

**BROOKLYN COMMUNITY BOARD 6
YOUTH/HUMAN SERVICES/EDUCATION COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 25, 2015**

PRESENT:

P. BELLENBAUM
K. ENO
T. JACKSON
D. RAMOS
R. UNDERWOOD

F. BROWN
A. FAILOA
F. JEAN
B. SOLOTAIRE

R. CERVONE
R. FREEMAN
J. LI
S. TURET

EXCUSED:

L. HILL

M. SCOTT

A. SHEFRIN

ABSENT:

A. ANANTHARAMAN
C. PETERSEN

E. CAUSIL-RODRIGUEZ E FELDER

GUESTS:

P. JEPPE – REP. FOR HON. SIMON, STATE ASSEMBLY MEMBER
C. SHA A. RIZZI

*****MINUTES*****

Presentation and review of New York State Senate Bill 2500-2015, an act to amend the public health law, in relation to the closure of hospitals.

Presentation and discussion on bill known as LICH act (“Local Input for Community Health”) led by staff from the offices of State Senator Daniel Squadron and State Assembly Member Jo Anne Simon.

- LICH act was created after a lengthy debate surrounding the recent closing of Long Island College Hospital in Brooklyn. Officials saw that the current public health law didn’t include any specific procedures pertaining to the closing of hospitals.
- Under the old law the Commissioner of the State Dept. of Health was only required to notify the public within 30 days *after* a hospital was closed.
- Sen. Squadron’s staff took language from a piece of legislation that then-Assembly Member, Scott Stringer put together in the 1990s, and used it to establish a timeline (as detailed in the Bill 2500-2015) for notifying the appropriate elected officials and members of the public as soon as the Commissioner receives an application to close a hospital.
- Details of the proposed bill were reviewed--language that establishes a specific process and a timeline that allows communities a chance to respond (and have their responses acknowledged) when notified of an application to close.
- The proposed process also serves to create a body of evidence by requiring documents and reports from the Commissioner and the entity applying to close a hospital; and allows the public to formally respond in writing.

- The LICH act was announced in December 2014 and is presently assigned to the senate's Health Committee.
- Sen. Squadron's staff are cautiously optimistic about it passing; somewhat concerned about it being "an uphill battle" since they are in the senate minority. They also noted that at the moment bill drafting is really backed up--partly due to the recent upheaval in the assembly.
- The bill has the support of 1199SEIU and NYSNA and nonpartisan support is expected from several assembly members; Staff is also getting support from various Community Boards.

Question posed by a YHSE committee member:

- Is there a city or state mandate that a hospital must exist to serve X number of people within a certain radius? (Sen. Squadron's COS said she could look into that.)

Discussion moved to other issues around health care needs & additional legislation.

- Assembly Member Simon is working on a bill that would address the need to gather data re: response time and emergency needs.
- Overall sense by YHSE committee and Assembly staff is that the LICH act is too short to address such complex issues and that additional legislation may be needed. Focus now is getting the LICH bill passed and signed by Governor Cuomo.

Comment by a YHSE committee member:

- One concern is that the LICH act just deals with the closing of hospitals but does not address a transfer of management; perhaps that can be reformed in a future piece of legislation.

Questions posed by YHSE committee members:

- Q: Who is responsible for managing the "continuity of care" as outlined in the LICH bill?
- A: Sen. staff answered that the rulemaking process means that the Commissioner of the State DOH has to figure out how to comply with the details of the law.
- Q: How are "surrounding communities" defined?
- A: a lot of debate about how specific to be in the bill, and decided it's in the public's best interest to be vague; so the language is meant to be broad and open to interpretation for the communities involved.
- Q: Is it still possible to make changes to the bill?
- A: No, they are no longer accepting input (other than a critical typo pointed out by Benjamin Solotaire, Chair) because if they try to amend it now they may lose the ability to use a motion to get the bill out of committee (a result of parliamentary rules imposed by Senate majority.)

General sense of YHSE committee after discussing LICH bill is that it's a good idea to have the goal of getting it passed and then add on to it with additional legislation. The bill provides an opportunity for communities to have input when a hospital is under consideration for closure.

Suzanne Turet, Chair, motioned that we actively support the LICH bill. Paige Bellenbaum, Chair, seconds the motion.

VOTE: 13.....YEAS 0.....NAYS 0.....ABSTENTIONS

MOTION PASSED: UNANIMOUSLY

Continued planning discussion on Spring Youth event.

Youth Opportunity Fair taking place on May 16, 2015.

- YHSE Chairs asked Assembly staff if they would be willing to participate in civic engagement portion; also asked them to check on their Members' willingness to support the event.
- 1:00 to 4:00 (or 5:00) pm
- John Jay Educational Campus in Park Slope said they would allow us to use the auditorium, cafeteria and classrooms; formal application is with the DOE and could take a few more weeks to be approved.
- Meeting on March 4 with young representatives from Red Hook Initiative to get their input and run some ideas past them.
- Need to create a flyer to use for inviting agencies and students
- Suggestion to promote the event through Facebook
- Discussion of other orgs/events that could cross promote
- Ideas to incentivize attendance (Knicks tickets? Giveaways?)
- Need to invite a "cool and interesting" keynote speaker
- Reiterated 3 tracks for the day:
 - Civic Engagement (Voter reg. table; community boards, county committees; becoming poll workers; young gov. staffers to encourage youth to become involved in political process)
 - Job readiness
 - Enrichment programs

Discussion moved to topic of schools and ideas for next meeting.

- CECs (Citywide Education Council) are increasing their activities and looking to engage with community boards.
- Perhaps we'll invite CEC13 and CEC15 to meet with us.
- They're working on a resolution about school funding—NYS owes schools a large amount of money.
- Some area schools are concerned about the Governor's proposed changes to teachers' evaluations—they're asking for community support.
- Complex intertwined issues around Common Core and testing; tying teacher evaluations to tests; tying funding to tests.
- Suzanne Turet, Chair, wants to go on record in support of teachers and schools.
- Discussion to be continued during March 2015 meeting.