

MINUTES

MCB9 Health and Environment Committee

June 1, 2026

PRESENT: Co-Chairs: Hon. Cameron Clarke, MPH, (via ZOOM); Hon. LaQuita Henry
Committee Members: Hon. Elizabeth Eastman, Hon. Monique Hardin-Cordero, Hon. Heather Jason, Hon. Lenna Nepomnyaschy, Hon. Jordan Scherer (via ZOOM)

PUBLIC MEMBERS PRESENT: Hon. Edwin Torres, PhD

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Committee Co-Chair, LaQuita Henry at 6:40pm. Co-Chair Cameron Clarke was present via Zoom. The meeting began with attendance checks, noting that while a quorum was not yet present, several key members including Jordan linked in from Oregon. A quorum was achieved at about 7:00pm.

Meeting Summary for MCB9 - Health and Environment Committee Meeting

The Manhattan Borough Board Public Health Committee discussed Public Health Solutions' Medicaid waiver program and other community health initiatives. Mairead presented the organization's Whole UNYC network, which aims to screen all 2.6 million Medicaid members in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Queens by March 2027 and connect them with housing, nutrition, and transportation services. She noted that changing eligibility rules and possible cuts to Medicaid and SNAP could create challenges beyond the program's March 2027 end date. The committee also reviewed plans for a three-day health celebration featuring a science fair, clinical forum, and health festival. Isabelle presented Harlem Brain's holistic health programs and research initiatives, while Edwin raised questions about whether pre- and post-testing in community programs serving vulnerable populations requires IRB approval.

Whole UNYC Social Services Network

Mairead outlined Whole UNYC's social services network, launched in 2022 and awarded an 1115 Medicaid waiver grant in 2024 to connect Medicaid members with resources. Using a "no-wrong-door" model, the program administers a 12-question screening across Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Queens to identify unmet housing, nutrition, and transportation needs. By March 2027, it aims to screen all 2.6 million Medicaid members and refer eligible participants to a network of 250 nonprofits for expanded housing assistance, care management, nutrition support, and transportation services.

Mairead explained that Health Homes are separate organizations that coordinate appointments and services across providers for people with chronic conditions. She clarified that the program offers housing, nutrition, and transportation assistance to managed Medicaid recipients, while fee-for-service and emergency Medicaid recipients are ineligible. Potential federal cuts threaten the program's funding; current Medicaid requirements set a base monthly salary threshold of \$1,850. The organization is developing a sustainability plan and seeking a grant extension that requires federal approval.

Mairead outlined plans to station screeners and navigators in the building to assess community needs and provide immediate referrals, replacing the current online and phone-based approach, which has created voicemail backlogs. Manhattan recommended participating in community events and resource fairs, partnering with organizations such as Broadway Housing Communities, and adding Mairead to its event mailing list. The group also reviewed the 16-hour monthly requirement for board members and noted the Arts and Culture Committee's successful youth concert.

The Heritage Health and Housing Main Street Grant Proposal

The Committee tabled Heritage Health and Housing's New York Main Street Grant proposal because leadership turnover, including the departure of senior executives, raised concerns about the organization's management and stability. As a result, the prior board vote was postponed, and the current leadership was invited to address these concerns at the June 11 Executive Committee meeting.

Manhattan Event and Committee Updates

Manhattan reported on a successful event where Olivia Zhang spoke to approximately 125 young people at Columbia University's alumni auditorium, which was arranged through connections with Dr. Judelysse Gomez from CUNY and Nicole Bain. The event was sponsored by the community board and Tall Omega Charitable Trust and included food and activities including notes for children with cancer. Manhattan also discussed upcoming committee elections, noting uncertainty about timing and potential changes to board membership in June.

Health Program Planning

LaQuita briefly proposed a three-day health event featuring a science fair, health forum, and festival, with planning set to begin over the summer.

Isabel of the IBREA Foundation, which sponsors Harlem Brain, introduced a program offering daily classes, monthly community sessions, and a 10-month scholarship for young leaders. Edwin asked whether pre- and post-testing in Harlem Brain's programs requires IRB approval and suggested partnering with universities on research. The group also discussed following up on earlier resolutions and strengthening community advocacy.

Next steps

- Manhattan: Follow up with Brian about the meeting discussion within 1.5 hours
- Manhattan: Contact the ALMS organization head about potential resource fair participation
- Manhattan: Put Public Health Solutions on the mailing list for community events and e-blasts
- Manhattan: Send information about upcoming events to Mairead for potential participation
Manhattan: Contact Broadway Housing Communities about potential collaboration opportunities
- Manhattan: Reach out to Oscar-winning committee member about assisting with video editing
- Manhattan: Contact Tina Lumby to get Milton's contact information
- Mairead: Follow up with ALMS organization head about future events
- Mairead: Continue outreach efforts to community events and resource fairs
- Committee: Consider adding Public Health Solutions to the mailing list for community events
- Committee: Plan for 250th anniversary celebration event
- Committee: Follow up on Heritage Health and Housing situation before June 11
- Executive
- Committee meeting