

Minutes for Senior Issues Meeting for April 7, 2020
Hon. Martin Wallace, Hon. Anthony Fletcher, Co-Chairs
Hon. Marti Cummings, Hon. Walter T. Alexander, Members
(Meeting held via Zoom-2 Seniors on line)

Agenda adopted 12:25pm
Minutes adopted 12:25pm

Anthony mentioned that Martin and Eutha did a great job orchestrating this meeting via Zoom, and hope that all in attendance are safe and well.

Irene Zola (LILY) states she has senior's phone numbers and addresses to share if needed. She stated she has four pages from Manhattan Borough President Gayle Brewer's current newsletter that she will share with the Board. They are working on providing masks and gloves to seniors that need to get out. She remarked about the home health aides who visit the seniors. A suggestion was made that Gayle Brewer can add to her email blasts that the HHA's should change to their scrubs before entering the senior residences to reduce the possibility of transmission of COVID-19 since they ride public transportation to the senior's residences.

William Hamer added that the HHA's have had an history of abuse and a lack of compassion and concern towards seniors. Pressure should be placed on the HHA agencies about this. Martin added that infractions should be sent to NYS Health Care Professional office.

Martin asked about the possibility of doing robo-calls with the seniors.

Miriam Aristy-Farer (DHMH) mentioned that meals are being sent to seniors by the senior centers. She mentioned the use of bandanas or cloth coverings can be used in lieu of masks. She mentioned that the buildings in downtown Manhattan have signs on the elevators request that seniors be allowed to ride the elevators by themselves to reduce the possibility of transmission. Verna states Manhattan BP should recommend all buildings have signs about this.

Ms. Gail Powell mentioned that she was not receiving emails. Eutha stated she will add her to all lists.

Verna Arthur (DFTA)

- a) Grab and Go meals will now be eligible for all that requests them. Seniors can contact 311 to find the nearest location
- b) She is working on establishing robo-calls to notify seniors of available meals
- c) Kosher meals available-she will notify Board about Halal and vegetarian meal availability
- d) For homebound seniors-contact God's Love We Deliver for meals-(212) 294-8100
- e) For issues regarding loneliness, social isolation and/or depression call the Department of Aging at (212) 244-6969 to speak with the case management team. They can also provide friendly visiting if requested.

April Adams (Manhattan Borough President's Office)

- a) The Department of Buildings should follow suit of the buildings downtown to implement the policy of allowing seniors in elevators first to all Manhattan buildings.
- b) The MBP office will be sending out email blasts weekly.

Marti Cummings asked if masks can be distributed to all seniors. In light of the shortage of masks for the medical centers this may not be possible. In lieu of this, masks can be made at home. There are videos online to help with this.

Martin asked about the upcoming election, and the fact that one of the polling places in NYCHA has had flooding problems. Who do we inquire about this? Eutha suggest a phone call should be made to NYCHA. Shirley Saxon says if there is a hardship voting that seniors contact the Gayle Brewer's office.

William Hamer asked about how COVID-19 is affecting the census. Eutha stated the census information is still being disseminated in her mailings. In all likelihood the census deadline will be extended. Marti volunteered to help with mailings, and Martin will link with Eutha for same.

Shirley Saxon (SSA) states she will be working at home since the offices are closed. If assistance is needed call the main number (800) 772-1213. Seniors are eligible for the stimulus checks which should be going out sometime around April 9th. Those with direct deposit will get their checks first, and those who get their checks mailed will have to wait about 6-8 weeks. The Salvation Army offers meals as well as Salem United Church from 11am to 3pm (212) 678-2700.

Listen to WWRL for the Gary Byrd show for online meetings schedule.

Meeting adjourned 1:45pm