

MINUTES OF COMMUNITY BOARD #16 – February 22, 2011

Attendance

David Alexander	Ted McQueen
Angela Alexander-Wilson (A)	Genese Morgan
Carolyn A. Benjamin-Smith (A)	Rev. Joseph Norton (E)
Margaret Brewer	Deidre Olivera-Douglas
Adrainer Coleman	Blanche L. Peltonbusch
Essie Duggan	Marie Pierre
Helen Giles (A)	Rev. Devon Ponds (A)
Shirley Gonsalves	Mattie Pusey (E)
Danny Goodine	Linda Rivera
Chanel Haliburton	Melaine Rochford
Sarah Hall (A)	Wendy Rutherford
Kofi Hormeku	Beatrice Saunders
Michael Howard	Christina Serano
Allene Ingram (E)	Evang. Hellen Thomas-Purdie
Prince Issachar (A)	Ernestine Turner (A)
Daisy Jackson	Rev. Dr. Miran Ukaegbu (E)
Minyarn Johnson (A)	Alice Vines (E)
Orin Johnson-Griffith (A)	Annie Walkes (E)
Carl Joseph (A)	Yvette Williams-Lawson
Pamela Junior	Herman Winston
Rev. Eddie Karim (A)	Hazel Younger
Eula Key	Viola D. Greene-Walker, District Manager
Bettie Kollock-Wallace	Jimmi Brevil, Community Assistant
Charles Ladson	Latrice M. Walker for Hon. Yvette Clarke
Deborah Mack (E)	Alexis Hockaday for Hon. William F. Boyland, Jr.
James Mack	Karen Cherry for Hon. Edolphus Towns
Yolanda Matthews (E)	Carl Luciano for Hon. Darlene Mealy
Linda Mayo	Maurice Roberts for Hon. Eric Adams
Sadie McNamara (E)	

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

Chairperson Hazel Younger called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m., followed with an invocation by Evangelist Hellen Thomas-Purdie.

A motion was made by Ms. Pamela Junior, seconded by Mr. David Alexander and carried to waive the reading of the minutes.

A motion was made by Ms. Pamela Junior, seconded by Mr. Charles Ladson and carried to waive the reading of the District Manager's report.

The audience was encouraged to read the Minutes and the District Manager's report in their entirety.

Chairperson Younger recognized students from World Academy for Total Community Health (W.A.T.C.H.) High School.

The students introduced themselves as Sieh Nmah and Perla Valdez and stated that they are here tonight to advocate for a smoke free New York City. Mr. Nmah stated that each year tobacco companies spend four to five billion dollars to advertize tobacco products here in the city. He was surprised to find that this is more than what is spent on advertizing junk food and alcoholic products combined. Much of the advertisements are placed in grocery stores where they are easily and constantly viewed by young children who shop at the stores. Walk toward any school in the city and you are sure to find an advertisement for cigarettes within a one or two block radius. They also found that cigarettes can easily be obtained by underage youth by recruitment of adults or in some cases by direct purchase from stores which seek to gain the revenue without thought to the consequences to the health of the youth.

Second-hand smoke is also an issue of concern to them. They find that smokers will light tobacco products in the presence of young children, again without thinking of the health effects on the children – our future.

Chairperson Younger next recognized Ms. Hanna Campbell from Ocean Hill Collegiate.

Ms. Campbell stated that she is the Director of Operations for Ocean Hill Collegiate, a free college-prep charter school. Ocean Hill Collegiate Charter School (OHC) opened this past fall with a class of 80 fifth grade students at the I.S. 271 building (1137 Herkimer Street – corner of Saratoga Avenue). The school will grow one grade per year to serve students through eighth grade. Their school day begins at 7:45 a.m. and classes continue until 4:30 p.m.. Students who are having difficulty with a subject receive an hour of tutoring after classes. They challenge their students each day with the goal of having each student enroll in college, but they also want the students to have fun. They have music and art classes to help with this.

Another thing that is important to them is the relationships that are forged with the parents of the students. The preparation of the students for college is their job, but it is a job that they cannot do alone. They value the families and engage them every day. Advisors are in contact with the families on a monthly basis and support parents visiting classrooms.

Students are normally admitted into the school in the fifth grade. Like other charter schools in the city, admission is through a lottery. The only preference in their lottery is for students who live in the District.

There are two middle schools and two elementary schools within School District #23. Ocean Hill Collegiate is a part of the Uncommon Schools group of charter schools. Uncommon operates schools in New York, New Jersey, and Massachusetts. In Brooklyn, they operate twelve schools, five of which are elementary, six (including Ocean Hill Collegiate) are middle schools, and one high school.

