

SENIOR ISSUES MEETING MINUTES FOR AUGUST 4, 2020

In attendance: Hon. Martin Wallace, Hon. Marti Cummings, Hon. Walter T. Alexander, Eutha Prince (CB9), Shirley Saxon (SSA), Verna Arthur (Dept for the Aging), Kyshia Smith (Mark Levine), Porfirio Figueroa (Robert Jackson), William Hamer (Harlem Advocate for Seniors), Ameenah Muhammed, Bessie Davis, Gail Powell, Iretha Fletcher, Mary Goodman, Ron Guy, Cora Gilmore, Annie Payne, Lorraine Wilbourne

I-Call to Order @11:15am

II-Adopted Agenda

III-Adopted Minutes

IV-Discussion-Improving how the City communicates with seniors-Technology, Access, and Dissemination of Information

Q-Has any of the seniors received their air conditioners? Ms. Muhammed said she did not receive one.

A-(Hamer)-There was a limited supply for Non-NYCHA residents-supply might have been exhausted.

Q-Ms. Gilmore states she is not receiving mailings.

A-(Figueroa)-Sen. Jackson sent a brochure with information. He may not have enough for everyone, but CB9 is in the process of copying the information to distribute to the seniors.

Ms. Gilmore was happy to announce that she was able to schedule an appointment at Mt. Sinai with a geriatric doctor!

(Goodman)-I did not receive the tablet.

(Hamer)-The program is income driven, and there has not been an established criteria that was publicized so we don't know who qualifies. The system is not efficient! (Martin)-I believe it was on a first come, first served basis. (Adams)-Some tenants in NYCHA had received them. The seniors should call (212) 331-3126. (Smith) asked if the Borough President could collaborate the information about the tablets and distribute it to all the local politicians.

Q-(Martin)-Seniors have no internet access! Can politicians call seniors?

A-(Smith)-she will speak to Mark Levine and get back to us.

A-(Figueroa)-the sheer volume of seniors in the district makes it difficult to contact all seniors. Seniors should call 311 and identify themselves as seniors. The senior wellness check is starting again. We connect with the senior centers. You can call Senator Jackson's office at (212) 544-0173. Our resource booklet was sent to the Community

Board 9 office. Ms. Gilmore states she only receives mail when Sen. Jackson is running for office!

Ms. Smith added Mark Levine's phone number is (212) 928-6814. The office is closed at this time due to Covid-19. Martin adds that the resource information needs to be updated and that the seniors should be calling both offices. Figueroa states seniors should also contact Congressman Adriano Espaillat's office at (646) 740-1911.

Q-(Payne)-Can a mail drop box be put back into NYCHA buildings? Buildings used to have a social worker on site.

A-(Guy)-Social workers were made possible by a grant in the Mannie Wilson Houses which was run by the Department for the Aging-the funding ran out. Ms. Arthur added this should be brought up during CB9 budget meetings. Mr. Hamer stated the workers were service coordinators supplied by the federal HUD 202 housing program. Some still exist but most have been disbanded. Ms. Payne says a social worker (Laura) was still there but left for another job. Ms. Powell says the social workers at the senior centers she attends have been calling to check on her (food/needs) on a regular basis. Ms. Arthur mentioned the volunteer Wellness Program at DFTA for assistance with seniors (212) 962-2720-also contact Thrive NYC through 311. Martin-Signe Mortenson is establishing a phone tree to reach out to seniors.

Marti-Long term services are additionally provided NY Connect through the Mutual Aid Group (646) 849-2962. Food to seniors will be distributed on August 12th and 21st; September 9th and 25th; and October 7th and 23rd. The location is 454 West 155th St (The Mason Lodge). Long term services and support are also at NY Connect. Services are free.

V-Old Business

Q-(Martin)-Will the food program continue?

A-(Arthur)-The date is indefinite. Contact the food czar at 311. Also use Get Food NYC. These programs are no longer run by DFTA. Martin hopes the elected officials can make this a permanent program.

Q-(Martin)-What is happening with the air conditioning give out? Is there an updated list as to where someone is on that list? Who administers the program?

A-There is no definitive answer to these questions as well as the free tablets to the seniors.

VI-New Business

Ms. Saxton wanted to remind everyone to complete the census!!! It is easier this time via the telephone. Also, be careful of scams regarding the stimulus check! Never give personal information to anyone on the phone. The Social Security offices are not open due to Covid-19, however they are working virtually from 9am to 4pm. Call (800) 772-1213. She can be reached by email at shirley.saxon@ssa.gov.

Meeting adjourned at 12:43pm. Next meeting is September 1, 2020 at 11am through Zoom