

## MINUTES OF COMMUNITY BOARD #16 – January 27, 2009

### Attendance

David Alexander	Yolanda Matthews (E)
Renee Archer (A)	Sadie McNamara (E)
Orlando Aupont (A)	Ted McQueen
Octavius Bamberg (E)	Rev. Joseph Norton
Sissi Benitez (A)	Marie Pierre
Josephine Blakeley (E)	Rev. Devon Ponds
Patricia Boone (A)	Mattie Pusey
Essie Duggan	Melaine Rochford
Samantha Dunn (A)	Linda Sanders (A)
Ivory Ellison (A)	Lashon Segar (A)
Helen Giles (A)	Tyrone Thomas
Shirley Gonsalves	Ernestine Turner
Sarah Hall	Rev. Miran Ukaegbu (E)
Jessie Hilliard	Alice Vines
Kofi Hormeku	Annie Walkes
Michael Howard	Herman Winston
Allene Ingram	Hazel Younger
Daisy Jackson	Viola D. Greene-Walker, DM
Javonn Johnson (A)	E. Jane Coleman-Assistant ADM
Troy Johnson (A)	Jimmi Brevil, Community Assistant
Dr. Cade Jones, III (E)	Essie Duggan for Hon. Velmanette Montgomery
Pamela Junior	Brandon Bloomfield for Hon. John Sampson
Eula Key	Mel Faulkner for Hon. Charles Barron
Danny King (A)	Brenda Duchene for Hon. William F. Boyland, Jr.
Bettie Kollock-Wallace	Xamayla Rose for Hon. Marty Markowitz
Shawn Lewis (A)	Isiah Hall for Hon. Darlene Mealy
Deborah Mack (E)	
James Mack	

### MEETING HELD AT BROWNSVILLE MULTI-SERVICE CENTER, 444 THOMAS S. BOYLAND STREET, BROOKLYN

Chairperson Hazel Younger called the meeting to order at 7:17 p.m. and an invocation was said by Dr. Denise L. C. Boyce.

A motion was made by Ms. Pamela Junior, seconded by Ms. Mattie Pusey, and carried to waive the reading of last month's minutes.

A correction to the tenth paragraph of the fifth page of last month's minutes was made to now read "A member of the Association reported that a transitional housing program was recently established at **565** Chauncey Street." instead of **555** Chauncey Street.

A motion was made by Ms. Sarah Hall, seconded by Mr. Kofi Hormeku, and carried to waive the reading of the District Manager's report.

District Manager Viola Greene-Walker called attention to the item on the first page of her report concerning the availability of applications for 19 furnished studio apartments at 84-92 Mother Gaston Boulevard and the February 27, 2009 deadline for submission of completed applications. She encouraged all interested parties to read the article and comply with the instructions therein.

Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Alzen Whitten from the Newborn Home Visiting Program.

Ms. Whitten stated that she is the Deputy Director for the Newborn Home Visiting Program at the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

The Program offers the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene an opportunity to provide education and support services to young mothers who may not otherwise receive these resources. The services are currently offered to new mothers in the Brownsville, Bedford Stuyvesant, and Bushwick sections of Brooklyn. Portions of Manhattan and the Bronx are also served. The current birth rate in these areas is 7500 a year.

Community Health Workers conduct the visits which can last anywhere between one and two hours. Participation by the new moms is strictly voluntary and any new mother is eligible to participate. Most of the staff are bilingual in French, Spanish, or Chinese.

Being part of the Department of Health, they have access to birth records and outreach to new mothers who list their addresses within the communities that are covered. Outreach efforts are done via telephone and mail. They also currently, conduct hospital recruitment at Brookdale Hospital. Initial visits are normally made within one month of the newborns birth.

As part of the Department of Health's initiative to promote breast feeding, the Public Health Advisor that outreaches in the hospital will also do an on-the-spot lactation consultation with the new mother to encourage breast feeding.

