

Senior Issues Meeting Minutes for Tuesday, September 11, 2018

Call to order at 11:42 AM

Moment of Silence to remember the fallen from 9-11.

Introductions: of all present

Discussion of how to become a public member and the difference between being a public member and a full member of the Community Board.

Introducing William Hamer and Rita Carrington from Harlem Advocates for Seniors, Inc.

(See Attached)

Organization started to fill void left after 2011 fiscal crisis. Fill observed gaps in services for Harlem Seniors. Rev. Morgan Thomas was at the table at the beginning.

Rita C. recently resigned from careers with city and from being exec. Dir. Of Central Har. Senior Ctr. (15 yrs). Located at Kennedy Center + 3 additional sites. Make sure senior issues are being represented

Protests in 2011 to save Harlem Senior Centers. 6 or 7 out of 10 or 11 were closed.

Crisis to Crisis thinking changes to planning and prep.

Advocate for seniors in broader community. 6 members at start. Now, 60 people at monthly meetings. 2nd Wed. of month all months but Aug. 3-5 pm at Kennedy Center.

R.C.: Seniors in her experience are underrepresented. "Squeaky wheel gets the grease". Available resources not being used. Communication poor. Being proactive is key. Bring a friend, share info, spread the word.

Anthony F.: Questions.

How many centers survived crisis?

Ans: All survived but there was some consolidation.

Verna Arthur: Yes, with some mergers. Depending on if they were meeting needs. Mergers to help make centers more efficient.

A.F. Are there requirements for membership?

W.H. Age requirement.

C Gilmore: Doesn't go because there's "no more programming:". People just want to eat and leave.

V.A. Can join multiple organizations by joining one.

A.F. Join multiple organizations to get activities you want. Age prerequisite is 60 years old.

R.C. Community Services society of NYC. 21 years. Central Harlem Senior Ctr > 14 years. Find individuals in churches, block assoc. tenant assoc.. Get people involved. Show resources, activities, calendars. Need more support for activities.

W.H. This info is new.

A.F. Yes. Age restriction is preclusive. Center shrinks, becomes vulnerable.

W.H. Not sure of # of centers in CB9. Have you gotten listing of existing centers?

A.F. Not me. Kennedy is not in CB9 but CB10. Grant Housing - never visited. I cannot join. Want to look into and maybe change.

V.A. Agenda listed senior centers. Once, not now. Directors used to attend (Senior Issues Committee meetings). Importance of committee meeting during the day - spoke with BP office about this. Senior advisory group with center to advise/inform re. seniors' needs. Dir. Has to attend these mtgs. In order to be better informed/answer grievances. 55-year-olds who can't join - volunteer to avoid legal issues.

A.F. Who is member here? 4 members.

Lenny: From DFTA - get scanned by DFTA. Cards tell city where we go. I bring info from all mtgs I attend back to directors. We need specific rep.

C.G. I don't go. Downtown is crowded. Uptown I don't see anyone.

VA. DFTA public hearing for seniors October mtg. Hear grievances. (there will be food). Commissioner will respond. Strength in numbers. Senior Issue Committee needs to be there in force.

A.F. Agenda does not have date of next meeting. October 2nd is next meg. DFTA mtg. TBA.

VA. Probably later in the month and closer, physically, to CB9.

A.F> We had no idea. Being assertive, getting information out. Will follow up, will get as many people as we can to DFTA mtg. I don't know where these centers are. I apologize. I want to be educated.

Lenny – Best director ever for last 3 years – Craig – can't create a program or cancel it just because of what one person wants.

Ms. Doctor – never felt included in center. Blacks not treated same as Spanish. Feeling excluded, discriminated against

W.H. How we can help – work we are doing now:

2011 – call to action – 6 people

meeting monthly – maintain momentum.

Kennedy Center becomes meeting home base – 3 yrs.

Coalition becomes not-for-profit – resources – May 2016 = 501(c)(3)

Info/referral workshops – topics/presentations

Soc.Sec/Fall Prevention, health, education

Reps from other orgs are members of HAS, Inc.

Information resource via reps.

Age friendly mvt. NY academy of medicine.

2015 – 7th streets/ACP redesign – actively involved in process

partnership – not competition

Org. has moved into CB9 operating out of 3333 B'Way
Weekly activities (see flyer)

Oct 23rd Partnering with Wellcare – Senior Resource Healthfair

Fundraising; Elected Discretionary Funds

Have reached out to B. Benjamin, A Taylor and I. Dickens.

Charter emphasizes doing work in CB's 9,10,11 and 12

Men's healthcare, shredding events, Mt. Sinai working with Renee Slon on Fall Prevention

Doing a lot of work with little money.

Tomorrow's meeting – Medicare 101. Ind. Licensed broker who reps. No particular plan. Neutral presentation.

Co sponsors of Grandparents; Day event along with BP's office and others.

1. work with senior
2. Age in place
3. High quality of life

VA Check in with CB12

Ms Doctor – look into problems with centers

WH Food, isolation, cliques. We talk to dir./leadership. Want to help senior centers become better.

RC Need advisory councils to work within centers. Follow up and verification. We advise and check in. People need to speak up.

Ms. Doctor – People will only go for trips because there not treated well at the centers. I didn't join because of what I heard. When I joined, I felt excluded.

VA Need to recognize population shifts. When I was dir. I experienced this. People gravitate to others like themselves. I introduced a "Game Night". I would consciously mix the seniors. Helped over time. Need leadership on this.

WH Cultural Competency. Where there is a diverse population, have to make an efforts. Ex. 3333 B'way. When built, largely Afr. Amer. Now it's shifted. No effort there to brodge the gap.

Ms. Doctor: Leadership is responsible.

VA You as senior can recommend changes. Eg. Cultural day. Dress according to your nationality. Stand up. Insist on change.

WH. Another idea at 3333 – int'l food fest. Operative word = proactive.

AF Ms. Doctor could join board at center bring her ideas. Or take it to DFTA or WH's org.

WH our org has more flexibility.

AF How many members on board?

WH B. can go to 25. Doing board dev. Now. All but one are seniors. Many are still working.

AF Who is largest donor? Funding?

WH Personal and indiv. Contributions. This is 1st year in which we receive discretionary funding. Big year for building revenue.

AF Relative to what you received in dis. Funds, would you share info about who donated?

WH Councilman Perkins.

AF. We have had Senior Housing Forum – did you know?

WH No

AF Communication is key. Big problem with information regarding resources and communication amongst organizations. Thanks for legacy and education and work!

Brief announcement from M Wallace about Street Safety and Design subcommittee and plans to address specific issues of safety pertaining to Seniors. Will keep committee members posted regarding upcoming meetings and events.

Meeting adjourns circa 1:15