They are excited to be a part of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville community. Prior to their doors opening, she explored the community and has had the opportunity to speak to many of the residents and to interact with the Community Board. She encourages the audience to visit their school and reach out to them with any concerns.

Ms. Margaret Brewer, Secretary of the Economic Development Committee, in behalf of Ms. Genese Morgan, Chairperson, reported that the Committee met on Thursday, February 17, 2011, and continued their discussion about the need to revitalize Belmont Avenue and to organize the existing merchants into an incorporated merchants' association.

Ms. Morgan has been in touch with outside resources who have expressed their willingness to assist with informational seminars and workshops for the Belmont Avenue Merchants Association.

Former Chairperson, Ms. Essie Duggan, proposed the idea of organizing a retail business in the neighborhood for our "Designing Youths", a place where young aspiring designers in Brownsville will be able to display and market their personal work.

This is currently just an idea which the Committee will work on making an actual project. The Committee is looking for volunteers who have retail experience to help with research and grant proposal writing.

It was also suggested that the Committee start a regular newsletter. The cooperation of each committee of the Community Board is needed to contribute articles in order to thoroughly inform the residents of the latest happenings in our community.

A motion was made by Mr. Charles Ladson, seconded by Mr. David Alexander and carried to accept the Economic Development Committee's report.

Mr. Kofi Hormeku, Chairperson of the Parks and Recreation Committee, thanked the members who have joined the Committee and stated that he looks forward to working with them.

He requests that each Committee member select a few local parks and inspect them sometime near mid-month and a Committee meeting will be held wherein they will discuss their findings. He advised against entering comfort stations unaccompanied.

Lights have been installed on the basketball courts at the Brownsville Recreation Center. However, leaks from the roof continue to be an issue. Parks' Commissioner Jeffrey and Borough President Markowitz have committed to improving our parks and playgrounds, especially the

Brownsville Recreation Center which is heavily utilized but poorly maintained. Borough President Markowitz has allocated one million dollars for the rehabilitation of the center's pool area. However, the work has not been contracted to date.

A motion was made by Mr. Charles Ladson, seconded by Ms. Margaret Brewer and carried to accept the Parks and Recreation Committee's report.

District Manager Viola Greene-Walker read the following resolution in behalf of Chairperson Hazel Younger.

WHEREAS, during the calendar year of 2010 Angela Alexander-Wilson, Minyard Johnson, Orin-Oquil Johnson-Giffith, Rev. Eddie Karim, and Christina Serrano missed three consecutive meetings of Community Board #16, and

WHEREAS, there has been no written explanation to the Chairperson of Community Board #16 from Angela Alexander-Wilson, Minyard Johnson, Orin-Oquil Johnson-Giffith, Rev. Eddie Karim, and Christina Serrano as to why they failed to attend said meetings, and

WHEREAS, a letter dated February 16, 2011 was sent to Angela Alexander-Wilson, Minyard Johnson, Orin-Oquil Johnson-Giffith, Rev. Eddie Karim, and Christina Serrano informing them that a resolution would be introduced at Community Board #16's monthly public meeting on February 22, 2011 to remove them from Community Board #16,

BE IT RESOLVED that according to Article V, Section 5.5 of the By-laws of Community Board #16 that Angela Alexander-Wilson, Minyard Johnson, Orin-Oquil Johnson-Giffith, Rev. Eddie Karim, and Christina Serrano be removed from membership of Community Board #16.

A motion was made by Ms. Pamela Junior, seconded by Ms. Margaret Brewer and carried to approve the resolution.

Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Linda Baird from the Center for Court Innovation Project.

Ms. Baird stated that she is here with Denisse Ovalle who is a member of the Youth Justice Board. They are here to inform the community about an opportunity to participate in a focus group that is being made available to the youth of the community. There will be a focus group held on Thursday, February 24th at the Community Partner Commission Association (CPCA), Inc.'s Community Enrichment Center.

Ms. Ovalle stated that the Youth Justice Board is a group of fourteen youth who live in the City of New York. They are doing research to improve the living conditions in Brownsville. They are currently involved in interviewing and having focus groups with residents and stakeholders in Brownsville. Through the focus groups they are meeting with the youth because they have determined that their voices often go unheard.

Ms. Baird stated that the focus group is seeking youth ages thirteen to eighteen years old who live in the community and are interested in voicing their opinions about the community. The results of the focus groups will be placed in a report that will be written by Ms. Ovalle and her peers on ways to improve issues of youth crime in the community. She has additional information with her, including permission slips which are required for participants who are under the age of eighteen.

Chairperson Younger stated that it was mentioned that interviews were done with people in Brownsville. Can they elaborate on who they have interviewed?

Ms. Baird stated that they have spoken to some parents but most of the interviews were done with City employees.

Chairperson Younger asked if the persons interviewed were residents of Brownsville?

