

**COMMUNITY BOARD 9
890 NOSTRAND AVENUE
BROOKLYN, NY 11225**

**MINUTES OF THE
COMMUNITY BOARD MEETING
HELD ON FEBRUARY 24, 2009
MIDDLE SCHOOL 61 AUDITORIUM
400 EMPIRE BOULEVARD, BROOKLYN, NY 11225**

Board Members Present

Stuart Balberg
Rev. Phyllis Brown
Gwen Carter
Aldith Clarke
Chaz Crowder
Geraldine Dease
Shelia Foster-Golding
Theopia Green
Rabbi Nochum Gross
Tessa I. Hackett-Vieira
Sylveta Hamilton-Gonzales
Aaron Hershkop
Ruby Hodge
Brenda Hutto
Maurice Jean-Baptiste
Jannie Johnson

Board Members Present

Samuel Marmulzsteyn
Allan Martin, Jr
Dr. Marco Mason
Alice Mitchell
Carl B. Morgan
Frank Nicholas
Rosemarie Perry
Romania Roachford
Myrtle Roberson
Karlene Robinson
Eleanor Rollins
Brenda Scott
Rabbi Joseph Speilman
Yvonne Straker
Denise Thomas
Jacqueline Welch

Board Members Absent

Mary Allman
Dion Ashman
Joan Gill
Rabbi Jacob Goldstein
Denise Mann
Gary Marshall
Dwayne Nicholson
Roosevelt Rose

Elected Officials/Agency Representatives Present

Hon. Karim Camara – Wanda Gebrehinot
Hon. Yvette Clarke – Ron Thomas
Hon. Mathieu Eugene – David Morisset
Hon. Letitia James – Mark Callender

Hon. Darlene Mealy – Isiah R. Hall
Hon. Olanike Alabi
Kings County Hospital Center – Denise Peterson
Brooklyn Public Library – Mary Romeo, Angela Barnes

PUBLIC SESSION

Ms. Brooke McKenna, Assistant Commissioner, Coordinated Street Furniture Franchise, Department of Transportation, will present to the Board the location (Flatbush Avenue adjacent to Prospect Park) being considered for an Automatic Public Toilet in Community District 9.

Assistant Commissioner and Coordinator of street furniture Ms. Brooke McKenna informed that the public toilet installation will take place on the left side of Flatbush Avenue, south of the plaza opposite to the library. This will be the third public toilet installation to go into the city. In total there will be twenty throughout the boroughs. This will be the third one. One is located on Madison Avenue in Manhattan and one in Queens. This will be the first one in Brooklyn.

The reason for selection of the Flatbush Avenue site is because of high concentration of traffic in this area. There is the Grand Army Plaza Library, the Botanical Garden, the Museum, the park and all these areas lend themselves as an area of need.

The installation area will be 11 feet by 6 ½ feet wide. It is fully aerated in compliance to self cleaning. There is an automatic cycle that will be used. Regular operating hours will be from 8:00am to 8:00pm. The cost is 25 cents per use. After 12 minutes there will be a warning and after 15 minutes the door opens automatically.

A service contract is also part of the toilet franchise. There is the cost and ongoing maintenance included in the project. The location will be visited at least once per day, emergency calls not included. Ms. McKenna is very happy with the ones installed in Manhattan and in Queens. She is looking forward to bringing this amenity to Brooklyn as well.

Questions and Answers

Mr. Wasner – This is fantastic. I know of someone with a stomach problem who has to go to the bathroom frequently. The thing is if you have to go to the bathroom you can go to the Library next door. So why use that particular location? Answer: We think that the volume of traffic is so high in that particular area; there are times when the library is not opened. We do think that this is an active area and the demand is there.

Pearl Miles – How is it that you were able to pick Cemusa for this project? Answer: There was a competitive bidding project. There was an RFP put out by the city and they responded. Then there was an evaluation process. We looked at the designs, the background of the construction company and the monetary compensation to the city. Through that entire process they became the winner. **Pearl Miles** - Have they done any other work for the city before? Answer: No this is their first contract.

Jannie Johnson – Are there emergency buttons made for someone to answer a distress call? Answer: Absolutely. Safety is built in. There are several emergency buttons installed above and below. The below button is in case if someone falls, they can reach the button.

Theopia Green - Is it child proof? Answer: Yes. The door will not close unless it is operated correctly. Is it wheelchair accessible? Answer: Yes.

Eleanor Rollins – When will it be ready for use? Answer: once all the necessary paper work is done, we get the approval, the final engineering work is done, then hopefully it should be ready by this spring.

1st Vice Chairperson Dr. Marco Mason thanked Ms. McKenna for an informative presentation.

For the first time the number of people waiting for organ transplants is in excess of 100,000. Dr Robert Kurtz, Medical Director, Trauma and Surgical Critical Care at Kings County Hospital, along with Ms. Karen Cummings, Organ Donor Network, are collaborating to increase organ and tissue donor awareness.

