

**Community Board No. 8
Hope City Empowerment Center
650 Washington Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11238**

December 8, 2011

Members Present

Kim Albert
Akosua Albritton
Glinda Andrews
Desmond Atkins
LeeAnn Banks
Princess Benn-James
Samantha Bernadine
Julia Boyd
Gail Branch-Muhammad
Dr. Flize Bryan
Renaye Cuyler
Diana Foster
Nizjoni Granville
Curtis Harris
Xeexema Jordan
Shalawn Langhorne
Priscilla Maddox
Robert Matthews
Kwasi Mensah
Adelaide Miller
Dr. Fred Monderson
Atim Oton
Angelina Pinto
Mary Reed
Cy Richardson
Marlene Saunders
Stacey Sheffey
Meredith Staton
William Suggs
Launa Thomas-Bullock
Ethel Tyus
Yves Vilus
Sharon Wedderburn
Robert Witherwax
Deborah Young
Vilma Zuniga

Members Absent

Viola Bing
Helen Coley
James Ellis
Fred Frazier
Doris Heriveaux
Marie Louis
Alton Pierce
Robert Puca
Patricia Scantlebury
Audrey Taitt-Hall
Gregory Todd

Elected Officials Present

Hon. Walter Mosley, 57th Assem. Dist. Leader

Elected Official's Representatives

Carl Luciano, Councilmember Mealy's Office
Simone Hawkins, Councilmember James's Office
Renea Murphy, Councilman Vann's Office

Liaisons Present

Assistant Commissioner Lisa Fitzpatrick, NYC
HRA
Gwen Sumpter, Brooklyn Children's Museum
Andrea Phillips-Merriman, Bklyn Nghbd. Impvt. Assoc.

CB Staff Present

Michelle George, District Manager
Julia Neale, Community Associate
Valerie Hodges-Mitchell, Comm. Service Aide

Ms. Granville called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

CORRESPONDENCE – Information pertinent to the District was distributed.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES - The minutes of the last meeting were adopted with any necessary corrections.

Ms. Granville asked for an update on Census 2010 statistics from Ms. Rosemarie Fogerty.

2010 CENSUS – Ms. Rosemarie Fogerty

Ms. Fogerty distributed information packets that broke down the statistics for the 2010 Census. The Census measures America in terms of population, housing, and the economy. Enough information is collected to put out reliable data. Additional data collection is done on a sample basis. Random households are selected to become the voice or representative of the community.

Mr. Atkins asked if the census numbers have been changed to reflect the number of incarcerated persons returning to their originating communities. He was informed that the Census bureau merely collects the data; they do not make adjustments to the figures. It is up to the state to determine where incarcerated individuals came from.

Ms. Oton stated that she is working on a project to identify Africans in Brooklyn. She asked if there was any way to identify residents that are African born. She was informed that African descent is not one of the categories listed on the census questionnaire.

Dr. Monderson asked what percentage of young people hired are retained for permanent employment. He was informed that the Census hires once every 10 years for short term employment. Very few people are retained for longer stints. In fact, this year, the number of census offices is being reduced from 12 to 6. Instead of covering 19 counties in NY/NJ, each office will be covering 8 states and Puerto Rico.

Mr. Staton stated that Mayor Bloomberg is challenging the census count. He asked if the challenge was being taken into consideration. Ms. Fogerty stated that every challenge is taken seriously, especially the challenge by New York City. Mayor Bloomberg is challenging on a processing error. If the challenge is successful, the estimate can and will be changed, but not the numbers on the website. Monetary allotments are based on estimates as well as actual numbers.

Mr. Harris asked if there is anything being done to mitigate groups that feel threatened, such as the immigrant population. He was informed that questions such as citizenship and legality are not asked on the questionnaire. The census bureau tries to inform people of the necessity of the census and that there is nothing to fear.