Among the things they look for, during home visits, are post-partum depression, domestic violence, overcrowding, and home stability. They provide information on breast feeding, and safe sleep environment – they discourage clients from sleeping with their babies, vouchers are provided for parents that do not have cribs for their infants. They discuss bonding, the need for a healthy home environment, and health insurance.

The Community Health Worker also assesses the home for environmental hazards such as chipped paint, faulty wiring, lack of smoke/carbon monoxide detectors, and window guards. If there are smokers in the house, information is provided for cessation programs.

They began home visits in Brownsville in August 2007. From that time through December 2008, there were 1,971 births to Brownsville moms. Of those births, visits were conducted for 1,213 or 62% - a very good number for a voluntary program. Forty percent of the births were to first-time moms, thirteen percent were school moms (the highest percentage amongst the covered areas), eighteen percent of the homes had potential lead hazards, sixteen percent had overcrowding issues, and about eighteen percent had missing window guards. About twenty percent did not have a proper crib and eight percent of the mothers smoked.

Ms. Blanche Peltonbusch asked if there were any childcare services available that would allow a new mom to attend classes?

Ms. Whiten stated there are childcare services in Bedford Stuyvesant that address that issue, she is not aware of any in Brownsville and suggested that the parent call 3-1-1 to inquire about available services in their community.

Ms. Mattie Pusey asked if exercise classes were offered to moms to be?

Ms. Whiten stated that there is a program for expecting mothers, who are twenty-eight weeks pregnant through two years after birth. She asked to be called at her office for further information.

Ms. Genese Morgan, member of the Economic Development Committee, reported on Thursday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009, members of the Economic Development Committee held a meeting to discuss the next course of actions in the Belmont Avenue Revitalization plan and additional ways to get the merchants excited and involved in the planning and formation of a Business Improvement District along the Belmont Avenue corridor.

The Committee is asking that residents and business owners of the community continue to support the existing merchants on Belmont.

Additionally, the Committee reviewed the plans for the East Broadway Business Improvement District which requires approval by the Community Board. At this time, I will ask Eric Feldman, Executive Director of the East Broadway Business Improvement District, to come forward and present their plans to the Board.

Mr. Feldman stated that he and Mr. Matthew Schneiderman, Deputy Director of the proposed East Broadway Business Improvement District are here tonight to speak to the Board about bringing a Business Improvement District to the East Broadway Corridor. A Business Improvement District is a public and private partnership wherein the property owners and other stakeholders elect to make a collective contribution for the maintenance, safety, and rehabilitation of the covered area. The East Broadway Commercial Corridor is a vital area that is

in need of improvement. There are about sixty business improvement districts that have been approved by New York City along the years. They provide supplemental services to their respective areas. Why form a Business Improvement District (BID)? No single business or entity can successfully solve the problems of the area by themselves. A BID is an entity that represents the needs and desires of the community with one voice to their elected officials and City agencies. The purpose of a BID is to improve conditions for businesses in a specific area by attracting and maintaining businesses, generating jobs, and improving the quality of life of those who use the district.

A BID is recognized by law, it can therefore deal with the community's issues with one solid voice. The unique needs of the BID are determined by surveys conducted by the Steering Committee. The surveys asked the merchants and community residents what services they feel are needed in the community. A sampling of the responses showed a desire for the establishment of a chain pharmacy, and an improvement to the quality of life.

The supplemental services that will be provided will not affect the services normally provided by the City. Additional security will come in the form of volunteers and Auxiliary Police, sanitation service would be augmented with the hiring of a private company to clean up the area and provide graffiti removal services, additional litter baskets would be placed along the corridor, and capital improvements such as additional street lighting and signage may be provided.

The BID is underwritten by special assessments collected from property owners in the defined boundaries of the district. The assessments are levied on the property owners who may in-turn pass it on to their tenants, if their lease contains such a provision. Assessments are based on the frontage of the properties in the district at the rate of \$55 per foot, i.e. a store with a 20 foot frontage would be assessed \$1100 a year. The assessment is billed by the City and distributed by the BID's Manager.

