

Manhattan Community Board 9  
General Board Meeting  
June 18, 2020

6:40 PM meeting called to order. MW moves adoption of agenda, SW seconds, unanimous. WA moves adoption of minutes, SW seconds, unanimous.

### **Presentations**

#### **Riverside Church Community Survey, Ugochi Oneyeukwu**

Working on project around development of community, programming, campus. Represent community development committee. Goals of survey to learn about education, housing, food insecurity, employment, youth in the community. Church celebrating 90th anniversary and reflecting on significant history. Focus on strengths as well as problems.

Ask CB what you'd like to see in community survey. Looking to learn from best practices. Virtual survey to be conducted in summer of 2020. Reach out directly: [rdc@trcnyc.org](mailto:rdc@trcnyc.org).

Looking to build partnerships in the community -- learn what's happening that church can join, and how church's programs can be helped.

Board members urged the presenter to make sure that the purpose of the survey was clearly defined in order to get the best participation and buy-in from the community.

#### **NYPL Update, Sydney Renwick**

Summer reading program, "Quest for Adventure", will be offered virtually. Participants can track reading progress and partake in at-home activities.

[https://www.nypl.org/sites/default/files/summer\\_reading2020\\_activity\\_packet\\_1.pdf](https://www.nypl.org/sites/default/files/summer_reading2020_activity_packet_1.pdf)

Rolling out book kits: looking for community organizations to be a host partner and deliver kits to families.

Eight branches across network will be opening initially, providing grab-and-go services (reserve online, pickup in person).

Working with NYC Census and US Census Bureau: completion is critical to having voices heard. Next week, hosting town hall with MBPO on census. Working with Union Settlement.

Digital resources: Simply-E for any reader, provides audio books and ebooks. Just need a library card.

#### **Chair's Report, Barry Weinberg**

Many killings by police in recent weeks. People beginning to having conversations about race, racism, and police violence. CB9 has long history of complicated relationship with NYPD.

Take time to imagine solutions: what does this look like in our community, given that what we have now isn't working? How do we address over policing, prevent use of excessive force? Keep on city and state agencies and nonprofit partners to solve problems.

Grateful that DI Soto of 30th Pct addressed many of these issues at recent town hall. Reaching out to DOITT to remove unused phone booths involved in drug movement.

Mayor announced plans for reopening of playgrounds. SBS working to help restaurants reopen, including sidewalk and in-street seating. CB9 can help small businesses get back on their feet, while preventing unsafe or disorderly behavior. Enforcement should start with education.

Will try to organize Morningside Area Alliance meeting with Columbia that are planning on having students returning, to discuss precautions.

Co-hosting Uptown Reopening information session on Monday with CBs 10, 11, 12, coordinated with MBPO to share information about reopening plans that people can share with neighbors.

City is planning large budget cuts; CB9 needs to advocate for priorities to prevent them falling on most vulnerable.

### **Treasurer's Report, April Tyler**

With board office, going through service contracts and bills due. CM Levine looking to prevent cuts to CB discretionary budgets, but no guarantees. Discretionary capital purchases focused on preparing new office technologically to support remote meetings and accessibility for committee chairs and public, including laptops and software, projector, speakers, and headsets for translation.

Finalizing Land Use study with CCNY Max Bond Center. Progressing slower than expected due to shutdown, but planning to work with them over the summer. Plan to purchase data that is not publicly available to complete the study, requires info on every lot in the CD.

Should catalog and document impact of COVID-19 on neighborhood, regarding health, local businesses. Want to be able to direct people to services.

Update 197-A plan (comprehensive document, basis for negotiating CBA with Columbia) last updated in 1994. Also part of work with CCNY. Will also ask them to run training for committee chairs: board should have access, but not real estate developers. Need to protect data.

### **District Manager's Report, Eutha Prince**

Reopening town hall, Monday 6/22, 6-8pm, hosted by MPBO. Reopening topics: healthcare disparities, preventing eviction surge, public spaces, reopening businesses. Contact board office if you aren't receiving email blasts with updates.

### **WHDC Board, Pat Watler-Johnson**

On June 1, virtual press conference announced 2020 grants to continue ARISE Youth Development program. Ken Miles doing a great job.

WHDC COVID-19 Impact Grant released \$500K to fund CB9-based nonprofits working in health services, education, housing. Committee reviewing applications to make decisions. Will announce toward end of June.

### **MPBO, Gale Brewer**

Will attend upcoming Juneteenth event in St. Nicholas Park. Africa Center also holding various events. Thanks to Dep. MBP Aldrin Bonilla, upcoming Land Use and Landmarking online training sessions for CB members (open to public).

Working with uptown boards for reopening discussion on June 22. Holding business discussion with local businesses: hard to make sure communities are represented and businesses survive. Mayor and Governor's task force working on form for SLA and city to help businesses set out tables on sidewalk/curbside.

