsome. Currently we have email that has been directed to DDC and City planning to find out more about the software they use. A discussion session will be set up as soon as we receive information from those agencies.
I have a new email address I will be using for Community Board business. That email address is dnicholson@cb.nyc.gov.

**Voting Items**

We will now do a roll call vote for the removal of Nacala Mitchell. We need a motion from the floor. A motion was made by Rabbi Goldstein to remove Nacala Mitchell from the board and was seconded by Demetrius Lawrence. Call the roll.

The Board Secretary calls the roll. The roll call vote result: 35 yes votes and 2 abstentions; the motion carries and the member is removed.

Chairman Nicholson: A letter will be sent to the Borough President.

Chairman: Is there a motion to adjourn?

Tim Thomas: I would like to place a motion on the floor.

Chairman: what is it Tim

Board member Tim Thomas read the following:

**Community Board 9**  
**890 Nostrand Avenue**  
**Brooklyn, NY 11225**

**Resolution from Community Board 9**  
**Calling Upon the NYC Dept of City Planning**  
**To Immediately Begin A Study of Community District 9, Brooklyn**  
**Focusing on the Specific Issues Raised at the Listening Forum Held On March 17th 2014**

**Whereas** Community District 9 is comprised of the distinct neighborhoods of South Crown Heights, northern parts of Flatbush, Prospect Lefferts Gardens, and Wingate, and is bordered by the historic landmarks of Prospect Park and Eastern Parkway; and

**Whereas** Community District 9 boasts such prestigious cultural institutions as the Brooklyn Museum, the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, and the Brooklyn Public Library; and such notable medical institutions as Kings County Hospital Center, a number one Trauma Center; SUNY Health Science Center, Kingsboro Psychiatric Center, and Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center; and the educational institution Medgar Evers College of the City University of NY; and

**Whereas** Community District 9 is a unique and extraordinarily diverse blend of people, and families have thrived in Community District 9 for generations living along our tree lined streets and enjoying the beauty and nuances of the neighborhoods; and

**Whereas** the existing zoning designations and prevailing land uses does not provide nor address all of the needs of the community; and
Whereas Community Board 9 held a forum at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden on Monday, March 17th 2014 and in subsequent meetings in the community where residents of the community expressed various concerns; a summary of which is as follows:

1) Preserve the existing character of the neighborhood
   - Prevent/limit out of context (i.e. high-rise) development in the R7-1 zoned ALL areas of the district
   - Make provision for incremental expansion of homes in R2 and R4 districts

2) Adjust current zoning designations to conform to prevailing uses and densities
   - Residential zoning designations mapped in Community District 9 often do not match the type of housing that exists

3) Create opportunities for affordable housing development
   - Make every provision to protect residents from displacement (e.g. anti-harassment areas/measures

4) Increase residential and retail density along transit and commercial corridors
   - Allow contextual mixed-use developments along commercial corridors including Empire Boulevard

4) Consider the appropriate blocks and lots on which modest increased residential density can be accommodated, provided that adequate restrictions on height are observed - six stories or 70 feet should be the maximum - and all efforts are made to maximize affordable housing options while staying within the above contextual height limits.

5) Ensure that new development does not overwhelm existing infrastructure
   - Address parking shortages in congested areas
   - Address the need for improved sewer and water capacity
   - Address the need for adequate schools
   - Address the need for adequate transportation, both public transit and vehicular traffic

Be it Therefore Resolved that NYC community Board 9, Brooklyn, calls upon the NYC Department of City Planning to immediately begin a study of this district to address the issues raised in the foregoing summary; and

Be It Further Resolved that Community Board 9 calls on the Department of City Planning to implement a text change for the institution of special height and setback regulations in R701 areas in Community District 9, pursuant to the Quality Housing Program; and

Be It Further Resolved that Community Board 9 stands ready to work with the Department of City Planning to spearhead public hearings to gather additional input from the community as we seek to address the critical concerns express by the constituency.

Adopted this 9th day of December, 2014
Community Board 9, Brooklyn

Tim Thomas that is my motion, do I have a second? Yes, I have a second

Fred Baptiste: I reject your motion. To be clear, I understand this is what we need to do better. If you vote yes 2/3 of you must vote yes. There will be ample discussion at the ULURP meeting

Tim Thomas: I urge you to vote no so we can move forward
Chairman: A vote yes is to reject the motion and no is to approve the motion just so everyone is clear.

OK call the roll:

Board Secretary Rosemarie Perry: Quiet please let's repeat the instructions. What is the confusion now? Fred please explain

Fred Baptiste: Tim put a motion on the floor and it was seconded. It means there is a motion on the floor. The chair outlined there is a training session and a ULURP meeting to discuss this. The recourse this body has a special meeting can be called by 13 members can have a special meeting about this matter. A vote yes means the objection is upheld. A vote no means we move ahead with Tim's plan

Board Secretary Rosemarie Perry: Quiet please let's vote

Foster-Golding: I don't understand what is going on this resolution was already discussed and voted on and we keep going over the same things and we are not getting anywhere. I don't understand this we keep doing the same thing over and over again. We are not getting anything done. This is madness.

Board Secretary Rosemarie Perry called the roll: result of vote: 25 yes 8 no 1 abstention

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Warren Berke and seconded by Ada Terry. The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted
Rosemarie Perry
Secretary
February 24, 2015