

**MINUTES OF COMMUNITY BOARD #16 – May 24, 2011**

Attendance

David Alexander	Terry Norfleet
Carolyn A. Benjamin-Smith (E)	Rev. Joseph Norton
Margaret Brewer	Deidre Olivera-Douglas
Adrainer Coleman (E)	Blanche L. Peltonbusch
Essie Duggan	Marie Pierre
Norman Frazier (E)	Rev. Devon Ponds (E)
Helen Giles (A)	Mattie Pusey (E)
Shirley Gonsalves	Linda Rivera
Daniel Goodine	Melaine Rochford (E)
Chanel Haliburton	Wendy Rutherford (E)
Sarah Hall	Beatrice Saunders
Kofi Hormeku	Melina Terry (E)
Michael Howard	Evang. Hellen Thomas-Purdie
Allene Ingram	Ernestine Turner (E)
Prince Issachar	Rev. Dr. Miran Ukaegbu (E)
Daisy Jackson	Annie Walkes
Minyarn Johnson	Jennifer Williams
Carl Joseph	Yvette Williams-Lawson (A)
Pamela Junior	Herman Winston
Eula Key	Hazel Younger
Bettie Kollock-Wallace	Viola D. Greene-Walker, District Manager
Charles Ladson	Jimmi Brevil, Community Assistant
Deborah Mack (E)	Latrice Walker for Hon. Yvette Clarke
James Mack	Essie Duggan for Hon. Velmanette Montgomery
Yolanda Matthews (E)	Maurice Phillips for Hon. John Sampson
Linda Mayo (E)	Tyson Leo for Hon. William F. Boyland, Jr.
Sadie McNamara	Carl Luciano for Hon. Darlene Mealy
Ted McQueen	Rene Hastick-Motes for Hon. Marty Markowitz
Genese Morgan (E)	

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

Chairperson Hazel Younger called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m., followed with an invocation by Rev. Eddie Karim and a moment of silence observed in honor the late Alice Vines.

A motion was made by Rev. Joseph Norton, seconded by Mr. David Alexander and carried to waive the reading of the minutes.

District Manager Viola Greene-Walker highlighted the first article of her report regarding the proposed sale by the New York City Department of Finance and the New York City Water Board of all or part of the liens on a number of privately-owned properties at a sale to be held on or about August 3, 2011. In order to prevent the sale of a lien, the property owner must arrange payment of the property taxes and/or payment of water-sewer charges by August 1, 2011. A list of the properties on which such liens exist as currently shown in the records of the New York City Department of Finance and the New York City Water Board is available for review at the Community Board Office between 9:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday thru Friday. In addition, a complete list of the liens that may be included in the proposed sale is also available online at [nyc.gov/finance](http://nyc.gov/finance) or for inspection in the Office of the City Register, located at 210 Joralemon Street in downtown Brooklyn. An explanation of the lien sales and other information about such sales are also found in the article. She also highlighted a time sensitive articles regarding the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Greenest Block in Brooklyn contest, and a free GED/Job Readiness/Culinary Arts Program for unemployed persons ages 18-24.

A motion was made by Ms. Annie Walkes, seconded by Mr. Ted McQueen and carried to waive further reading of the District Manager's report.

Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Susan Blech of Brookdale University Hospital and Medical Center's Live Light, Live Right Program.

Ms. Blech stated that the Live Light, Live Right Program is an obesity management program for children ages 2 to 19. It features four core components, medical, behavior modification and

motivation, nutrition, and exercise. There are seven exercise sites located throughout Brooklyn including the Brownsville Recreation Center.

The program focuses on assisting the families not just the child. Initial screening is conducted at primary care centers, public housing complexes, public schools, and community non-profit organizations. Overweight and obese children who show one or more symptoms associated with obesity are eligible for enrollment into Live Light, Live Right. These children are at highest risk for chronic diseases, including coronary artery disease and type II diabetes. Families are interviewed by the care coordinator and selected for enrollment based on their readiness for change and willingness to adhere to consistent medical visits, counseling sessions, and physical activity programs. After a two week cool-off period, if the families continue to show interest and they are healthy enough to participate in physical exercise, the child is enrolled. This is one of only a few programs of its type that has no time limitation – a child may be enrolled at the age of two and remains in the program until they are nineteen years old.

The program is funded by the Robin Hood Foundation (which targets poverty in New York City by finding and funding the best and most effective programs and collaborating with them to maximize results). The Live Light, Live Right program is hospital-based and staffed by a team of Board-Certified physicians and a team of highly trained and skilled nurses, ancillary staff and many volunteers that have joined forces to combat the epidemic of pediatric obesity.

