

**COMMUNITY BOARD #14
MONTHLY VIRTUAL BOARD MEETING
MARCH 8, 2022**

PRESENT

Audrey Amsterdam-Handy, Mark Anaya, Lailah Boyd, Natasha Carter, Louis Caucig, John Cori, Dr. Gerald David, Rose Marie Duggan-Gulston, Ahmad Edwards, Jack Epter, Jaden Gaab, Eugenia Gibson, Yitzchok Goldstone, Randy Hall, D. Brian Heffernan, Felicia Johnson, Paul King, Betty Leon, Denise Lopestri, Nancy Martinez, John McCambridge, Sonia Moise, Helen Montero, Al Moore, Daniel Mundy, Dolores Orr, Dr. Harold Paez, Linda Plummer, David Rood-Ojalvo, Karen Sloan-Payne, Chris Tedesco, Jose Velez, Wanda Warden, Lisa Williams

ABSENT

Gabrielle Bennett, Yaakov Berger, Giselle Carter, Andrea Colon, Eric Diaz, Temina Feldman, Tamara Jacobs, Brian Kelly, Maggie Larkins, Annette Lord-Cohen Ife Maijeh, Rosalyn Mason, Isa Mitchell

GUESTS

Ciara Donley - Rep. City Council Member Joanne Ariola, Dan Brown – Rep. Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz, Mac Lawrence – Rep. City Council Member Selvena Brooks-Powers, Jason Greenberg -Rep. Assembly Member Stacey Pheffer-Amato, Jose Reina - Rep. Congressman Gregory Meeks, Joseph Edwards – Rep. Congressman Gregory Meeks, James Mongeluzo – Rep. NYC Comptroller Office.....

.....
The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:15pm.

MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 8, 2022

Wanda Warden made the motion to approve February 8, 2022 minutes as written. Jack Epter seconded the motion. The motion carried.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Dolores Orr, Chair reported that Borough Budget Hearings for discretionary funds from the Queens Borough President was held on March 7 ,2022 via Zoom. QBH. 209 people signed up to speak and the last person scheduled to speak was at 11:55pm. Out of the 209 speakers, 5 Rockaway groups asked for funding which is as follows:

- Jonathan Gaska for CB#14
- St. Johns Hospital requested funds for replacing critical care beds
- Swim String requested \$50,000 for them to provide scholarships to youth of the community to learn to swim.

- Jewish Community Council requested \$75,000 to continue helping residents with medicare applications. The demand is so great that JCC needs funds to hire additional staff and provide training for the new staff.
- RDRC requesting \$75,000 to conduct business training for 20 people that want to learn how the start a business and another \$75,000 for direct marketing.

Following up from last month meeting regarding requesting CB #14 District acquiring for our two precincts, hand held devices for the summer to issue illegal parking tickets. Traffic Enforcement notified us the handheld devices are issued/used by one person only. Therefore we requested assignment of summer detail traffic agents to work Thursdays thru Mondays.

At the JFK Airport Committee meeting the Port Authority presented their program to reduce carbon emissions. Their report involves the purchase of electric buses, the construction of 10 charging stations for electric cars, at the cell phone parking lot.

REPORT OF THE DISTRICT MANAGER

Jonathan Gaska, District Manager reminded all that the upcoming Transportation Committee meeting for March 22, 2022 at 7pm is posted on the office website as well as all of the others meetings.

Mr. Gaska advised that he did testify on Monday at the Queens Budget Hearing on behalf of the district regarding the following:

- The widening of RBB between Beach 56 Street to Beach 62 Street needs to be addressed as in which city agency/developer is responsible for the widening to complete the section because the city and a developer have already agreed to complete all the other sections as in Beach 35 Street to Beach 56 Street and Beach 62 Street to Beach 73 Street.
- Capital Storm and Sanitary Sewer project HW631, the last phase for the Arverne area, which covers Beach Channel Drive to the Bay for Beach 62 Street to Beach 73 Street. The goal of the project is to stop streets from flooding by bringing streets to the same height level as Beach Channel Drive because streets closet to the bay are 5 to 7 feet below grade. The last phase has been on hold for 30 years.
- Requested traffic enforcement summer detail for the 100th and 101st Precincts to issue illegal parking summons working the same schedule as the NYPD summer detail.
- requested a comprehensive district wide traffic study to handle to the increase of about 30,000 new residents with about 10,000 cars to the peninsula.

