

Community Board 1
June 29, 2015

Interview of District Manager Candidates

6:45 Executive Session

DRAFT

not Approved by the Board

Vinnie Donato goes over rules and regulations with the Board. He states approximately 30 minutes per candidate with time for questions. You have a ballot, with your name on it. Vinnie states the start time will be 7 PM Florence Koulouris will begin. She will give a statement and then answer questions. We do have a ballot make sure you sign the ballot and at the end of the night turn it in. ?—My question is why do we put our name on it? Why shouldn't it be a secret ballot, and at the end of the night turn it in? Answer—Because it is a public meeting? ?- Oh so because it's a public meeting, you have to have names. Nothings secret. Just asking...?- Mr. Chairman may I ask a question please. VD Yes. Maybe you can clarify for me I'm not too verse on procedure at this point. Is this a public meeting? We are not the public we are the Board? VD It is a public meeting which we have the right to close this point to the public. ?-I understand that. Ok So why are the names on the ballot? This is not a public meeting we are on the Board. VD- Well, because you are going to have to vote for somebody.?- I understand that but why are our names on the pieces of paper? VD So we know who to give it to, It is a public record. We checked with the Borough Presidents office, the lawyers said our names have to be on it. ? I have another question- VD OK ? Once we vote, once the voting is completed (inaudible) you are the only one going to see them. Now, after you looked at them and counted them. Where is it filed? In the district office? It's kept on record in the office. If someone wanted to FOIL them then they can get them. ?-They are public record and they must be public record.? There's unlikely anybody who will ask. ? The issue I have is that the district manager will have access to this. That's the issue I have.(inaudible) That's the issue I'm concerned about, but the next District Manager (inaudible) ?- It's going to be held in the office. We will take care of it..... Send it to the Borough President?- No we the Board want to send it to the Borough President from now. We are suppose to (inaudible) we send it to Borough President. (inaudible) not for next District Manager to know which one we vote for. ?- No, we are not going to give it to them. We are to take them, count them, then send it to the Borough President. OK? No one will see them except for the exDM. ?- No problem. Yes. Do the Board members come up with the vote too? ?- Of Course. Yes. Could we have it where we vote on sealing them, and sending them to the Borough Presidents office than the Board Keep them? Yes, we are going to send it to the Borough Presidents Office. Sealed, Sealed. ?— We don't want our name on it we are not going to put our name on it. ?- Your name is on it.....No, our names are not on it.

There is a question why a political person's representative is allowed to stay. It's an ex-official office. This political representative from council's office has been allowed to stay and we were told anybody who wasn't a Board member had to be out of (inaudible) ?- They are unofficial board members. They are not a Board Member, but they are equivalent to a Board Member.

1900 Meeting Opens

Florence Koulouris- First Applicant

V. Donato- Please introduce yourself and tell the Board a little about yourself-

FK- Hello good evening I am Florence Koulouris. I have been with the Board for eight years. I started at the museum of moving image office location. For those of you who don't know me, I was hired under George Delis before Lucille Hartmann became District Manager. I helped move the office, along with Lucille, into our new location I set up with Lucille the FMS system and the network of the office. I've been lucky enough to have her guidance and to learn as much as I possibly could about the function of the

DRAFT not Approved by the Board

Board. I have dealt with your meetings, I dealt with the committee meetings and I dealt with the cabinet meetings. I am very happy to be here and I just hope you pick me, so vote for me.

Questions –

M. LaRocca- Tell the Board what the District Manager can do to improve Boards relationship with the community and to bring more help into getting involved with the Community Board and also how do you see the role as District Manager Is it purely support of individuals and Community Board Members or is it something different.

FK- I feel that the District Manager by following the direction of the Board can easily bring people from the community in. We are in daily contact with the community in the office. From members of the community who call to ask questions to 311 complaints we have the ability to be more inclusive, as we have always been. When people ask for applications we tell them where they can get them and we help them navigate the borough president's website. I feel the job of the District Manager is to follow through with what you, the Board members, say as to what needs to be done. What goes on in the office is very different from what goes on here at the meetings. We do a lot of community support in the office. Where as here you are working on the Liquor Licenses or the Unenclosed Cafes and then need the District manager send out letters it is up to you to choose the role. But, in the office we have a completely different role supporting the community. Whether it is a tree down or a pot hole or a street light out these are just a small part of the things we do.

