

Manhattan CB9 HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES

December 2, 2024, 6:30 pm

COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE

Present: Chair: Hon. LaQuita Henry **Members:** Hon. Elizabeth Eastman, Hon. Monique Hardin-Cordero, Hon. Heather Jason

Absent Hon. Justin Dent (*Excused; out of country*), Hon. Michael Iglesias

Present Board Members: Board Chair Victor Edwards

Public Members Present: Dr. Edwin Torres (on ZOOM)

Minutes Submitted by: Dr. Edwin Torres (on ZOOM)

Meeting Purpose

To discuss community health initiatives, receive updates from grantees, and address mental health concerns in the community.

Key Takeaways

- City Harvest and Three and a Half Acres Yoga presented on their grant-funded community health programs
- Kumba introduced their community-based care model for underserved youth and families
- Mental health experts discussed rising anxiety, depression, and burnout in the community, especially among Black women
- The committee approved a letter of support for Emma Bowen Community Center's temporary relocation

Topics

Community Board 9 Updates

- Meeting started late at 6:40 PM with quorum of 3 out of 6 committee members present
- Announcements made about:
 - Bowen Center photo exhibition on 12/5 showcasing clients' journey to wellness
 - Green market and farm stand lists to be distributed
 - Columbia University Irving Medical Center neighborhood grant opportunity (up to \$5,000 for organizations)

City Harvest Presentation (by Rebecca Silver)

- Rescued and delivered 81 million pounds of food across NYC in past year
- 128% increase in food distribution to CB9 area since FY2019

- 75% increase in food pantry visits compared to pre-pandemic
- Mobile market near CB9 served 13,000 families with 330,000 pounds of food in FY2024
- Delivered 140 turkeys to local partners for Thanksgiving

Three and a Half Acres Yoga Presentation

- Offers trauma-informed yoga teacher training and community partnerships
- Sustained partnership with St. Mary's Episcopal Church (200 yoga experiences since summer)
- New partnerships with Harlem Boys and Girls Club (75 experiences since October) and African Services Committee (100 experiences for seniors since October)

Kumba Healthcare Initiative

- Startup developing community-based care model for underserved Medicaid/rural youth and families
- Aims to address social determinants of health and close behavioral, social, and preventive care gaps
- Seeking partnerships with safety net clinics, FQHCs, and community mental health centers
- Uses hybrid model with virtual care managers and in-person community health workers

Mental Health Discussion

- Experts noted increased anxiety, depression, burnout, and social withdrawal in community
- Particular concern for Black women experiencing exhaustion and overwhelm
- Suggestions included:
 - Creating intentional community spaces for healing and connection
 - Promoting rest and self-care as forms of resistance
 - Reconnecting to cultural and spiritual practices
 - Developing a "Wisdom Council" of older community members to share mental health knowledge

Emma Bowen Community Center Update

- Committee unanimously approved letter of support for temporary relocation to 135th Street for 5 years

Next Steps

- Distribute green market locations list and grant opportunity information to committee
- City Harvest to explore advertising food pantry info on local kiosks
- Plan potential February mental health community event/conference

- Forward approved Emma Bowen support letter to executive committee
- Review and approve November/December meeting minutes by 12/5

Annotations

HIGHLIGHT

- Manhattan (LaQuita/LOH) calls meeting to order and notes quorum with three committee members
- Manhattan discusses agenda placement and letter of support during meeting
- Manhattan discusses reviewing and approving both November and December meeting minutes by Thursday
- CJ describes upcoming photo exhibition about mental health treatment journey at Bowen Center
- Manhattan discusses hospital community survey and DOH survey participation requests
- Manhattan asks about sharing surveillance link and saving information from chat
- Rebecca confirms presentation visibility with attendee confirming they can see it
- Manhattan announces co-host setup and presentations for City Harvest and Three and A Half Acres Yoga
- Manhattan discusses audio setup and time limits for upcoming presentation
- Manhattan and Dr. Judelysse Gomez discuss PCP partnerships and clinic establishment for community healthcare
- Dr. Cynthia Grace describes the widespread increase in people seeking help during difficult times
- Dr. Gomez Judelysse discusses expectations about administration's predictable rhetoric
- Dr. Judelysse Gpmez discusses community activism, solidarity, and declining church participation patterns

CLOSING

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 9:07 pm.