Each Business Improvement District is governed by a board of directors that is elected by members of the district. The board of directors has fiduciary responsibility for the district and hires management for the association who is responsible for its day-to-day operation. The Board is divided into classes that include commercial property owners (The City requires that at least 70% of the property owners be in agreement with forming the BID for it to be created.), residents, commercial tenants, and public officials. BID members vote for Board members in their respective classes. The Board consists of at least forty percent property owners. The Mayor, City Council members, Community Board members are defacto members of the Board. A twenty-block area, the proposed East Broadway BID is located within Community Districts 3, 4, and 16.

An estimated budget was displayed indicating an operating budget of approximately \$285,000. Approximately 12% of the budget will be allocated towards security services, 44% for maintenance and sanitation, 16% for marketing and District promotion, 23% for administration, and 5% for contingency.

Ms. Pusey asked if additional litter baskets will be placed on each block?

Mr. Feldman stated that they will place one or two litter baskets on each block as part of their sanitation efforts.

Ms. Frances Brown asked if there are any other BIDs nearby?

Mr. Feldman stated that there are approximately sixty BIDs citywide. The nearest to their area is the Myrtle Avenue BID.

Someone asked what Mr. Feldman's contribution to the BID is, and does he receive in return?

Mr. Feldman stated that his father owns several properties along the corridor, Mr. Schneiderman's family owns the Associated Supermarket in the area. As property owners, the BID is funded through additional taxes levied upon them with those funds being redirected towards the improvement of the area.

Mr. Stanley Kinard asked what are the demographics of the area of the proposed BID?

Mr. Feldman stated that has not been determined as yet, however, upon the establishment of the BID a demographic survey will be required.

Mr. Kinard asked how many minorities are members of the BID and how many are part of the Board of Directors?

Mr. Feldman stated that there are not many on the BID, there are four or five on the Board of Directors which constitutes about half of the Directors.

A motion was made by Ms. Mattie Pusey, seconded by Ms. Marie Pierre and carried to accept the report of the Economic Development Committee.

A motion was made by Ms. Mattie Pusey, seconded by Mr. David Alexander and carried with 18-in favor, 2-opposed, and 2-abstentions, to support the establishment of the East Broadway Business Improvement District.

Mr. Kofi Hormeku, Chairperson of the Parks and Recreation Committee, thanked everyone for their kind thoughts and prayers during his past illness. He reported that on January 21, 2009, he and District Manager Viola Greene-Walker met with a representative from the Council on the Environment of New York City and two gardeners from the Phoenix Garden which is a New York City Parks Department GreenThumb site at Fulton and Somers Streets.

They are seeking a letter of support from the Community Board for a project at the garden which involves the construction of a sitting area with a roof and equipping it with tables and chairs. The total cost of the project is \$125, 000.

The Committee recommends that the Community Board support this request.

This month, he and Mr. Tony Rosa, Manager of Parks for District #16, visited the parks and playgrounds in the District. Their findings are on the tonight's distribution table and can be reviewed at your leisure.

The Committee continues to need volunteers to adopt the parks and playgrounds in our community. Please contact the Board office at (718) 385-0323 to volunteer.

A motion was made by Ms. Annie Walkes, seconded by Rev. Devon Ponds and carried to accept the report of the Parks and Recreation Committee and its recommendation.

District Manager Viola Greene-Walker, in behalf of Deborah Mack, Chairperson of the Transportation and Franchises Committee reported that the Transportation and Franchises Committee met on January 14, 2009 and discussed the proposed changes to bus and subway services announced by the MTA.

Proposed changes to services in our community include:

- 1) Elimination of the B-25 (Fulton Street) bus
- 2) Elimination of weekend service on the B-7 (Saratoga Avenue/Thomas S. Boyland Street) bus
- 3) Elimination of overnight service on the B-7 and B-14 (Pitkin Avenue) buses.

The MTA will be holding a public hearing on Wednesday, January 28<sup>th</sup> at the Brooklyn Marriott at 333 Adams Street, beginning at 6:00 p.m.. We are asking that everyone attend and sign up to speak.

If you cannot attend the hearing, please send written comments to Douglas Sussman, Director, MTA Community Affairs, 347 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10017. You may also comment on the MTA website at mta.info.

