

SENIOR ISSUES MINUTES FOR MEETING MAY 5, 2020

In attendance: Hon. Martin Wallace, Hon. Anthony Fletcher, Hon. Marti Cummings, Hon. Walter T Alexander, April Adams, Annie Payne, William Hamer, Lorraine Wilbourne, Verna Arthur, Aretha Fletcher, Mary Goodman, Shirley Saxon, Bessie Davis

- I- Call to Order 11:12am
- II- Adopted Agenda
- III- Adopted Minutes
- IV- Discussion

The late Ernestine Welch passed away (not Covid-19 related) on 3/3/20 at age 99. The family asks that we refrain from a memorial until the family can finalize arrangements. Please send any remarks/remembrances to Martin Wallace for an informal memorial May 26, 2020.

Johanna Garcia (Robert Jackson's office) spoke about the discrepancies with Isabella Nursing Home regarding accountability, transparencies, and the persons living there. There is a need for testing patients and staff to determine symptoms/exposure. They need to adhere to the State's nursing home policies in four areas: Confirm Covid-19 numbers; confirm suspected Covid-19 numbers; confirm actual deaths; and report daily on suspected Covid-19 deaths. An investigation is initiated by the State Attorney General's Office and the NYS Department of Health. They are taking complaints at this time.

Q-Is Isabella testing all patients and staff?

A-The governor is expected to issue an Executive Order for this purpose. Ms. Garcia gave her personal cell number (646) 651-9728-call or text her with concerns.

Verna Arthur (Department for the Aging-DFTA) stated that food deliveries are no longer done by DFTA. All food deliveries will now be done by the GetFood Program by New York City's Mayoral Office. Call 311 in order to get meals. Home delivery meals are either one or twice a week containing three prepared meals. DFTA is not affiliated with God's Love We Deliver-contact them directly for their meal plan. If seniors are feeling socially isolated call DFTA at (212) 244-6469. DFTA is also asking for additional food vendors-call (212) 244-6929 if you have information. DFTA is in the process of establishing robocalls since most seniors use their telephones instead of computers/cell phones for information.

Q-Why are some people getting snacks instead of meals?

A- DFTA is working on this issue. If this is occurring please call 311-ask for GetFood.

Q-Why are some seniors getting meals they cannot reheat?

A-Seniors need to request meals that are either prepared or need to be reheated.

Q-Explain what is the role of the Food Czar?

A-DFTA handled meal deliveries to the senior centers. Some senior centers are delivering food to the persons signed up with them. The new Food Czar was appointed by Kathleen Garcia who now has three hats: Commissioner of Sanitation; NYCHA Liaison; and now the Food Delivery Program.

Q-Is there another phone number besides 311 since it seems to be busy most of the time?

A-No. 311 has added more personnel to handle the large call volume.

Q-Are some senior centers being converted to testing sites?

A-Not to my knowledge. I will get back to you about this.

Q-How is DFTA sending information to seniors? Can information be included in the food boxes?

A-I will get back to you on this.

There was some concern about persons living in nursing homes, and the care they are receiving since they cannot be visited by their families (bed sores). Nothing can be done at this time in hopes that the patients are being cared for properly. Also there were concerns about the stimulus checks. Ms. Arthur states they are being sent out weekly. DFTA has no information since this comes from US Department of Treasury.

Lorraine Wilbourne had concerns about giving out personal information regarding the stimulus checks. If you receive a call asking for information to help process the checks- DON'T DO IT-it is a SCAM.

Shirley Saxon added if you get a call regarding the stimulus, hang up! Call (212) 864-6200.

V- Old Business-discussion of meals (food vs snacks), meal delivery, and vendors.

Irene Zola (Live Force Later Years) wanted a follow up regarding health aides removing clothing worn in the street before entering senior's houses.

Q-Is there additional training given to the health aides?

A-DFTA will follow up on this and report at the next meeting.

VI- New Business-send memories of Ms. Welch to Martin Wallace's address:
6 Sylvan Trail, Monroe, NY 10950 for the May 26th informal memorial.
Marti Cummings has a food delivery organization to homebound seniors:
Mutual Aid Deliveries (917) 696-7707 (Marti's personal cell number)

Meeting adjourned at 1:25pm