Ms. Granville thanked Ms. Fogerty for her information and asked for a report from the following committees:

AGING/HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES – Ms. Marlene Saunders, Chair; Dr. Flize Bryan, Co-Chair

The Aging/Health & Human Services Committee met on Monday, December 5, 2011 at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation but did not have a report. December is National HIV/AIDS Awareness Month. Dr. Bryan stated that Brooklyn has the highest number of individuals diagnosed with HIV/Aids of all other boroughs in New York City. Most individuals who are HIV positive are diagnosed with Aids, which means that they are not benefitting from access to care and treatment which has extended the lives of many others.

The next meeting will be held Monday, January 2, 2012, 6:30 PM at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation located at 727 Classon Avenue. All are welcomed to attend.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – Ms. Priscilla Maddox, Chair; Ms. Atim Oton, Co-Chair

The next meeting will be Tuesday, December 13, 2011 followed by January 10, 2012, 6:30 PM at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation located at 727 Classon Avenue. All are invited to attend.

EDUCATION – Ms. Sharon Wedderburn, Chairperson

The Education Committee met on Wednesday, November 16, 2011 at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation. The next topic that will be discussed at the next committee meeting is New York State's adoption of crowning core State standards which is a national initiative. Students will be taught various subjects such as English, Language Arts, Math, and Social Studies at the collegiate level. This will be implemented at the beginning of summer 2012. Teachers will come together and discuss new methodologies of teaching and ways to adapt to the new common core curriculum in the classroom. These new methods will be introduced to students in September 2012 starting with pre-kindergarten.

There is a process of school closures commenced by the Department of Education. The announcements of school closures are set to take place December 8th and 9th. There are several schools located in or near the District of Community Board 8 which are slated for closure. The listing of school closures is available in the New York Times and the Department of Education's website (schools.nyc.gov).

Mr. Atkins stated that Charter Schools are forcing out Public Schools. Public schools are unionized and Charter schools are part of the Department of Education's initiative to bring in teachers/educators who are non union, thus weakening the union system. They are attempting to cut our needs out from under the people of the community. Many people were able to elevate themselves through unionized jobs. If there is no control of the education from the people of the community, there will be a lack of control of other aspects of life for each individual. For the past 40+ years of education increasing in the community, this is a destructive trend.

Ms. Langhorne asked the status of Middle School 571 which falls in the district of Community Board 8.

Ms. Wedderburn thanked Mr. Atkins for pointing out a valid concern and informed Ms. Langhorne that the status of MS 571 will be announced Friday, December 9, 2011.

Mr. Harris asked if anyone believed that the school closures were politically motivated based on a statement made by Mayor Bloomberg.

Ms. Wedderburn stated that she does not believe the closures to be politically motivated; however, they are reflected upon results of actions that did not reflect the community's needs, desires or wants.

New York City School Chancellor Dennis Walcott is opening up a number of new Middle Schools. It was not specified where any of these schools will open.

The next Education Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 18, 2012 at 6:30 pm. This meeting will be held at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation located at 727 Classon Avenue. All are invited to attend.

ENVIRONMENT/SANITATION – Ms. Ede Fox, Chair; Ms. Helen Coley, Co-Chair

The Environment/Sanitation committee met on Tuesday, November 15, 2011 at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation but did not have any action items. The next two meetings will be held on Tuesday, December 20, 2011 and January 17, 2012 at 7:00PM at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation located at 727 Classon Avenue. All are invited to attend.

Executive Committee – Mr. Robert Witherwax

The sub-committees of Community Board 8 have been operating differently in regards to procedures and protocols. The Executive Committee has adopted certain measures to standardize voting procedures and asks that all sub-committees follow. This is in reference to the operational function of each sub-committee and who is a voting member of that committee. This adjustment does not require a By-Laws change because all of the changes are within the prerogative of the chair within the existing BY-Laws. There are three elements:

1. Every sub-committee must obtain board members and community residents,
2. Both groups of people may serve, participate and vote at the sub-committee. Only Board members may vote at the full Board meeting. A written roster with names of Board members and residents formalized on the committee roll so that each committee will know how many people make up/serve on that committee and
3. Each committee must have a quorum (25% of voting members in attendance) so that each committee knows when they can or cannot conduct business. Smaller committees such as

those who have only four members must have at least two members present to conduct business.