ELECTED OFFICIALS REPORT

ASSEMBLY MEMBER STACEY PHEFFER-AMATO

Jason Greenberg reported that Assembly Member Amato is up in Albany working on the budget which hopefully will get passed this week. Updates are as follows:

- announcing for residents to check your EZ Pass accounts because the office has been getting calls for assistance error is resident accounts, where resident rebate is not being posted to their account
- Reminding all that this month is Woman's International Month and the office is distributing forms to those that would like to nominate someone.

QUEENS DISTRICT ATTORNEY MELINDA KATZ

Dan Brown reported that D.A. Katz was in Rockaway over the weekend and she marched in the Queens County St. Patrick's Day Parade.

On March 24, 2022, D.A. Katz will be hosting her Women's History Month event that will be held at Queens College. Those interested in attending this event please contact queensda.org.

CITY COUNCIL MEMBER SELVENA BROOKS-POWERS

Mac Lawrence reported that Council Member Powers had her first Chair of Infrastructure Committee hearing that was very successful in dialogue with the Commissioner of DOT. Dialogue was also held with the Commissioner of DSNY to look into bogus sanitation enforcement summons. As well as the office being in the process of purchasing cameras to catch those that are illegally dumping in chronic locations within the district.

CITY COUNCIL MEMBER JOANN ARIOLA

Ciara Donely reported that Councilmember Ariola is hosting a meeting regarding the staging area at Beach 116 Street with the Army Corp of Engineers. In addition, a meeting regarding the speed humps along Shore Front Parkway with DOT, CB14 and local civic association is in the process of being scheduled.

NYC COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE

James Monerizo reported that the office is working to continue the Weekly Economic and Fiscal Outlook Newsletter that had been created by former Comptroller Scott Stringer. The newsletter is helpful for those that want to know about the employment rates, etc. The information regarding the newsletter and other information can be accessed through the NYC Comptroller's website.

On March 8, 2022 the office will be providing the 1st training to teach people how to use the checkbook website where you can look up city contracts with outside vendors and track money as well as how the funds are being spent.

CONGRESSMAN GREGORY MEEKS

Jose Reina reported that the Postal Service Reform Act of 2021 was passed in the House of Representatives with bipartisan support. Some of the key reforms of the act on and operational level if this legislation is passed in the senate will include:

- USPS personal will be required to enroll on Medicare in order to cut down on prefunded healthcare costs.
- USPS will be required to deliver mail and packages 6 days a week through and intergrated delivery system.
- Provisions within the act will be geared towards improving the effectiveness of the postal service along with expansion of special rates for local newspapers to promote local news organizations.
- Adjustments will be made to improve the mode of transportation to use when delivering mail to ensure greater consistency and reliability.

For more information regarding this legislature please call the office at 718-725-6000.

Joseph Edwards reported that on a federal level the House passed legislature to protect veterans exposed to toxic substances (Bill will be called Honoring Our Packed Act). The act will require V.A. Hospitals to provide access to healthcare for veterans that have been exposed to toxic substances rather than forcing veterans to prove that they have been exposed themselves and the act makes key improvements to streamline the review process to congress.

STATE SENATOR JOSEPH ADDABBO JR.

Sandee Doremus reported that on April 3,2022 Senator Addabbo will be sponsoring a shredding event and home goods event at Forest Park at 10:00am to 2:00pm. Please note that home goods are items that people want to get rid of which could be silverware, dishes and plates etc.

INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION

Paul Graiziano – Re: discussion on pending bills in Albany that Governor K. Hochul supports which are: NY Senate S4547-Assembly A4854.