N. Silverman- Can you tell us your experience with technology, your knowledge of software web design and any other types of things?

FK- Absolutely. I have no real background on web design but we have somebody who works with our office. We have someone who handles all of our technological access, but I do have hands on experience with our website and One of my issues is that as Lucille and I discussed I would like to set up Facebook and a Twitter account as soon as possible. That is something that will be put up this summer. We are also going to become a little more involved in Twitter and Facebook to help support the Board. We want to be proactive with technological aspect of the office. I would like to also make some changes to the website.

T Ryan- Do you know Woodside is a part of our district? What are the borders of Woodside?

FK- I can't give you the exact borders of Woodside without a map. We have a very large area and our office is involved in the entire area. We work with the whole district.

S. Nicolaou- How do you see the direction of the leadership?

FK- The direction of the leadership is up to the Board. The Board guides the District Manager and the Manager follows through with the Boards agenda. The District Manager is here to represent the Board and is the face of the Board.

F. McDonald- I have yes or no questions. Do you live in Community Board 1? Have you been on the Board in Douglaston? Is your real estate license held by a Broker? I see you were very active with the PTA. Now that your children are grown, what community service do you perform?

FK- No. May I say, I do not but I grew up here on 34th Street and went to Queen Lutheran School as a child. Also I worked here for 10 years prior to the Board. Yes. It is held by a Broker in Nassau County. I am on my Churches Board and Chair several committees including one that raised 7 million dollars.

A Di Saverio- can you describe a situation with City Agencies?

DRAFT not Approved by the Board

FK- I have a very good working relationship with NYC agencies. For example, if a resident calls our office with a complaint placed with 311 and road work needing to be done we will contact our representative at Department of Transportation (DOT) and our liaison may investigate the work order. Sometimes this can expedite the response.

D Stiller- Where do you see the future of Astoria Is it more of a Suburban car centric community with the zoning and transportation resolutions needed to accommodate that culture or prioritize people , public transportation walking, bicycling and public space?

FK- You mean as far as cars and bikes? I think it is a mixture of both. I don't think it's one or the other. We will have to coexist. I grew up on bicycles, without my bike I had no mode of transportation. After we moved from Astoria there was a period where I lived on Long Island and my bike was everything to me. Without my bike there was no place I could go. I understand that owning a car is extremely expensive. I understand that there's not enough room for every single person in Astoria to have a car, but we all have to co-exist. That means that drivers and bike riders follow all the rules and regulations on the road. So, if you are on an electric bike that does not mean riding on the sidewalk and also if you have a car that does not mean hitting 21 year old person and leaving.

DS- So, what my question is where is Astoria going in terms of urban transportation in our community?

FK- I am answering your question. What I am saying is that we are going to all co-exist. We have to. There is no other way.

Katie Ellman- What kind of initiative will you implement?

FK- A District Manager cannot implement initiatives. A District Manager works for the Board and follows the directive of the Board. So, I would follow what you, the Board, ask to the very best of my ability.

E. Hantzopoulos- What has been you biggest challenge since you worked for the Board and describe how you overcame it...

FK- Let me think. I would have to say working in the office trailer, where I believe I met you, was the biggest challenge. Lucille and I were in the office trailer for three years and I had to pack it up and move as if we were going to California each time we moved. We moved three times around the corner and back again. While in the trailer we were hit by a car and a truck. Then, we moved into the new location and had to completely set up a new office while operating at a hundred and ten percent. Following this we had a flood in the office. I feel I never dropped the ball. The office was in full operation during all these events.

R. Khuzami- Can you tell me about your Supervisors roll on your resume?

FK- I am on my church Board. I am chair of multiple committees. At the Queen Gazette I gave direction to three employees.

R. Khuzami- What is your opinion on how transparent the office should be?

FK- Completely transparent we are a city agency.