Ms. Ovalle stated that some were.

Chairperson Younger expressed disappointment in that the interviewed parties did not consist of mostly community residents who have first-hand appreciation of the problems that face the community. She personally gets a little tired of reading statistics about Brownsville that are not

entirely true. It appears that grants were issued for these studies but this community has not benefited.

Chairperson Younger recognized Mr. Daniel Murphy from the Pitkin Avenue BID (Business Improvement District).

Mr. Murphy stated that he was pleased to hear the report of the Economic Development Committee and requested to be placed on their forthcoming agenda.

He is currently working on increasing the number of trees along Pitkin Avenue and is seeking feedback from the community. Along with providing shade in the summer, trees can help ameliorate the high rate of asthma in the Brownsville community which is amongst the highest in the city.

Earlier today, he met with Deputy Mayor Dennis Walcott who has asked that all the BIDs within the City assist with the City's summer youth employment program. He also met with the Community Board's Youth Services Planning Committee Chairperson, Ms. Daisy Jackson, and discussed this issue earlier in the month. With the support of the Deputy Mayor his job is made easier, since he can outreach to the other BIDs in the City to help place youth in jobs this summer.

Chairperson Younger acknowledged the presence of Minister Rhue Rosa from the Gideon Outreach Ministries and Ms. Franchesca Feliciano of Touchstone Health.

She recognized Mr. Carl Luciano from the Office of Councilmember Darlene Mealy.

Mr. Luciano announced that Councilmember Mealy, in collaboration with Assemblyman Darryl Towns, was pleased to have been able to send two busloads of people to the Black, Latino, and Asian Caucus in Albany on Saturday, February 19th. Constituents were able to meet with their elected officials and voice their concerns.

Councilmember Mealy invites everyone, especially Board members, to attend her monthly Advisory meetings. The venue for the meetings has moved to Saint Anthony's Baptist Church, located at the corner of Utica Avenue and East New York Avenue.

Free flu shot vouchers are still available at Councilmember Mealy's office. For more information, please contact him or Ms. Lipkin by calling (718) 953-3097.

Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Essie Duggan from the Office of Senator Velmanette Montgomery.

Ms. Duggan announced that Senator Montgomery would like the community to know that discretionary funds are no longer available as they were eliminated in the Governor's budget. She asks that we keep pressure on our elected officials and hold them accountable so that we may receive proper funding for needed services.

Senator Montgomery continues to champion her youth justice alternatives legislation. She asks for the support of the clergy for this as the churches will play a vital role in helping to keep our youth out of the system for misdemeanor offenses.

Chairperson Younger recognized Mr. Maurice Roberts from the Office of Senator Eric Adams.

Mr. Roberts announced that the Wildlife Conservation Society is seeking to hire full- and part-time seasonal workers for their Bronx, Central Park, Prospect Park, and Queens Zoos, and New York Aquarium locations. Visit the Society's website (wcs.org) for more information. The Department of Sanitation is also hiring, more information may be found by visiting nyc.gov/dcas.

Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Karen Cherry from the Office of Congressman Towns.

Ms. Cherry stated that at last month's meeting it was mentioned that there are no free tax preparation sites located in Brownsville and her research confirmed this. She reached out to an organization which committed to making a mobile unit available in the community for two consecutive Saturdays. She apologized for not having the information about the specifics here tonight. Interested persons may call Congressman Towns' office at (718) 272-1175 for more

information.

Mr. Luciano offered the following website and telephone number to obtain a list of locations that are offering free assistance with completing income tax returns: www.communitytaxaidnyc.org or call (646) 200-5080.

Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Alexis Hockaday from the Office of Assemblyman William F. Boyland, Jr..

Ms. Hockaday announced that Assemblyman Boyland, in collaboration with District Attorney Charles Hynes, will host a screening of the documentary film "Charge it to the Game: The Effects of Gun Violence in Brooklyn" on Thursday, March 3rd, 6:00 p.m. at the District Office, located at 467 Thomas S. Boyland Street.

Assemblyman Boyland hosts his Advisory Board meetings at 10:00 a.m. on the second Saturday of each month and all are welcome to attend.

Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Latrice Walker from the Office of Congresswoman Yvette Clarke.

Ms. Walker announced that Congresswoman Clarke will host a job fair on Tuesday, March 22nd, from 10:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Madison Square Boys and Girls Club, located on Bedford Avenue between Erasmus Place and Snyder Avenue.

Chairperson Younger recognized Mr. Daniel Goodine.

Mr. Goodine stated that we need to have an investigation done with the way the police in the 73rd and 67th Precincts are going about their work. He related an incident that took place at a young man's funeral wherein police officers disrupted the service because of an allegation that an attendee had stolen some beer from a nearby bodega. The police operations are making it so that if he were to go visit a friend in a New York City Housing Authority building and could not remember the exact address if stopped, he would be arrested. He called on elected officials to look into this and have changes made.

