

Minutes for Senior Issues for March 3, 2020

Hon. Martin Wallace, Hon. Anthony Fletcher Co-Chairs
Hon. Marti Cummings, Hon. Walter T. Alexander, Members
17 Seniors in Attendance

Agenda adopted @ 12:17pm
Minutes adopted @ 12:18pm

Hon. Eutha Prince and assistant Ms. Zita addressed the room to discuss the reason Ms. Zita's new role and why she can no longer be assigned to the Senior Issues meeting.

Seniors Month is coming up in May. Ms. Zita will assist in getting speakers for the meeting.

Motion to adjust the agenda to allow our guest speaker to go first-motion adopted.

Speaker: Irene Zola-LILY (Life Force for Later Years). www.L.I.L.Y.org

This is an organization which she started to link seniors in Morningside Village with volunteers that come to assist them with shopping, go to medical appointments with them, and visit with them when they can. Ms. Zola started the organization with a small group of volunteers, but since then the business has grown. She matches the seniors with the volunteers to make sure that they are compatible. Since the organization has expanded, she was able to hire a social worker to help coordinate volunteers with seniors but now there is a need for more volunteers. She wants to expand the group to the Central Harlem area from 123rd Street to 145th Street. She is requesting about 105 volunteers to serve the seniors in that catchment area. Volunteers should live within five blocks of that area. LILY is having their first gala on May 11th. Information will be available on the website.

Speakers: Ms. Allie and Mr. Rivera: Columbia Office of Community Affairs-Columbia Bus Shuttle transportation.columbia.edu (for schedule/service of stops)

The Columbia Bus Intercampus Shuttle operates free in the CB9 area. All buses are electric. Seniors and disabled persons show identification to board the bus which operates between 96th and 166th Streets from 9am to 5pm. Caregivers and service animals are welcome. Hours can be extended in the evenings if requested. During summer hours service goes down until school is back in session. They are not affiliated with MTA.

Q: What about working with DOT to get stop signage?

A: Due to construction along the route there has been changes along the route, so at this is not possible at this time but this will be done as soon as they can. Columbia recognizes the need for information in both English and Spanish.

Speaker: Cindy Garcia, Citibank: Banking for Seniors/Fraud Protection

Citibank understands the special needs of seniors. They want to protect senior's assets and protect them from scams. There have been scamming of the ATM machines by putting devices in front of the card entry to be able to read the card and the information on them. As such the Citibank staff has to check the ATM's on an hourly basis. Citibank wants to serve as a trusted partner to seniors at the bank located across from Lincoln Center. Our banking staff strive to be alert to the needs of the elderly and their banking needs. Online banking is new to this population. Our goal is to assist them with online banking, even to have coaching sessions on their computers. Their Fraud Unit investigates possible frauds in a timely manner. Our bankers are trained to spot elder abuse and reporting it. Citibank offers a Basic Banking Package for persons over 62 years old. This includes a free checking account with no balance minimum, including free checks! Ms. Garcia states that Citibank is the only major bank offering this service. They have a bill pay feature to help seniors set up automatic payments and will accept payments for utilities that they have contracts with for no charge. If Citibank doesn't have a contract with the vendor, they will send a check to the company for no extra charge.

Q: Why won't banks accept cash at the bank for credit card payments?

A: This is to deter money laundering. The customer will have to deposit the cash then make a withdrawal in the form of a check to pay the credit card bill.

Q: Why can't I get rolls of quarters in the bank anymore?

A: You can if you have an account at the branch.

Q: How much are money orders with the Basic Banking Package?

A: The cost is \$5. You have to have a Citi Gold account to get free money orders. The minimum balance for this account is \$200,000.

Speaker: Heather Caines, NY Public Library-125th Anniversary of NYPL
Drew Derner, Hamilton Grange Library

The Central Harlem Libraries are having special celebrations. A brochure was handed out listing the events at each of the four branches. Mr. Derner noted that AARP will be using the branch to do taxes in the months of March and April. The Senior Issues Committee are tentatively scheduled to move to Hamilton Grange in May or June in order to start at 11am.

Please note: Housing Forum will be held on May 16th at 3333 Broadway from 12 noon to 4pm. Refreshments will be served. CB9 Executive Board has approved \$1000 for this event. Speakers will be announced shortly.

After the Budget Hearing February 24th a letter was sent to DFTA addressing the dilapidated conditions in the NYCHA housing projects and monies to provide for more affordable housing for seniors. Ms. Cassandra Roberts will speak at our meeting in April.

Next meeting: April 7th

Meeting adjourned at 2:23pm