Obesity is a serious disease which does not discriminate. Some of the services of the Live Light, Live Right Program include:

- Outreach, screening and identification of overweight children
- Referral to the multidisciplinary program
- Individual nutritional counseling
- Care coordination
- Community education
- Education of community physicians
- Structured free or subsidized physical activity programs
- Parent/patient education and support groups
- Advocacy and policy changes

The services are offered to help children who are obese and those who have the potential to become so. The real cure for obesity is prevention. She encourages schools, churches, and other groups and organizations to reach out to them to arrange for workshops and informational sessions. She can be reached at (718) 240-8325.

They operate year-round and this year will offer a summer camp.

Ms. Mabel Davis asked when will the summer camp begin?

Ms. Blech stated that the summer camp will run from July 5<sup>th</sup> thru August 19<sup>th</sup>. The child must already be a participant in the program. The cost per child is \$350 for the seven week program which includes breakfast and lunch. The camp focuses on nutrition and exercise with field trips three times a week.

Chairperson Younger thanked Ms. Blech for her report and next recognized Mr. James Broderick from the Center for Court Innovation.

Mr. Broderick stated that late last year, he appeared before the Board and presented the Center's plans for locating a community court in Brownsville. He is part of the original team that created the idea of community courts in 1995. The community courts have two essential components; first to hold people accountable for their crimes and secondly (and more importantly) to find underlying issues to the crimes. To that end, a communitywide survey was conducted wherein 850 people were interviewed during a week's time. Questions were asked about people's views of the community. A one page synopsis was produced from the data collected.

They are seeking to have a community dialogue on June 23<sup>rd</sup> to discuss their findings. The focus

will not be on the problems, but rather on seeking solutions to the problems that face the community. The Center wants the help of the community to discover what resources are needed to help the youth of the community have a better life. One of the things heard often by the survey team is a perception of lack of employment opportunities and afterschool activities for youth in the community. As of last week, they have started the first Brownsville Youth Court where thirteen to eighteen year olds are trained to hear real cases, which are referred by police, probation, and parole, and adjudicate them at 2318 Atlantic Avenue. Much is said about the youth of Brownsville who are doing wrong, he wants it known that there are many young people here who are doing the right thing. One of the programs helping towards that end is the Youth Court, which he invites everyone to visit.

He displayed a map of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Precinct pinpointing the location of individual shooting incidents in the Precinct for the past three years. He finds it very disturbing that in that time span there have been 243 shootings with nearly 300 victims. That has to stop. They are working with the District Attorney's Office to do two things. First, to let people know that this will no longer be tolerated – the justice system is going to mean business. Secondly, to let people, especially young people who want to leave the gang life behind, know that there are avenues available to do so. The Center will work with young people who want programs and services to offer options and alternative to gang life and shootings. So they are reaching out to the community for their assistance. The Youth Court will only work with the community's input, not relying solely on the input of strangers to the community. He hopes to see many faces from the audience on June 23<sup>rd</sup> at 2318 Atlantic Avenue, when they will discuss some of what they have learned from the survey. Moreover, they look forward to hearing from the audience their experiences and thoughts for solutions to the problems.

Chairperson Younger next recognized Ms. Laurie Cumbo from the Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts.

Ms. Cumbo stated that she is the Founder and Executive Director of the Museum also known as MoCADA. The Museum, located 80 Hanson Place, was originally located on Stuyvesant Avenue and is now twelve years old. Having grown up in Brooklyn, she was always conscious of there not being any representation of the arts of the African Diaspora in the Borough.

While she was a student at Spellman College, Bill and Camille Cosby were in the midst of building the first contemporary art museum at Spellman. Seeing people of color involved with art and culture truly inspired her to pursue the field. After Spellman, she went on to New York University (NYU) where she produced what was supposed to be just her thesis paper. She became even more excited about the idea and with the support of her family was able to bring it to fruition.

They are in talks with Assemblyman William Boyland, Jr. to bring back the film festival which they did two years ago. They are currently featuring a exhibition of student art entitled "From Africa to Brooklyn: Great to Great" and invite everyone to join them for the opening reception on Thursday, May 26<sup>th</sup> from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m..