Members can serve on a sub-committee in following three ways only:

1. Appointment by the Board Chair,
2. Appointment by the Chairperson of a particular committee or
3. Earn your way on by attending any given Committee 3 of 5 consecutive meetings

This will not prevent any Board members or community residents who wish to voice their opinions and concerns on an item or topic at a sub-committee from doing so. This will preserve the integrity of committees by allowing only voting members to participate in the voting process. This will also prevent voting members who attend meetings month after month from being outvoted by individuals who come only for one item or a “hot topic.” These upgrades will be effective as of January 2012.

Ms. Tyus stated that these changes are bringing us in compliance with New York State meetings law which requires a quorum. Therefore this is something the Board has to do.

Ms. Granville stated that each Board member is required to serve on 2 committees at minimum. Several members have signed up for committees but do not attend. Attendance records are being monitored and members will be appointed to committees with low attendance if they do not sign up for a committee or if they do not voluntarily serve on the two that are required by the By-Laws.

After a brief question and answer period, it was noted that a person may become a committee member as long as they live, work, or have an interest in the community in which they wish to serve.

FIRE/SAFETY – Mr. Robert Witherwax, Chairperson

The Fire/Safety committee met Wednesday, November 9, 2011 at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation but had no action items.

Mr. Witherwax explained the importance of community involvement with fire/safety and encouraged everyone to attend the Fire/Safety committee meeting.

The next Fire/Safety committee meeting will be Wednesday, December 14, 2011 followed by Wednesday, January 11, 2012 at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation, located at 727 Classon Avenue at 6:30PM.

HOUSING/ULURP – Ms. Nizjoni Granville, Chairperson; Ethel Tyus, Co-Chair

The Housing/ULURP Committee met on Thursday, December 1, 2011 at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation at 6:30PM. Present were Curtis Harris, Lee Ann Banks, Stacey Sheffey, Yves

Vilus, Diana Foster, Nizjoni Granville, Ethel Tyus, Sharon Wedderburn, Cyndie Djmont, Wayne Bailey, Fred Frazier, Desmond Atkins, Meredith Staton, James Ellis, and Vilma Zuniga.

The committee discussed the Dept. of City Planning's (E) Designations Citywide Text Amendment. The Dept. of City Planning (DCP) is proposing a text amendment to update provisions related to the (E) Designation Program. In addition to clarifying the text and removing obsolete provisions from Zoning Resolution Section 11-15 (Environmental Requirements) originally established in 1983, the proposed modifications would remove duplicative zoning provisions concerning the (E) Program in the Special Districts. The changes will provide tighter coordination between the City's Office of Environmental Remediation (OER), DCP, and the Department of Buildings for the issuance of notices to proceed and building permits.

The proposed changes will: (1) create a single, transparent process to assign hazardous materials (E) designations to both non-applicant owned and applicant-owned properties; (2) enable the application of (E) designations in combination with all other ZR actions; (3) modify ZR §11-15 to require compliance with air quality, noise and other environmental restrictions as prerequisites to obtaining building permits; (4) allow OER to apply equally protective post-approval modifications to (E) designations; (5) provide for ongoing monitoring to improve enforcement; and (6) remove duplicative and outdated text in ZR § 11-15.

Committee members asked: how community residents would know what manufacturing activities involving hazardous materials are being conducted in a building; and whether any permit applications for buildings with (E) designations will require full remediation of all hazardous materials, air quality improvements, and noise attenuation. Further discussion of E-designation will take place at the next meeting.

Ms. Tyus reminded the Board that the Citizens Committee of New York City is accepting applications for their *New Yorkers for Better Neighborhoods* grants program which are due January 31, 2012. Grants are awarded for creative community projects that bring neighbors together to improve their neighborhoods. Eligible groups can receive a grant of \$500-\$3,000, one-on-one project planning assistance, enrollment in their skills-building workshops, and access to the equipment loan library. For more information, please refer to www.citizensnyc.org/grants/NYBN.

The next committee meeting will be held on Thursday, January 5, 2012 at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation located at 727 Classon Avenue at 6:30 PM. All are invited to attend.