Ms. Karen Cummings informed that the Organ Donor Network is partnering with Kings County Hospital to increase the educational awareness of the critical shortage of organs and tissue donation in Brooklyn. At present there are over 100,000 people waiting for transplant. Over 8,000 are in the New York Metropolitan area. Over 1,300 are waiting in Brooklyn. There are people waiting for kidneys in New York for five to ten years.

The Organ Donor Network is a separate entity altogether they are in partnership with emergency centers. Only if a patient is brain dead does the network get involved. What they are doing is trying to educate people and to help them make an informative decision.

The registry is maintained by the Department of Health. It is a confidential database. In addition one can sign up for it on the back of one's driver's license. As an organ tissue donor you can sign the forms at the DMV on receiving your license. This is confidential, upon death your family would be informed about your wishes.

Dr. Robert Kurtz informed that he is the Director of Trauma and Critical Care at Kings County Hospital. It is the busiest trauma center in NYC. It has the highest rate in the nation for treating trauma like knives, guns etc. "It is our job to turn out 3% of time the patient does not survive. In that case they may arrange earlier with their families to become organ donors."

As mentioned by Karen there are 100,000 people waiting for transplants. However she did not mention that of those 100,000 people, about ten thousand of those people die every year waiting for an organ transplant. "If the U.S. could get to the point where 75% people who are approached give organs, then we could wipe off the deaths on the waiting lists. The question is what does this have to do with those who are here? By virtue of the fact that everyone who are here are ambulatory, the brains are working and you are healthy, everyone should be aware that there will be a time when this will not be the case." What Dr Kurtz would like for everyone to do is to make it a topic what would like when you no longer can make certain decisions what would you like someone to make a health care proxy for you. This should be discussed when you are calm.

Kidney transplants help people to get off dialysis. People will benefit by getting kidney transplants. People who are in need of heart and liver transplants die quickly. These particular transplants help to save lives. Sometimes the liver can be split and used for two patients. One organ donor can give 2 livers, 2 kidneys, a heart, etc. By preparing someone to be an organ donor you are preparing them to be a survivor.

Dr. Kurtz told the story about a patient who was a peddler on the streets. He was badly beaten and lived to die. He became an organ donor but instead of becoming a donor he turned out to be a survivor. After many operations and extensive medical procedures, the man who was expected to die recovered and was able to thank the hospital staff and to go back to his regular work.

There are horrible stories of black people being discriminate against. African' American people take a longer time to get organ transplants. African' Americans are more prone to kidney diseases, due to hypertension and diabetes. There are more transplants coming into this community than going out of this community. Dr. Kurtz would like people to think about writing their names as donors on their driver's license speak to your family what they would like to see happen to their organs when they die. Doing it now when you are not stressed out rather than waiting until the person dies and you are approached.

Dr. Marco Mason thanked Dr. Kurtz and Ms. Karen Cummings for their informative presentation.

Mr. Johnathan Bissell, Director for Adult and Continuing Education (ACE) at Medgar Evers College will present to the Board the exciting course offerings for spring 2009. ACE offers relevant and effective services and training. Come and explore opportunities for achieving your dreams.

Mr. Bissell in his presentation reminded us that the economy is taking a toll on all of us. There are some people who are fearful that there are no jobs out there. The reality is that while there are some difficulties, there are areas which are destined for growth. There are training courses in many areas: computer, business, healthcare, education, personal development, knitting and crochet. There are pipe lines to jobs: The first one

is the CISCO, CCNA. This is a computer training program. This is a certificate program that prepares the individual for an entry level job in IT like instructors who work at Verizon. There are inspectors in the field and there are jobs available.

Second field is in Healthcare KSAC Program. It is the Alcohol and Drug Addiction. It is certified by OASAS which is the governing body.

There is the KFAX Program that will allow one to work in any kind of Social Service Agency under a healthcare setting where KSAX Drug and alcohol substance abuse is an issue.

Medical Office Assistants are in high demand. It is the training of individuals in many hospital types setting. Upon completion of the program, the students will possess not only the skills necessary in any medical office, but also be competent in medical terminology and medical office policies and procedures.

Medical Billing and Coding Certificate – Everyone who goes into a hospital has to be coded. If one is coded incorrectly then the hospital stands to lose a lot of money. The Medical Billing and Coding certificate program is designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the skills required for work in health care institutions, nursing homes, physician's offices, community health groups, insurance companies, billing companies and other health care centers.

Finally for those who are working with youths there is a new program called the Child Development Associate Certificate. This will be a requirement in 2016 for anyone working in head start as a teacher. It is useful for Day Care providers.

Dr. Marco Mason thanked Mr. Bissell for his presentation and hopes that the community will take advantage of these programs especially in these trying economic times.

Public Hearing on the agencies' responses to Community Board 9's FY 2010 Capital and Expense Budget Requests.

