



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
BOROUGH OF THE BRONX
COMMUNITY BOARD 7



RUBEN DIAZ, JR., BOROUGH PRESIDENT EMMANUEL MARTINEZ, CHAIRPERSON ISCHIA BRAVO, DISTRICT MANAGER

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Chair:	Chad Royer
Meeting Date:	October 20, 2021
Meeting Time:	6:30 pm
Meeting Location:	Via Zoom Video/Teleconference
Members In Attendance:	✓ Chad Royer ✓ Emmanuel Asamoah ✓ Hugo Gonzalez ✓ Jean Hill _ Jeffery Hunter ✓ Helene Redd
Minutes done by:	Chad Royer

Minutes:

- I) Introductions**
- II) Review of previous minutes**
- III) Community District (CD) Budget Capital and Expense Request for 2023**
 - a) The committee came up with two items for consideration of the 2023 Capital and Expense budget request. One was for dedicated allocation of housing units in newly built buildings that would be earmarked for Veterans and the other was for providing funding to Union Community Health Center (UCHC) so they can expand and enhance Veteran based program with accessibility to medical/health care appointments and services via Wi-Fi tablets, training for Veterans to use technology and delivery of service.**
- IV) New Business**
 - a) Update with VetVo Newsletter**
 - 1) Veteran Liaison Eva Hinds of Veteran Voices Newsletter discussed the progression of the next edition. November 6 is the target date for the next newsletter, and they are looking to secure office space for personnel to continue with the newsletter.**
 - b) Tenant Issue from Fordham Village Veterans Residence**
 - 1) The tenants of Fordham Village Veterans Residence at 355 East 194th Street have shared some concerns that have taken place.**



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- 2) **cleanliness issues lack of heat and hot water on a consistent basis elevator out of service for extended periods of time high turnover of staff and loss of veteran staff over time sick and tired of feeling neglected.**
- 3) **Tenants of the building are still plagued with the elevator issue and as a result, veteran tenants who are wheelchair-bound or have a disability cannot run errands, attend necessary appointments or travel on their own.**
- 4) **There will be a follow up on the matter.**
- c) **Presentation on Suicide Awareness: Sebastian Shaw, New York Harbor V**
 - 1) **Sebastian Shaw's role as Community Engagement and Partnership Coordinator is to promote community-based interventions for suicide prevention**
 - 2) **Suicide is a national problem that is steadily rising over the past 30 years and affects Veterans greater than civilians (non-Veterans). Factors that heighten the threat of suicide are economic disparities, race/ethnicity/LGBT disparities, homelessness, isolation, and health issues (including COVID-19). One completed suicide can affect anywhere between 135 to 145 people.**
 - 3) **Suicide Prevention is the top clinical priority for mental health within the VA. Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death nationally and 12th leading cause of death in New York State.**
 - 4) **Some of the major risk factors to be aware of are prior suicide attempt, existing mental health issues, substance abuse, access to lethal weapons, a recent loss, legal or financial challenges, relationship issues and unemployment.**
 - 5) **Some protective factors are access to mental health care, a sense of connectedness, problem-solving skills, a sense of spirituality, having a mission or purpose, physical health, employment, and social and emotional well-being.**
 - 6) **Women tend to make more suicide attempts than men, but men take their lives at a rate of 3.5 times the rate of women. Suicide is the second leading cause of death among 15–24-year-olds. Middle aged individuals (45-64) and those who are 85 and older have the highest suicide rate. Veterans are at 21% increased risk than those who are civilians.**



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- 7) **Veterans represent 8.5% of the population, but account for 18% of suicides. 70% of Veteran suicides were completed via firearms.**
- 8) **Regarding the timing from decision to action, 24% of attempts occurred within less than 5 minutes, 48% of attempts occurred within less than 20 minutes, but 71% of attempts occurred within an hour!**
- 9) **Suicide is preventable, yet one suicide loss is one too many.**
- 10) **Sebastian Shaw can be contacted at Sebastian.shaw@va.gov. Alyson Lemard can be contacted at Alyson.lemard@va.gov**

V) Adjournment

- a) **The next meeting date for the Veterans Committee will be in November of 2021. Please reach out to the office for further details.**