Growth Options for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Go21) is a national, non-profit public interest organization dedicated to promoting freight railroad service which they say could help the economy, relieve highway truck congestion and improve the environment.

They are requesting that the Board adopt the following resolution:

**Whereas**, state and federal transportation officials and others project that United States freight volumes will increase by more than 67 percent over twenty years;

**Whereas**, the nation's highways are already stretched to capacity;

**Whereas**, the efficient movement of goods is directly related to the strength of a nation's economy and its citizens' quality of life;

**Whereas**, public policies promoting increased investment in freight rail infrastructure would result in increased freight rail hauling capacity;

**Whereas**, expansion of freight rail hauling capacity would yield impressive public benefits by relieving worsening congestion, reducing highway costs, providing a critical intermodal link to international trade, and improving air quality and fuel efficiency;

**Whereas**, relatively modest public investments in freight rail infrastructure would yield an impressive return on investment in the form of savings to motorists, businesses, and taxpayers;

**Whereas**, bi-partisan legislation was recently introduced in Congress that would create tax incentives to increase investment in freight rail infrastructure;

**Whereas**, this legislation is the type of proposal that the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials says is needed to accommodate increasing freight volumes and realize the public benefits that come from shipping more freight by rail; and

**Whereas**, Congress is considering proposals that would re-regulate freight railroads and these proposals would turn back the clock on the successes of reregulation, devastating the railroads and freight transportation in this country;

**Therefore, Be It Resolved** that Community Board #16 endorses the Go21 mission of building a stronger economy, reducing highway congestion, improving air quality, using tax dollars more efficiently, and improving quality of life by advocating for increased use of freight rail transportation ; and

**Be It Further Resolved** that Community Board #16 endorses federal investment tax incentives to increase freight rail hauling capacity and opposes any effort to re-regulate freight railroads.

A motion was made by Ms. Pamela Junior, seconded by Mr. Ted McQueen and carried to accept the report of the Transportation and Franchises Committee and its recommendation.

Ms. Daisy Jackson, Chairperson of the Youth Services Planning Committee, reported that on Monday, January 26<sup>th</sup> the Committee met to kickoff the planning of their annual youth conference. They are still in the early planning stage and invite anyone interested in support and ideas to join them at their next meeting on February 10<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m.. She thanked all for their support and prayers in the past year.

Chairperson Younger stated that at last month's meeting Rev. Dr. Denise L. C. Boyce presented to the Board a request to support the co-naming of Pitkin Avenue in honor her mother the late Gloria Boyce. However, there was not a quorum present to take a vote. Dr. Boyce briefly reviewed some of the highlights of her mother's accomplishments as a community activist and read a letter of support from Congressman Ed Towns.

She thanked the membership for allowing her to present and considering the co-naming of Pitkin Avenue in honor of Minister Boyce.

A motion was made by Ms. Mattie Pusey, seconded by Mr. David Alexander and carried with 17-in favor, 0-opposed, and 3-abstentions, to support co-naming of Pitkin Avenue between Eastern Parkway and Van Sinderen Avenue in memory of Gloria Boyce.

District Manager Greene-Walker stated that because a quorum was not present at last month's meeting a vote was not taken on a Bicycle Text Amendment being proposed by the Department

of City Planning that would require developers of new multi-unit residential, commercial, and community facilities allocate space in their building for the storage of bicycles. She referred everyone to the second and third pages of the minutes of the December 23, 2008 Board meeting for the details of the presentation.

A motion was made by Ms. Mattie Pusey, seconded by Mr. David Alexander and carried with 18-in favor, 2-opposed, and 2-abstentions, to support the establishment of the East Broadway Business Improvement District.

Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Allison Jones from BMS Family Health Center.

Ms. Jones thanked all those who participated in their recent voter registration drive, especially the seniors who registered and brought along younger people to register as well. She stated that BMS is headquartered at 592 Rockaway Avenue, but they have six sites located in the Brownsville and East New York neighborhoods. They offer a slew of medical services from health screenings to dentistry. They strive to be a one-stop health center for the community.

