



## Economic Development and West Harlem Piers Minutes

7 May 2024 at 6:30pm

### Attendees

**Committee members present:** Hon. Maritta Dunn (co-chair), Hon. Joyce Adewumi (co-chair), Hon. Clayton Sanford, Hon. Michael Iglesias, Hon. John-Martin Green, Hon. Chris Berry, Hon. Clotilde Monguya

### 1 Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:42 PM with a quorum of six people present in person.

### 2 Adoption of Agenda

Chair Joyce Adewumi (JA) added the NYC Multicultural Festival to the announcements. The agenda was adopted, moved by chair Maritta Dunn (MD) and seconded by John-Martin Green (JMG).

### 3 Adoption of Minutes

The April meeting minutes were adopted, moved by Chris Berry (CB) and seconded by JMG.

### 4 Introductions/Presentations/Announcements

Clotilde Monguya announced that there will be a Senior Fair on Friday, May 10th, at the Forum from 11 AM to 4 PM.

#### 4.1 NYC Multicultural Festival

Joyce Adewumi, as the head of the [Multicultural Festival](#), provided details about the 15th annual NYC Multicultural Festival, which will take place on Saturday, June 22, from 12 PM to 6 PM on St. Nicholas Avenue between 141st and 142nd Streets. The event is free, with a limited number of tables available to local businesses. The festival aims to celebrate diversity and foster dialogue between the police and the community. She shared an anecdote about creating a program together with the NYPD, highlighting an instance where people came together through this initiative.

JA requested that the committee and the office share information about the festival. She also expressed a desire for CB9 to have a table at the event to disseminate information about every committee.

#### 4.2 JobsNYC

Geneva Bain (GB) of [NYC Small Business Services \(SBS\)](#) discussed [Jobs NYC](#), an inter-agency initiative organized by the Adams administration to address post-pandemic unemployment issues. The initiative is holding hiring fairs city-wide, including a recent event at the Grant Houses.

JA inquired about how to conduct community outreach for individuals who are not online. GB emphasized the importance of community boards (CBs) in outreach efforts. JA shared that every Tuesday, she provides supplies and food to people on the sidewalk, ensuring that it is clear these items are free, and noted the many disparities that make it difficult for individuals to be ready for hiring opportunities. In response, GB offered to join JA next Tuesday to distribute flyers and coordinate outreach with the Borough President's (BP) office. GB also mentioned that while jobs

are important, they are not a solution to all problems, suggesting collaboration with caseworkers to address broader issues. JA concluded by mentioning a social event planned for next Friday and encouraged attendance.

### 4.3 Nicole Carter

Nicole Carter of [Ladies of Hope Ministry](#) announced the upcoming [Women of West Harlem](#) event, a women empowerment event organized by the Ladies of Hope Ministry, which will be funded by the [West Harlem Development Corporation \(WHDC\)](#). More information can be found [here](#).

## 5 Old Business

### 5.1 Manhattanville Business District

MD proposed moving the following meeting to June 5th to meet at the [Manhattanville Factory District](#) by Janus Partners, which is co-led by Jerry Salama. MD emphasized the importance for CB members to be aware of space availabilities and designated spaces for small businesses, noting that this is a good location and potentially useful for small businesses.

### 5.2 West Harlem Piers Park

John Herrold (JH), administrator of [Riverside Parks Conservancy](#), provided an overview of West Harlem Piers Park (WHPP), which is supported by funding from the Columbia University Community Benefits Agreement (CBA). He noted that while overall staffing in the park system has decreased significantly since 2008, WHPP's staffing has remained stable. The park currently employs a parks worker, a seasonal program associate, four Park Enforcement Patrol (PEP) officers, and occasionally, a seasonal park worker and gardener.

JH explained that any unspent funds from the CBA must be placed into a reserve account, with only 10% allowed to roll over each year. This reserve is expected to grow to \$1 million by the time the CBA expires, ensuring that the park will have funding for an additional year of operations.

During the discussion, several questions were raised:

- **Management of Funds:** Columbia University manages the excess funds in reserve, but these funds will ultimately be received by the city.
- **Staff Utilization:** WHPP staff are dedicated to the park, with two shifts during the summer and one during the off-season. Other parks in the district do not have this level of staffing due to budget cuts.
- **Sustainability After CBA:** There is concern that once the CBA expires, the park may revert to the baseline maintenance levels seen in other parks, which could result in a decline in care quality.
- **Fractional Positions:** Consolidating fractional positions into fewer full-time roles was discussed, but JH noted that differences in expertise, job descriptions, and union agreements make this challenging.
- **Park Enforcement Patrol (PEP):** PEP is separate from the NYPD and is responsible for park enforcement at WHPP.
- **Staffing Needs:** The necessity of maintaining current staffing levels, particularly in winter, was confirmed due to ongoing maintenance needs, such as trash collection.
- **Funding Limitations:** The CBA funds are intended for operational expenses rather than capital expenditures, meaning they cannot be used for major projects like building restrooms.
- **Long-Term Sustainability:** The importance of planning for the park's future after the CBA funding ends was emphasized, with suggestions for exploring additional private funding sources.

The discussion also touched on the need for improved signage in the park, both for dog-walkers and to permanently identify WHPP. The committee stressed the importance of continued community board involvement in the park's future, particularly as the CBA approaches its end.

### **5.3 Small Business Confernece**

The Small Business Conference has been moved to October. There is interest in involving the Ladies of Hope Ministry (LOHM) in the event, and Geneva Bain will be kept informed of developments. The discussion also covered potential locations for the conference, including the Columbia Forum and the Manhattanville Community Center, with concerns raised about the capacity of these venues.

## **6 New Business**

There was no new business to discuss.

## **7 Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 PM, moved by John-Martin Green and seconded by Clotilde Monguya.

*Minutes respectfully submitted by Clayton Sanford.*