RK- Do you view your job as proactive or reactive?

FK- My experiences tells me reactive until I have more experience under my belt.

V. Donato- I would like to share an experience I had with Florence . We have a business in the area for over one year they had concrete stations outside in the street blocking parking. After a lot of work we couldn't get rid of them. I took Florence out one day to

DRAFT not Approved by the Board

look at stuff in the neighborhood and we stopped by there. She went in and spoke with them. Within a few minutes the guy came out and removed the cement. Florence done in one trip. That takes a strong personality to go in and get the job done. It takes a strong personality.

G. Stamatiades- I have a question about the statement on your resume where you say you Manage the budget. How do you manage the budget?

FK- I use a system in the office called FMS(financial management system). FMS is a city program I was trained to do. And DCAS contract set up. I pay all the bills for the community board office electronically. I request estimates, receive the statements and pay as required. I also do all the ordering of supplies.

G. Stamatiades- So, you do data entry.

FK- No. I manage the budget I order and pay for supplies. I pay the bills.

B. Piazza- Is it a problem to work after normal business hours?

FK-It is not a problem.

V. Hall Jones- How much will you get involved with Astoria Houses and the surrounding area. Would you attend meetings?

FK- Yes. I will attend meetings if I am invited as long as there are no conflicts with other meetings. We will invite the new representatives from Astoria Houses to the Cabinet meeting to engage with the reps from NYC agencies.

G. Prentzas- How do you feel regarding the budget and informing the Board?

FK- It's not a problem. All you have to do is ask.

FK- Thank you all. Thank you.

1930 Closed with Florence.

15 Minute Break.

Edmund Rosenbaum- Second Applicant

Vinicio Donato- Please introduce yourself to the Board and if you have a statement we would like to hear it.

STATEMENT

Hi my name is Edmund Rosenbaum I lived in Jackson Heights my whole life. I have served on Community Board 3 for 9 years. During those 9 years I've worked with my fellow board members very, very frequently. With the staff and District manager there (CB#3) I've learned a lot. I feel I'm ready to take the next step and build on that experience.

VD- Who would like to ask him a question? Everyone has a copy of his resume--

Questions

G. Alexou- Are you willing to attend evening meetings and on the weekends?

ER- I will attend meetings at anytime needed.

E. Hantzopoulos- Can you tell us some of the skills you have that would qualify you to be a District Manager?

DRAFT not Approved by the Board

E Hantzopoulos- Do we have to select from tonight?

V Donato- We have to select tonight.

D Tharrington- Do we have to choose from these three?

V Donato- Yes.

2015

Jose Batista- Third Applicant
STATEMENT

First of all I'd like to thank my fellow Board Members for giving me the opportunity to apply for District Managers position. Let's let's (inaudible) over the last couple of weeks where this position became available. I'm number one very grateful and honored that some of you think I would make an excellent District Manager and I hope that at the end of this process I can answer some questions that you may have for me that would either encourage that point of view or for some of you that I'm not the guy. So please, Alright. Anyone have questions? Yes.

Questions

T Ryan- Do you know the Boarders of Woodside?

JB- I know Woodside Senior Center, and Mathew (in audible)-- is over there. We have a very good relationship with that part of the district. Other than being over there at the Senior Center and doing some shopping at the shops over there that is about the extent of my knowledge. All positive things are done with people over there in Woodside, but my relationship other than the Woodside Senior Center is limited.

VD- Anyone else?

R Khuzami- I have a three part question...Will you be reactive or proactive? How do you feel about transparency. What is your supervisory experience?

JB- The answer to your first question is I believe that the role of the District Manager is to take the direction of the Board. I am here to listen to the Board and then proceed with some of the issues that they bring up. Perhaps they may want me to explore, and so being proactive. I'm not the person that's out there making things happen but I am in terms of enticing the action and I'm the person if you have a question. If you have something you want me to proceed you want me to bring in work and maybe a service--- a member or some other program that might be in the district that is what I see as the role. This will help me to initiate action. Using the kind of experience (in audible) I have in the community to bring some of these people in front of the Board members that they might bring up some of the issues. I am currently the Director of HANAC and supervise 130 volunteers, we put them in to positions to help all different HANAC programs function. Those are through (In audible)--senior centers and youth centers. So in terms of being able to manage all of that, that is on me. If my program needs extra help, it's up to me to make sure I re-cap the volunteers which come from various organizations.

