

SENIOR ISSUES MEETING MINUTES FOR JUNE 2, 2020

In attendance: Hon. Anthony Fletcher, Hon. Martin Wallace (co-chairs); members Hon. Marti Cummings, Hon. Walter T Alexander; Eutha Prince, Verna Arthur (DFTA), Porfirio Figueroa (Senator Robert Jackson's Office), Gail Powell, Lorraine Wilbourne, Annie Payne, Ameenah Muhammed, Aretha Fletcher, Mary Goodman, Bessie Davis

I-Call to Order @11:17an

II-Adopted Agenda

III-Adopted Minutes

IV-Discussion

The Senior Issues Budget requests for the fiscal year 2021-2022 were submitted to the Mayor's Office. Sadly, the Committee was disappointed with the replies from the Mayor's Office. Due to COVID-19 requests won't be met. HPD's budget will be cut by 50% unless the Federal Government provides additional funding for affordable/senior housing. Funds were reapportioned to the communities in need (education). Since there is a projected 9 million dollar deficit the Senior Issues Committee should also send funding requests to Senator Robert Jackson's office for debate in Albany.

Q-Any requests to resubmit proposals for funding?

A-See below:

- A) Supplemental funding of nursing homes
- B) Maintenance of meals post COVID (senior centers and food services from food czar)
- C) Maintenance of services offered by senior centers
- D) Supplement of funds for housing to cover NYCHA housing rent increase
- E) SCRIE (Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption) and extension of time due to COVID-19 pandemic for Seniors to recertify

Verna Arthur-Department for the Aging

DFTA offers services to senior centers, has mental health services, the friendly visiting program, services for caregivers, grandparent resources, senior abuse among others. The Mayor's Budget was not yet presented to DFTA so they are not sure how much will be cut. Rehabilitation of senior centers are sorely needed.

Seniors should continue to call 311 for food insecurity. The City is committed to continue the food distribution on a monthly basis.

The hotline for COVID-19 test is (877) 204-8821 from 8am to 8pm. This number can also be used to request food for pets.

There were 10,000 tablets slated for NYCHA seniors 62 years and over-9,700 have been given out to this date. Internet service will be free for a year. Upper Manhattan has been given priority. Seniors are prequalified for the tablets.

The air conditioning program will be for low income seniors and they will be issued through DFTA, HRA, NYCHA, and HPD. A senior will be called three times by DFTA and if no response results will be notated.

Q-What about assistance with utility bills?

A-Ms. Arthur will get back to us about that. NYCHA residents don't pay electric bills.

Q-What can CB9 do about the possible rent increase? Some seniors were told that their rent will be brought up to 30% of their income.

A-The rent increases are coming from Housing and Urban Development Agency (federally funded-states decide where the funds go). Ms. Arthur will share any rent information with the Senior Issues Committee. If there are any questions, call 311 and ask for public housing. The emergency rent exemption bill did not go far enough...the exemption ends in August. The best way to make changes is to send proposals to the State Senate's office. Ms. Arthur says that the senior centers are still operational and are placing calls to seniors to determine services needed to seniors.

Porfirio Figueroa-Senator Robert Jackson's Office (212) 544-0173

The senator is contacting senior centers to determine needs, supplement food programs, and speak with case managers. Community boards will continue to request for these services and pass a letter of support or a resolution. His office is working on recertifying SCRE S8401.

V-Old Business-Seniors got their stimulus checks!!!

VI-New Business-Call for Tablets (929) 505-6208 or (929) 237-3069

Next Zoom meeting will be July 7th at 11am.

Meeting adjourned at 1:11pm