"Sewer doesn't lie": waste treatment plants can detect resurgence of virus, following model used in Netherlands. Need local analysis and equipment (~\$200K) and experts for early warning of outbreak.

Mailing 150K postcards to census tracts with low census response rates. Pushing on summer camps. Pushing on organics pickup while building pickup is cut. Garment center is producing PPE.

### **Public Session**

#### **Mary Marshall, Insight Oral History Project at Columbia**

Director of Center for Oral History at Columbia. Archive goes back to 1850s. Document history of NYC for public use; archives always open to public. Project to document COVID-19 memories: interview people about daily lives during crisis. Using interview approach first used two days after 9/11/01. Oral history tries not just to take information, but to give something back, by teaching oral history. Partnership with Apollo theater. For COVID-19 project, looking to interview 3 times. Speaking to providers of essential services. Sign up at [Incite.columbia.edu/covid19-oral-history-project](https://incite.columbia.edu/covid19-oral-history-project)

#### **Jessica Chornesky, NYC Kidsfest**

Children's performing arts festival usually in Morningside Park. Expanded to Jackie Robinson Park last year. Going virtual this year -- online this weekend (2-6pm Saturday and Sunday), free to participate. Special raffle for CD9 kids. Looking for kids who want to be on camera as magicians' assistants or part of storytelling team. Dance class from HSA, storytellers from Sugar Hill Museum. [www.nyckidsfest.org](http://www.nyckidsfest.org)

#### **Padmore John**

Testing site at Riverside Church. Appreciate partnership with MBPO. People who test positive may be called by city contact tracers: want to know who else you've been around, contact them to contain the spread. Some resources (short-term hotel accommodations, food) provided to those who need to isolate.

#### **Victor Edwards**

Putting together statement on Juneteenth and BLM for CB9 website. Recognize 155th anniversary of freedom for enslaved people, and ongoing injustices against Black people in this country. Lists some of the things the CB is already doing for Black people, and connects CB activities to current demands arising out of protests.

#### **Pat Watler-Johnson**

Thanks to Mayor's Office and CB9 for information leading to donation of face coverings to Riverview Towers Mitchell-Lama co-op. People who want face coverings for block associations or neighborhood associations, call the Mayor's office.

### **Elected Officials**

#### **AM O'Donnell, Angela Rodriguez**

Tireless push to repeal 50a finally passed. Increase transparency and transparency, end protection of records of police abuse. Governor signed on Friday. Organizing food distribution and hand sanitizer distribution, especially in senior housing.

### **Mayor's Office, Isaiah Jenkins**

Phase 2 reopening: June 22. Offices and stores will still have capacity limitations. Open Restaurants plan provides five options for outdoor seating. Application for restaurants goes live tomorrow.

Housing Connect website revamped, more affordable units coming online in July. Anti-crime unit of NYPD (plainclothes officers responsible for violence during protests) disbanded.

Testing thousand of people a day, and contact tracing underway. NYC Cares: access to healthcare for undocumented people will roll out later this summer. City and state police investigating discovery of noose in Marcus Garvey Park. Advocating for expansion of tablet program for seniors in NYCHA.

Board members posed questions and shared concerns about the reallocation of officers with a history of violence and brutality.

### **CM Levine, Kyshia Smith**

Council Speaker announced Juneteenth as an official holiday for Council staff. Talking with 34th Pct about tragic death in Ft. Tryon Park, ensuring investigation before deeming it a suicide.

Top budget priority to prevent cuts is SYEP, looking to reallocate NYPD funding. Distributing info about how to minimize COVID-19 risk for summer activity. Encourage everyone to get tested. Spanish-language town hall upcoming.

### **PA Williams, Phillip Ellison**

Out in the community during curfew to keep police from engaging protestors in irresponsible ways. Council passed legislation introduced by PA codifying right of people to record police activity. Call for rent relief. Introduced bill for property tax deferment.

### **Sen. Jackson, Porfirio Figueroa**

Sen. Jackson led march from Marble Hill to Riverbank State Park. Senate passed 50a last week. Visited BGCH to help distribute food. Help folks find test sites and food pantry sites.

### **Action Items (Y-N-A-PNEV)**

Action item 1 (Housing committee, HDFCs): 41-0-0-0

Action item 2 (Stock transfer tax): 39-1-0-0

Action item 3 (Parks & Landmarks, Mt. Zion Lutheran): 40-0-0-0

### **New Business**

Marti Cummings introduced a resolution to endorse the reallocation of \$1B from the NYPD budget to social services including housing, education, and nursing homes, and to call for the investigation and suspension of police officers who perpetrated violence against protestors.

Board members debated the plausibility of discipline for officers which is currently governed by the union contract, and whether to address police discipline and reform separately from

reductions in NYPD funding. Friendly amendments removed the discipline subject matter for a separate resolution.

Motion carries 35-0-2-0.

A statement drafted by VE to post to the CB9 website on behalf of the board was put to a vote, and carried.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30pm.