Parks & Recreation – Ms. Glinda Andrews, Chair; Ms. Kim Albert, Co-Chair

The Parks Committee met on Tuesday December 6, 2011 at the St. John's Recreation Center but had no report. Ms. Andrews informed everyone that the Center's manager, Ms. Vernetta Diggs, has retired after many years with the Parks Department. There is a temporary replacement of her position, and the Parks Department is hoping to hire a permanent manager very soon.

Friends of Brower Park sponsored their 2nd Annual Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony Wednesday, December 7, 2011. Although it rained, several people came out to support the venture.

Ms. Andrews announced that Barge Music is sponsoring a free family concert under the Brooklyn Bridge every Saturday at 3:00pm. Doors open at 2:30 PM and seating is on a first come, first served basis. There will be a one hour performance, including a Question & Answer session with the musicians (no intermission). For exact dates and/or further details please refer to the Barge Music website: www.bargemusic.org/calendar

The Parks Committee will be hosting its second annual Community Awareness Day which will take place Saturday, June 9, 2012. Individuals or groups who wish to participate should provide the District office with their contact information.

The next Parks Committee meeting will be January 3, 2012 at 6:00 PM at the St. John's Recreation Center located at 1251 Prospect Place.

Police – Ms. Shalawn Langhorne, Chairperson

The Police Committee met on Monday, November 21, 2011 at the 77th Precinct located at 127 Utica Avenue but had no action items.

Ms. Langhorne thanked members of her committee for their dedication to the community. In October there was a discussion of the TBOC (Taking Back Our Community) plan that was presented to the Board. In 2012, the Police Committee will host a community meet and greet which will allow neighbors to become more familiar with one another. There will be discussion as to how everyone will be willing to work together to put this plan into motion.

Ms. Langhorne asked everyone to attend the Police Committee meeting to obtain more information about TBOC and learn how to become more involved. The committee will also discuss actions in moving forward from statements made by the NYPD regarding the West Indian Day Parade.

The 77th Precinct Community Council is hosting their annual Christmas party on Saturday, December 10, 2011 from 10:00AM – 2:30PM at St. Theresa's Church. Food will be served and there will be toys for children.

The next Police/Public Safety Committee meeting will be held Monday, December 19, 2011 at the 77th Precinct, 127 Utica Avenue at 6PM.

TRANSPORTATION – Dr. Frederick Monderson, Chairperson

The Transportation Committee met on Tuesday, November 22, 2011 at 7PM but had no action items.

After wishing everyone a happy holiday, Dr. Monderson stated that the Transportation Committee will discuss the Mayor's plan to institute the bike share program. Bicycle stations will be set up in certain areas for individuals who wish to rent a bike. Input is requested from community residents for potential locations for Bike stations. Ideas that are brought to the Transportation Committee meeting will be taken into consideration and forwarded to the Department of Transportation. This is a great way for the community to become involved. There is also a website where individuals can make suggestions or leave comments: www.nycitybikeshare.com.

The Transportation Committee will not meet for December. The next meeting will be held Tuesday, January, 24, 2012, 7:00PM at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation, located at 727 Classon Avenue.

Youth and Family Services – Ms. Akosua Albritton, Chairperson

The Youth and Family Services committee met on Wednesday, November 2, 2011 and again on Wednesday, December 7, 2011 at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation, located at 727 Classon Avenue.

At the November meeting, the committee discussed a bill introduced to NYS Senate. This bill seeks to reclassify alcoholic beverages known as Alco pops as liquor and to remove them from convenient stores, so that they will only be sold in liquor stores. The NYC Dept of Health and Mental Hygiene influenced the NYS Senate to write this legislation due to the popularity of this beverage with teens. Alco pops contain between 7% and 12% alcohol which is higher than beer. The packaging is designed to attract young consumers and can be found in the same coolers as Wine Coolers in some convenient stores. In other convenient stores, they are found in the same refrigerator as fruit juices and other non alcoholic beverages. If anyone wishes to further investigate this bill and read it independently, the number is 4221-2011.