For many of the young visitors to the museum, it is their first encounter with art and culture from their own background. Few schools teach much about the African continent; in-fact when they ask many of students if Africa is a country or a continent most reply a country. They do not know that there are 53 countries with thousands of languages and dialects spoken. Nor do they know that it is the richest continent of the world in terms of natural resources. They offer an educational component and its use by schools and after school programs.

She is also excited about a trip to Ghana that they are planning for this coming October 13<sup>th</sup> through the 27<sup>th</sup> and hope to make an annual event. She is of the belief that people of African descent take a trip to Africa at least once in their lifetime. She encourages people to display the fliers for the trip even if they cannot make the trip this year. Due to it being to point of departure for many slaves, Ghana has been called the Door of No Return. At the Museum they now call it the Door of Return as juxtaposition against the former term that has now come full circle with descendants of slaves making the pilgrimage and defying the curse placed upon us.

They have begun a project that is being called the Soul of Brooklyn. The Borough of Brooklyn is becoming an attraction for visitors from all over the globe and yet communities like Brownsville and Bedford-Stuyvesant are having difficulty attracting the tourism dollars. The Soul of Brooklyn is seeking to change this by asking local residents to visit [soulofbrooklyn.com](http://soulofbrooklyn.com) and completing a survey telling them about their top twenty things to do

in their community. People will be able to tell them about their favorite places to eat, worship, to gather, etcetera.

Lastly, on June 15<sup>th</sup> the State Legislatures will be voting on whether or not to extend rent control and rent stabilization regulations within the City. She encourages the community to contact their legislators and voice their opinion on the matter.

Someone asked what is the cost of the trip to Ghana?

Ms. Cumbo stated that the cost is \$3,000. They are now accepting deposit of \$500 with the final payment due on July 12<sup>th</sup>. Air fare, hotel, and some meals are included in the price.

Chairperson Younger next recognized Ms. Deborah Henry representing the 1400 Herkimer Street Block Association.

Ms. Henry speaking in behalf of Eartha Stevens, their president, stated that the 1400 Herkimer Street is opposed to the proposed opening of a 200 bed transitional home for homeless men at 1424 Herkimer Street. They have collected over three hundred signatures on a petition against such opening and submitted over seven hundred letters to local elected officials expressing their opposition to the proposal.

It is understood that the City of New York has a responsibility to provide emergency shelter for homeless individuals in need, however, enough is enough. There are more than eleven shelters within a one mile radius of the proposed site. One block away is another homeless shelter for men. Their once quiet neighborhood has experienced a rise in crime since the opening of that shelter. Seniors and young people are already at risk. One block away is a New York City playground. There two schools, numerous day care centers, and several churches in the vicinity. There is a fear of criminal assaults against youth and senior by these individual as the City provides no screening of the individuals. The placement of another shelter in the area would be a devastating blow to the community.

She questioned how did Community Board #16 allow this to happen without opposition? Has the Board lost touch with the community? She stated that in March of 2011 Ms. Stevens received a phone call from Viola Greene-Walker, District Manager of Community Board #16, informing her of a proposed shelter at 1424 Herkimer Street. The Association's vice president received a letter dated April 27, 2011 from the Community Relations Department of the New York City Department of Homeless Services stating that Community Board #16 was aware of the homeless shelter at 1424 Herkimer Street since December 20, 2010. Community Board #16 failed to communicate this to the community until three months later. Why the secret? The developer is acting very quickly to get this proposal done. She stated that they are aware that Community Board #16 and the local Councilmember have direct decision making powers in siting the shelters.

Instead of shelters in our communities, we need nurturing elements such as day care centers, senior citizen centers, senior citizen residences, affordable housing, job training and educational facilities.

The members of the 1400 Herkimer Street Block Association, other area block associations, and residents of the Ocean Hill community demand that Community Board #16 totally oppose the proposal to site a homeless shelter at 1424 Herkimer Street instead of supporting it.

Chairperson Younger stated the Community Board is not in support of the proposal. The Board is constantly fighting to keep transitional shelters out of our community. When the 1400 Herkimer Street Block Association came to the Board and expressed their dislike of the proposal they were informed that Board does not support its siting in the District. Steps were taken to gain an audience with the developer at a meeting scheduled to take place on Thursday (May 26<sup>th</sup>) to discuss the proposal. Because Chairperson Younger did not entertain any further comments on the shelter, there was total chaos by residents who came in support of Ms. Henry's statement.