The Bills will allow side stepping of local zoning regulations to allow major increase in density of residential units in neighborhoods.

Paul Graiziano stated that on January 7, 2022 Governor Hochul in her r State of the State Address, spoke of supporting fixing outdated land-use laws that hold

back housing development and encourage transit oriented development and the conversion of hotels and offices for housing.

Mr. Graiziano explained that since the pandemic converting hotels and offices for housing makes sense and so does transit housing which would be close to modes of transportation . However upon actually reviewing the Governor's State of the State Address the reference to fixing outdated land-use laws is, in other words, to eliminate single family home ownership zoning in the state of New York. The agenda would be to create "accessory dwelling units" (ADU) which are additional units within a house/building/backyard etc.

Apparently, this was the Governor's plan to solve the affordable housing crisis and the homelessness crisis in the state of New York. This plan would eliminate 1 and 2 family home zoning in the state of New York and eliminate Home Rule in the State of New York and mandate a blanket amnesty for all illegal conversions in the City of New York. As in the homeowner would not be paying taxes for a 3 or 4 family home, the homeowner would be receiving funds while the tenant would be living substandard in a small room, parking would be eliminated, set-back for rear yard and side yard is only 4 feet instead of 40 feet, ceiling height is only 7 feet and floor area ratio is not included.

Therefore those of us that have been working hard to protect our neighborhoods and communities need to continue to do so by opposing both proposed Bills as a community board in the form of a resolution. If passed, the Bills would be mandated for New York State in the form of policy which is unfunded but included in the state budget by Governor Hochul. Further since public discussions are being held more and more elected officials are becoming aware of the effects of the proposed Bill and are opposing the Bills

Betty Leon made the motion to oppose Governor Hochul's proposed Bills regarding amnesty of illegal conversion in NYC. Nancy Martinez seconded the motion. The motion carried 28 YES, 1 NO, 1 ABSTAINED,

Betty Leon made the motion to oppose Governor Houchel's proposed Additional Dwelling Units (ADU) Bills. Lou Caucig seconded the motion. The motion carried by a roll call vote of 23 YES, 6 NO and 0 ABSTAINED.

PUBLIC SPEAKING: The Chair opened the floor for public speaking. 2 people signed up to speak. They all were recognized and heard. Public speaking was closed.

COMMITTEE REPORT

YOUTH SERVICES & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Helen Montero reported that a web ex meeting was held on February 17, 2022. The purpose of the meeting was to gather important needed information from school agencies involved with public schools in Rockaway. The meeting included members from the Water Safety Coalition which is working to improve water safety education and water safety class locations within our community.

Mrs. Montero reported that Community School District Deputy Superintendent David Norment and Deputy Superintendent Melissa Compson presented the following updates on Rockaway Schools:

- The covid-19 pandemic has had an undeniable disruption and impact on student learning in the public school system; including closures, quarantines, lock-downs, switch to remote learning protocols, teaching staff impacts, family and student health & psychological impacts. There has been a 10% decline in public school student enrollment since 2020. There has been an estimated decrease of 2.5% of teaching staff within 2020-2021 school year and a 15% loss of teaching assistants and paraprofessionals during this same period. The current NYC education budget is \$38 billion dollars. Per student spending is the highest in the nation at \$25,139 per student. NYC provides 51% of the budget, NY State 34% and Federal is 15%.
- New Schools Chancellor David Banks was appointed January 2022: He summarized his educational strategy as Four Pillars of Success: -scale, sustain, restore best teaching practices - Fully reimagine the school experience to fit student voices - prioritize health and wellness and measure its impact - Engage all parents and families.
- The educational framework for improving student outcomes has been in place since 2019 and includes the following strategies which have been in place across three school chancellors now (Carranza, Porter, Banks): -implementing learning targets aligned with ELA, Math and Science standards (2018-19) -small group instruction and discussion aligned with advanced literacy standards (2019-20) - leveraging instructional leadership teams with social emotional learning to improve student outcomes (2020-21) -data-driven instruction embedded in social emotional learning framework (2021-22) Plan for 2022: -implement plans for rigorous coherent instruction in Literacy and Math within the framework of social emotional learning (integrating social and emotional skills within the framework of traditional school subject learning) -improve family and community involvement structures to develop connections with families.