The committee voted to support the legislation modification which mandates that Alco pops to be classified as spirits. Since the vote on Alco pops in November, the State Senate has classified Alco pops as liquor. Based on the recommendation of the Youth & Family Services Committee, the full Board voted unanimously with 30 in favor, 0 opposed, with 0 abstentions.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 4, 2012 at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation at 6:30 PM. All are invited to attend.

Ms. Granville thanked the committee chairs for their reports and asked District Leader Mosely if he had anything to share.

57TH ASSEMBLY – Mr. Walter Mosely, District Leader

District Leader Mosely announced that the 2012 political calendar has been released. The presidential primary election date will be in April and the main election on November 6. Please note that June 26, 2012 is the tentative new primary date rather than the second Tuesday in September to allow for more time to count absentee ballots and overseas military ballots.

Mr. Staton asked how the representative lines will be redrawn going forward with the census results. He asked if it will be done with the court or if the legislature will vote on how to change the lines. Also, the Governor wants an independent committee while incumbents want to draw the lines themselves as they've done in the past. Congressional lines are being proposed and state lines will be done first. City Council lines must also be redrawn. Mr. Mosely informed him that there are discussions of counting prisoners where they originate.

Ms. Granville thanked District Leader Mosely for his report and made a number of brief announcements. She announced that the Board had the first of a series of public hearings on the reduction of Alternate Side Parking days on November 15th and the community was extremely divided on the issue. Additional hearings will be held for further community input and feedback. She asked that if you have an opinion on the subject, please email or write the District office to let us know your thoughts. The email address is info@brooklyncb8.org.

CB 8 is collecting donations of socks and underwear for the homeless. The donation box is in the back of the room. She thanked everyone that brought items to the meeting and asked that others please support the cause by donating additional items. If you did not bring them to the meeting, you can drop them off to the District office. She next opened the floor for public comments.

Ms. Akosua Albritton announced that the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) has an Out of School Time (OST) program. This Program is available for students from Kindergarten thru 12th grade. OST provides a mix of academic, recreational and cultural activities after school, during holidays and in the summer. Programs are free of charge and are located in every neighborhood across the City.

A Request for Proposal (RFP) was issued October 31, 2011 and the deadline for the RFP is Tuesday, December 20, 2011. For more information please refer to DYCD's website: www.nyc.gov/dycd.

Dr. Frederick Monderson announced that Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC) is getting ready to close Kingsboro Psychiatric Center and will disperse the patients into the community. Ms. Tyus stated that the facility will be made into homes for the homeless.

Ms. Lisa Fitzpatrick, Deputy Commissioner of the Human Resources Administration stated that HRA has made a number of improvements in how people can apply for food stamps. There is severe overcrowding at the two offices located at 500 DeKalb Avenue and 275 Bergen Street; therefore, HRA is trying to get people to use other methods to apply for food stamps. Call 311 to get a list of community partners to apply. Office visits are no longer required to apply; it can be done online or via telephone interview, and also through Access NYC. For more information, visit www.nyc.gov/hra.

If you know someone that has an active case and needs a budget letter, they can call 718.722.8009 instead of visiting an office. You only need to know your case number and zip code to get the budget letter using the telephone system. It can be mailed directly to you within 3-5 business days.

HRA is still issuing replacement money for Hurricane Irene. In order to be eligible, you need to have had an active case prior to Hurricane Irene to get replacement money. Processing for replacement money should be completed by January 2012.

Ms. Marlene Saunders announced that Marie Louis is back in the hospital. She asked everyone to please pray for her.

Ms. Granville thanked everyone for attending and wished everyone a happy and healthy holiday season. She then adjourned the meeting.

The next meeting of Community Board 8 will be Thursday, January 12, 2012 at 7 PM at Calvary Community Church located at 1575 St. John's Place, Brooklyn, NY. All are invited to attend.

Guests

Lula Staton
Aaron Giroux
Max Colson
Dorothy Bembrey-Guet
Willard Hawkins
A. Andrews
L.R Chase
Shirley Mondesir
Paula Pinnock
Patrick Atwell
Ari Feldman
Lisa Pierre
Agatha Baptiste
Jacqueline Welch
Carolyn Sanders-James
Paula Saunders
Rita K
Richard Miller