Ms. Cherry stated that she understands Mr. Goodine's plight. There are so many rules and regulations within New York City Housing Authority, which the average person may not be aware of. What she suggests is that a meeting be held similar to one that was held two weeks ago in another community. We want to be both protected and respected. There needs to be respect between the police and the community because we need one another.

Ms. Deidre Olivera-Douglas stated that last Friday, she and Mr. Goodine went to the 73rd Precinct in order to file a complaint about treatment of innocents by police who were roving the neighborhood like gangs in groups of six or more. They were told that they could not file a complaint. She feels that officers are receiving on the job training and it is at the expense of the community. She encourages everyone to call 3-1-1 if they see officers mistreating individuals. They do not need to engage the police, but they should file a report so that at least there is a record.

Ms. Shirley Baisden, President of the Marcus Garvey Village Tenants Association, stated that she met with Police Officer Dawn Townsend of the 73rd Precinct and Mr. Goodine, in part due to concerns that were raised by some of the young men in her complex. She saw a video of the incident at the funeral home and it was heartbreaking to see how the police treated the family because of the actions of one individual.

A young man who lives in the complex was picked up and arrested for trespassing for being in front of a door that is two doors from his own. The young man nearly lost his job, all because the police refused to reach out to the young man's mother to find out if she had sent him on an errand.

Chairperson Younger thanked the individuals who have taken up this cause.

Ms. Duggan encourage the audience to voice these issues at the 73rd Precinct's Community Council meetings that are held at 7:30 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month at 1630 St. Mark's Place.

Mr. Luciano suggested that the Civilian Review Board be called at (212) 442-8775 or (212) 442-8815 to report such incidents.

Ms. Margaret Brewer recommended that concerned individuals take part in the Police Department's Civilian Academy Program – a 14-week program which offers some insight on what police officers should be doing and some of the challenges that they face. Taking this course, learning who the Department heads are, and being involved will give you an upper hand when you see something you know may not be right.

Ms. Cheryl Bond-Washington stated that she and her neighbors on Ralph Avenue witness these types of actions on a daily basis. She grew up with the belief that police are to be trusted, but she no longer believes this.

Chairperson Younger suggested that a meeting be convened with the 73rd Precinct and the members of the community to discuss these issues.

She recognized Police Officer Dawn Townsend from the 73rd Precinct's Community Affairs Unit.

Officer Townsend stated that year-to-date, crime statistics for the 73rd Precinct are up 19.8% in the seven major crime categories. Murders are even - 1 this year versus 1 last year, rapes are up - 8 this year versus 7 last year, robberies are up - 69 this year versus 43 last year, burglaries are up - 49 this year versus 39 last year, grand larcenies are down - 52 this year versus 53 last year, grand larceny autos are up - 17 this year versus 15 last year and assaults (which includes shootings) are up - 77 this year versus 66 last year. Shootings year-to-date are also up – 10 shootings with eight victims this year versus eight shootings last year. Their Anti-crime teams are active in areas where they have seen spikes in shootings and gunplay. They have recovered twenty-five firearms this year compared to nineteen last year.

Robberies are the chief cause of their overall numbers being up this year. The Commanding Officer is combating this by having identified the crews and individuals who are responsible for a large number of the robberies in specific areas such Marcus Garvey Village, Riverdale Towers, and the area of Sutter Avenue and Mother Gaston Boulevard, where the robberies have been concentrated.

A new Impact Zone has been created encompassing Pitkin and East New York Avenues to supplement the zone that encompasses Marcus Garvey Village. This was due to an increase in shootings between rival gangs. They have since, arrested the key players in those shootings, including one individual who was charged on the federal level.

Bike lanes have been added in the community. This is an initiative of the Mayor's office and the Police Department will begin strictly enforcing bike regulations. This includes enforcement of the regulation that prohibits persons over the age of twelve years old from riding on sidewalks. She encourages parents to inform their children of this regulation as summons or juvenile reports will be written to persons violating the rule.

Anyone interested in attending the Civilian Academy, which was mentioned by Ms. Brewer earlier, may contact her after the meeting – a class will be going in shortly.

Mr. Goodine asked if the bike rules will apply to delivery persons as well.

Officer Townsend stated that it does and that she has personally visited most of the locations in the Precinct with bike delivery and informed them of this.

Chairperson Younger announced that there will be a Black History Month celebration at the BMS Family Health Center, located at 592 Rockaway Avenue on Friday, February 25th, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m..

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Ms. Eula Key, seconded by Mr. Charles Ladson and carried to adjourn the meeting.