- Questions for DOE: What is the status of pools located in the Far Rockaway HS campus and the Beach Channel HS campus? Answer: Far Rockaway Campus Pool is operational Monday-Thursday- Afterschool -School use and Campus swim teams (PSAL) Mon and Wed - Beach Channel Club - 6:30 to 8:45, Tues and Thurs - St. Francis - 6:30 to 8:30 Some Saturdays- P.S.A.L. Beach Channel Campus Pool is NOT operational After extensive repairs completed to make the pool operational, the pool subcontractor is currently awaiting a backwater valve, whose manufacture & delivery has been impacted by the current supply chain crisis. The valve is expected by the end of February with completed within a week.

- There are concerns about student safety outside of schools on subways and busses, what is being done to ensure student safety after school? Answer: the DOE coordinates with School Safety division and the local precincts to provide a safe environment after school. There are officers currently deployed at various subway stations at the time of dismissal and at locations of high bus traffic. Specific issues at schools should continue to be addressed at meetings with the 101st and the 100th Precinct Community Councils so that they can manage the distribution of community officers in areas of specific concern.

- School Construction Authority (SCA) External Affairs Manager- Danielle Schaaff: Updates on Rockaway School Construction Projects The current budget for the NYC School Construction Authority is \$20.6 Billion dollars to build new schools, renovate existing schools and to purchase equipment. In Rockaway, there is an identified school seat need of 451 seats which is already funded for the Seaside/Belle Harbor areas. There is no site identified as of this time. The SCA is currently in the process of locating a suitable site within the area to commence the planning phase.

Funding for school improvements is usually based on the BCAS (Building Condition Assessment Survey) system where schools are evaluated yearly by school administrators, the DOE and SCA in order to identify needs, deficiencies and repairs. The identified needs are scored on a system which prioritizes the most urgent needs for funding and project planning. These needs are also based on recommendations by the district's Community Education Council. Additional sources of funding for school projects can be provided through the offices of the Borough President, City Councilmembers or State legislators. Occasional citywide initiatives, like air-conditioning for all classes, will be funded by the Mayor's Office or the City Council.

- The SCA continues to build and renovate spaces to support citywide 3-K and pre-K initiatives. The SCA continues to retrofit existing schools with electrical upgrades as part of the plan to have all NYC classrooms equipped with air conditioning. Ms. Schaaff went over specific projects in Rockaway recently completed, in process or planned: -The construction of a new school, to replace

the Chris Galas School (PS 47) in Broad Channel, is underway with an expected completion in time to open for September 2023. This school will have a capacity of 290 seats. -The construction of the new District 75 School for special needs students Q256, has been completed on B135th Street. The old school still stands and plans for demolition of this school are underway. The site of the old school will be replaced with the new playground space for Q256. -Boiler replacement and electrical system upgrades have been completed at Q317 Waterside Children's Studio School. -Q053 Brian Piccolo School has completed a roof replacement, stairs, masonry repairs, electrical upgrades, parapet repairs, windows and air conditioning systems. The school also has a new greenhouse funded through funding from elected officials (Resolution A funding) -Q104 The Bayswater School has completed a full boiler replacement and a playground renovation funded by elected officials (Resolution A funding). - Q197 - The Ocean School has completed a roof replacement and exterior masonry repairs. - Q198 Goldie Maple Academy has completed a roof replacement, parapet replacement and exterior masonry repairs. -The Far Rockaway HS campus has completed a library renovation funded by elected officials (Resolution A funding).

On the issue of new schools in areas of Rockaway that have plans in place for large housing developments (Far Rockaway, Edgemere, Arverne) Ms. Schaaff confirmed that the SCA allocates funding according to existing school capacity numbers in the area.

Felicia Johnson made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Eugenia Gipson.. The motion carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted: Mary Dunning