When order was restored, Ms. Keturah Suggs, member of the Economic Development Committee, reported that the Committee met on Thursday, May 18, 2011 at 6:30 p.m. and briefly discussed forming partnerships with neighborhood businesses to promote economic development initiatives that will benefit neighborhood residents; as well as partnering with the newly formed Ocean Hill-Brownsville Coalition of Young Professionals to promote financial literacy. As a result they will inform the Board of new programs and events as they become available to the

community.

Additionally, the Committee reviewed one renewal application for a liquor license. The establishment is a convenience store, Glen Grocery, and is located at 55 Hegeman Avenue.

The owner of the establishment was interviewed by the Committee and they find no immediate cause not to support the approval of the application.

A motion was made by Mr. David Alexander, seconded by Ms. Shirley Gonsalves and carried to support the liquor license renewal application submitted by the owner of Glen Grocery, located at 55 Hegeman Avenue.

A motion was made by Ms. Pamela Junior, seconded by Ms. Eula Key and carried to accept the Economic Development Committee Report.

Ms. Marie Pierre, Chairperson of the Legislative Committee reported that the Committee met on May 17, 2011 and discussed several pending legislation that will affect our residents:

- 1) Intro No. 566 which is a local law to amend the New York City Charter, in relation to requiring the reporting of information related to PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls).

PCBs have been found in a number of schools citywide and studies have shown that they increase the risk of asthma and other respiratory diseases, the rate of hospitalization for diabetes and coronary heart disease.

The legislation will require the Chancellor of the city school districts to submit to the City Council a report regarding the progress of PCB removal in public schools.

- 2) Intro No. 494 which is a local law to amend the Administrative Code of the City of New York in relation to requiring the posting of a bond to ensure compliance of building and maintenance requirements by holders of mortgages commencing foreclosure actions.

- 3) Omnibus Rent Regulation Bill A2674 with provisions including those

- To put into rent stabilization former Mitchell-Lama buildings including those already taken out of the program regardless of their year built, without rent increases based on unique or peculiar circumstances.
- To extend and strengthen the rent stabilization and co-op laws. The extension will last until 2016.
- To repeal high rent vacancy destabilization.

- 4) Intro No. 477 – The Tenants Bill of Rights. This bill would require every owner of a multiple dwelling (3 or more units) to post in and provide to all tenants in that multiple dwelling a tenants' bill of rights that, in plain and clear language, explains some of the basic rights to which every tenant in New York City is entitled.

The Committee will continue their review of these legislations at their next meeting on Thursday, June 15, 2011, 6:30 p.m. in the Community Board Office.

A motion was made by Mr. Charles Ladson, seconded by Mr. David Alexander and carried to accept the Legislative Committee Report.

Mr. Michael Howard, Chairperson of the Nominating Committee, reported that the Committee met on May 16, 2011 and discussed names of Board members to fill Executive Offices for the period from June 2011 to June 2012.

The Committee's nominations are as follows:

- Chairperson – Hazel A. Younger
- 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chairperson – Bettie Kollock-Wallace
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chairperson – Kofi Hormeku

- Treasurer – Sarah Hall
- Secretary – Sadie McNamara
- Parliamentarian – Marie Pierre

Ms. Deidre Olivera-Douglas asked if the nomination could be tabled for another meeting in order to see if there are other possible candidates?

Mr. Howard stated that the floor was open to further nominations.

Ms. Olivera-Douglas asked why not table it for a month to give the opportunity of presenting additional candidates?

Chairperson Younger stated that as per the Board's by-laws a Nominating Committee was named at last month's meeting. They met and have presented their slate of officers, and the floor is now open for additional nominations by Board members.

Rev. Joseph Norton asked if self nominations were allowed?

Chairperson Younger stated that the floor is open for nominations.

Ms. Chanel Haliburton nominated herself for 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chairperson.

A motion was made by Mr. Charles Ladson and seconded by Ms. Minyarn Johnson to accept the nomination of Chanel Haliburton for 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chairperson.

Ms. Deidre Olivera-Douglas nominated herself for Chairperson.

A motion was made by Mr. Carl Joseph and seconded by Ms. Terry Norfleet to accept the nomination of Deidre Olivera-Douglas for Chairperson.

Mr. Charles Ladson nominated himself for Treasurer.

A motion was made by Mr. Prince Issachar and seconded by Ms. Chanel Haliburton to accept the nomination of Charles Ladson as Treasurer.

A motion was made by Ms. Pamela Junior, seconded by Ms. Shirley Gonsalves and carried to close the nominations.

There being disruption and disorder on the floor, Chairperson Younger adjourned the meeting.