One their goals for 2009, is to do a workshop each month on one the health disparity issues in the community. In February it will be focused on heart disease and the issues around it.

Along with the outreach that she has been doing, she will now be heading a patient retention initiative for BMS. She finds many of their clients require assistance in navigating the healthcare system. Whether it is help with completing applications (some client cannot read) or helping them figure out their prescriptions, she wants to give the clients someone on the inside that they can reach out to for help. She wants to give them a sense of humanity. The community (especially men) needs to make relationships with doctors and stop waiting ten to twelve hours in an emergency room when they become ill.

Mr. Harvey Lawrence is their new Chief Executive Officer replacing Mr. Maurice Reid who has retired. BMS offers tours of their facility, if you would like to take a tour call her at (718) 345- 5000 x1158.

Chairperson Younger recognized Deputy Inspector Samuel Wright, the new Commanding Officer of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Precinct.

Deputy Inspector Wright stated he looks forward to seeing a revitalized Brownsville. He has held a number of positions in the Police Department and has excelled in most. He is ready to put in the hours to make the community safer. While statistic have some meaning, it is his contention that how safe someone feels being in a community is more important. He will take a two-tiered approach at making the community feel safe here. It is an approach that worked well, in one of his former post as the Commanding Officer of the 103<sup>rd</sup> Precinct. As a police officer enforcement is a must, but along with the enforcement it is his desire to have a community interaction component. That component will include both youth and adults. In reaching out to the adults he intends to post job openings within the Department. Many people are unaware that they are many civilian positions in the the Police Department or how to apply for the positions.

Chairperson Younger recognized Bishop Derwin Aiken who stated that they now hold Sunday worship services at 180 Chester Street. They have heard that some bad things have taken place there and want to change that image. They have started a component to help person over the age of eighteen obtain a General Equivalency Diploma, and a domestic violence deterrence component. They look forward to a good working relationship with the community.

Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Essie Duggan representing Senator Velmanette Montgomery.

Ms. Duggan announced that Senator Montgomery now chairs the Children and Family Services Committee in the Senate.

Chairperson Younger recognized Rev. Joseph Jones from the Office of District Attorney Charles Hynes who announced that on February 7 at 12:00 noon they will host a gang forum to deal with the issues of gang violence at 350 Jay Street. On February 25<sup>th</sup> they will host a Black History Month Celebration.

Chairperson Younger recognized Mr. Mel Faulkner representing Councilmember Charles Barron. Mr. Faulkner stated that they are taking the lead against the Mayoral take of our education system. It is their contention that schools in communities of color are constantly being reorganized while

schools in white communities are left undisturbed. How children cannot get the best education possible when their schools are constantly being destabilized. They will be seeking your support on this issue.

Chairperson Younger recognized Brandon Bloomfield from Senator John Sampson's office who announced that Senator Sampson is now the chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee. This change means there will be more resources available to our community. He continues to advocate that persons who have foreclosure issues contact the Senator's Office at (718) 649-7653.

Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Xamayla Rose from Borough President Marty Markowitz's office.

Ms. Rose announced that applications are now being accepted for the Borough President's summer youth employment program. The jobs are in non-food service area and will focus employment opportunities with a career path. She encourages employers who are able to offer a position with at least 25 hours per week during the summer to contact their office.

She also requested that persons that have been married for at least 50 years to contact them to join the Borough President's annual Champagne Luncheon celebrating such unions on February 13th. Additional information is available on tonight's distribution table.

Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Brenda Duchene from Assemblyman William F. Boyland Jr.'s office.

Ms. Duchene announced that Assemblyman Boyland, Jr. will host a Re-entry Forum here tomorrow for previously incarcerated person to offer employment opportunities, help with housing issues, and other areas where they might be discriminated against. She invites the audience to tell anyone that they may know who has been incarcerated to join them from 12:00 noon to 3:00 p.m..

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Ms. Sarah Hall, seconded by Rev. Devon Ponds and carried to adjourn the meeting.