Capital Budget Discussion:

Priority Numbers 4 and 7 - Rosemarie Perry – Request to acquire property at 445 Empire Boulevard to provide off-street parking for the 71 Precinct. This is a major issue, an issue that has been put back on the burner for many years. The condition is deplorable. This adds to police leaving New York for better working conditions. Suggested that the Public Safety Committee meet with the elected officials, tour the facility, and get funding to eliminate the congested parking which exists on New York Avenue and Empire Boulevard.

Stuart Balberg – inaudible.

Priority Number 18 - Jannie Johnson – (misinterpretation of response)

Pearl Miles - # 18 has been in the works since 1996. She explained the tracking code to the items. Number 2 = Brooklyn, 09 = Bd. 9. The following 4 digits represent the year; this will explain how long an item has been in the pipeline.

#20 Ruby Hodge – (misinterpretation of response) Pearl Miles – This response says that further study is needed. If you are not satisfied with the response say what's on your mind. The Board has to send a written response by March 6th.

Since there were no further responses Dr. Marco Mason closed the hearing on the Capital Budget.

Expense Budget – No discussion, the hearing was closed.

BUSINESS SESSION

The business session began at 8:30 pm with 31 members present.

Minutes of the January 2009 Meeting

The minutes of the January 2009 board meeting was presented for correction and adoption. Motion to accept the minutes was made by Rabbi Nochum Gross and seconded by Gwen Carter. The minutes were adopted.

District Manager's Report

Pearl Miles said she knew that everyone was anxious to go home and listen to the President's speech at 9:00pm. She then reported that she had attended a meeting with our new Senator Gillibrand at Borough Hall. The senator was very open to the Brooklyn problems. Other Brooklyn representatives in attendance were Congress Member Yvette Clarke, Lydia Valesquez, Bill De Blassio, Letitia James, and others.

It was a very good meeting in spite of the doom and gloom. We must have hope that the economy will turn around.

Committees' Reports

Housing Committee – Gwen Carter – See written Report

Ms. Carter reported that only two members were present at the meeting held on February 3, 2009. Due to the lack of a quorum the item presented could not be voted on. The meeting was centered on the correspondence from City Councilman David Yassky requesting board support for Legislation "Intro 599", and the Bioheat Act of 2007. This bill would require all heating oil sold in New York City to be 5% biodiesel blend beginning May 31, 2009, increasing to 10% by June 1, 2011 and 20% by May 2013. Transitioning to biodiesel will benefit New Yorkers in many ways.

Public Safety Committee – Rosemarie Perry

Ms. Perry reported that the committee met on February 3, 2009. It was well attended. Five hundred dollars is being rewarded for graffiti in progress – the 911 call. Cell phone theft is on the rise especially among teens, along with car theft and break-ins especially for air-bags. There is a rise of gangs in the district. Seminars are given by our local elected officials, it is beneficial to attend and learn about what is happening. The new police graduating class and the impact zones within the Crown Heights area. Prospect Lefferts Gardens is forming a Community Patrol. This will involve two-day training with the 71 Precinct.

The 71 Precinct is offering PAL activities for youths 8 – 12 years of age at P.S 249 at Caton Avenue at the playground at 7:00 PM on Thursdays. The committee has decided to participate in Community Board 9's Street Fair, in the community and the Night out program with the 71 Precinct. The next meeting will be held in April.

Youth Services Committee - Dion Ashman

Jannie Johnson informed of the youth “speak out” with the boys and girls from Medgar Evers Prep School on Friday February 27, 2009 from 2:00pm to 5:00pm. All are invited.

Census 2009 is looking for people to work. They are looking for 6,600 people to participate.

Chairman’s Report

Dr. Mason acknowledged the representatives from the elected officials and government agencies.

Announcements

Isiah Hall announced that Council Member Darlene Mealy will convene a State of the District address on March 4th 2009 at the Brownsville Academy High School from 6:00pm to 8:00pm.

Voting Items

Intro 599

A motion was made by Gwen Carter that the Board support Intro 599 legislation as proposed by Councilman David Yassky. The motion was second by Carl Morgan. Voting: Unanimous.

Proposal to Install Pay Toilet on Flatbush Avenue

A motion was made by Aaron Hershkop and seconded by Frank Nicholas that Community Board 9 supports the proposal. Voting: Yes = 27, No = 0, Abs = 5

FY 2010 Capital Budget Responses

A motion was made by Rabbi Nochum Gross and seconded by Myrtle Roberson that Community Board 9 the responses heard on the capital budget should be accepted. Voting: Yes = 25, No = 1, Abs = 1

FY 2010 Expense Budget Responses

A motion to accept the responses as presented was made by Aaron Hershkop and seconded by Myrtle Roberson. Voting: Yes = 25, No = 1, Abs = 1.

Adjournment

Since there was no further business for discussion the meeting was adjourned on a motion made by Jannie Johnson and seconded by Frank Nicholas.

Respectfully submitted
Shelia Foster-Golding
March 19, 2009