E Hantzopoulos- Do you have ideas for community engagement and visibility?

JB- I would go to other communities, find out information, go to street fairs, and meetings. I live in Astoria and have experience with the businesses in Astoria. (inaudible)...looking for new initiatives for example living wages and gainful experience.

K Mullarkey- Do you have experience with social media and web design?

JB- I have a Facebook page. I have seen other community Board websites but don't have much experience. I do have contact with experts in that area.

DRAFT not Approved by the Board

ER- The skills A District Manager should have are being able to effectively manage staff and work diligently on the budget. A large part also is working with the community deal with complaints and service issue in a timely fashion. It is very important for a district Manager to have a good relationship between the city agencies and the community to be effective. This way any task that the District manager need to address can be done efficiently background with liquor licenses. I've done some assisting with my community Board District Manager and have experience in this field. My strong points are dealing with sidewalk cafes and addressing their needs as well as the communities concerns. I've noticed there are licensing issues I would want to look into and get them into compliance.

R. Khuzami- I have a three part question: Do you currently do the job of District manager? Do you consider the position of District Manager to be pro active or reactive? What is your philosophy on transparency? What is your experience in handling personnel in an office situation?

ER- the majority of the time the District Manager is reactive because the Community Board deals with a lot of service complaints which are handled as they come in, but it is also a proactive position depending on the community. Once instance of this is with transportation, you have to be aware of what is happening with transportation services and any changes that are occurring.

ER- I believe in 100% transparency because Community Board is governed by the open meeting law which is one part transparency and Community Board represents the resident who have the right to know what is happening. In my ten plus years at the Jewish Center in Jackson Heights I supervised the staff I have. In my opinion I have plenty of experience with working with staff and I am on good terms with them.

M L Rocca- Can you tell us a little about your familiarity with Astoria and LIC?

ER- Because Jackson Heights is on the border of Astoria, I basically grew up in this area. I have spent a lot of time in Astoria and I am familiar with 30th Ave, Ditmars as well as the Business Districts.

MF- If you get this position would you have to resign from your current position?

ER- Yes, I would have to resign.

T.Ryan- What do you know about Woodside?

ER- I was actually just over by the Woodside houses the other day. I know there are some new apartment buildings being built in the neighborhood. I know of the Boulevard Gardens business district and I know Bryant High School is on the outskirts of the neighborhood.

VD- Any other questions? Fran?

F.McDonald- In your position as the grand coordinator at the Jewish Center I am assuming that you prepared the contracts and they are decided on by someone else. Is that true?

ER- I prepare the paperwork for the contracts and submit them to the Executive Board to make any decisions. After these decisions are made, I do play a part in any supervision that is needed and I assist in any way possible.

Fran.- What is your attendance record with your Community Board?

ER- I am at 100%

Fran.- Are you a registered voter in Queens County?

DRAFT not Approved by the Board

G Alexiou- Are you willing to work late and attend evening meetings?

JB- I'm not a 9 to 5 kind of guy I am willing to attend meetings.

V Hall- What do you know about Astoria Houses?

JB Astoria houses are the corner stone of the area. I would attempt to increase volunteering amongst young people. There are many ways children can help the community and at the same time help themselves.

N Silverman- How do you see yourself bringing your skills to the District Managers Position?

JB- With my experience of how to organize and group people. There is a way how to work with a group of people to make the strengths of all grow.

Thank you.

Voting Procedure

Board team- Evie Hantzopoulos, Danielle Tharrington, Ann Bruno, Jerry Krill

Non-Board Members- Lucille Hartmann and Brian Fieger

Ballots passed with names on each. Vote taken. Board team counts votes.
Vinicio Donato announces new District Manager's name—Florence Koulouris

2046- Meeting closes

This Document is a Draft Not Approved By Community Board 1,0 Members