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BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN

SUMMARY REPORT OF THE MANHATTAN BOROUGH BOARD

January 21st, 2016

In Attendance:

Presiding: Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President; Aldrin Bonilla, Deputy Borough President for Community Affairs and Constituent Services; Matthew Washington, Deputy Borough President for Budget and Policy; Jessica Mates, Chief of Staff; Lucille Songhai, Director of Community Affairs; Ahmed Tigani, Community Development Officer; Jesus Perez, Community Liaison; Drew Lombardi, Community Liaison

Council Members: Hon. Ben Kallos, accompanied by Paul Westrick; Hon. Mark Levine; Vincent Fang (representing Hon. Margaret Chin); Erik Bottcher (representing Hon. Corey Johnson); Adam Amit (representing Hon. Daniel Garodnick); Stephanie Arroyo (representing Spkr. Melissa Mark-Viverito); Lermond Mayes (representing Hon. Inez Dickens); Russell Murphy (representing Hon. Ydanis Rodriguez)

Community Boards: Catherine McVay Hughes (CB 1); Tobi Bergman (CB 2); Alysha Lewis-Coleman (representing Gigi Li) (CB 3); Delores Rubin (CB 4); Clayton Smith (representing Vikki Barbero) (CB 5); Rick Eggers (CB 6); Sheldon Fine, Audrey Isaacs, Jeannette Rausch & Christopher Riano (representing Elizabeth Caputo) (CB 7); A. Scott Falk (representing Jim Clynes) (CB 8); Padmore John, accompanied by James Archer (CB 9); Henrietta Lyle, accompanied by Tamara Martin (CB 10); Diane Collier (CB 11); Shahabuddeen Ally (CB 12)

Minutes: Morris Chan, Community Liaison

Agenda for January 21st, 2016 Borough Board – Adopted
Minutes for December 17th, 2015 Borough Board – Adopted

Video: Vision Zero Awareness and Crash Victims' Story

Presenter: David Zelman, Defensive Driving Instructor

A major feature of the Vision Zero initiative, launched by Mayor de Blasio in early 2014, involves promotion of defensive driving and distraction awareness. Since its rollout, a six-hour defensive driving program has become mandatory for every City employee driving City-owned vehicles. Increase in distraction awareness helps to induce drivers to seek proactive measures to prevent distraction, thereby bringing



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driving behaviors more in line with the Vision Zero goals and objectives. Most “accidents” occur because of distracted driving. In normal City traffic, vehicle can go forward as much as 100 ft. during the time required to send one text message. A number of mobile phone apps now available, for free or with in-app purchases, to block mobile phones from creating distractions while driving.

This video, produced by the Taxi and Limousine Commission, is an educational program targeting commercial drivers. Graphic images present serve to illustrate the circumstances where victims were killed. It follows a number of family members of these victims and their stories, such as “hit while had the green light,” “hit by a turning vehicle” and “hit and run collision.” The video concludes with the message, “Drive like your family lives here.”

Falk (CB 8): A number of police and motor vehicle departments are now moving away from the term “accident” to “crash” or “collision” instead. The term “accident” can appear unintentional and unavoidable, even as it is fully preventable.

Rausch (CB 7): Could there be similar videos targeting pedestrians?

Zelman: Driving is one activity where constant distraction exists. The idea is to show how drivers should become more aware and conscious of their surroundings.

Collier (CB 11): Is this video part of the defensive driving curriculum? Will drivers see lower insurance premium for completing defensive driving program?

Zelman: The six-hour defensive driving curriculum is now mandatory for City vehicle drivers every three years. It is also worth noting that penalty for mobile phone distractions is five points on the license.

McVay Hughes (CB 1): The intersection of Beekman Street and William Street has seen a hit-run collision in spring 2015; a UPS driver was killed there in 2012. With new parking garages opening, pedestrian safety needs are stronger than ever.

Lyle (CB 10): Central Harlem is a major point of entry into Manhattan for those from the Outer Boroughs and outside the city limits. Could the education program expand into various neighborhoods, as well as suburbs in New Jersey and Connecticut?

Rubin (CB 4): Drivers from outside New York City are often unfamiliar with the rules associated with an urban driving environment. Could the City call for such resources and attention to Vision Zero at a national level?



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Smith (CB 5): The issue also ties into congestion pricing, tolls at points of entry into Manhattan and the need to prevent Manhattan from becoming the “truck ramp” for national commercial operations.

Zelman: Community Boards have adopted resolutions in the past calling the City to post speed limit and “No Turn on Red” signage at all points of entry into the city.

Presentation: Organized Labor and Community Engagement (NYCCLC)

Presenters: Anthony Thomas, Legislative Director; Maryann Rosa, Community Outreach Coordinator

New York City Central Labor Council (NYCCLC) is a citywide umbrella organization representing over 1.3 million union members. It provides assistance to unions and their members in collective bargaining and industrial actions. In its work with the Community Boards, it has an objective of emphasizing how unions matter in the day-to-day life of the community. It consistently seeks various avenues for union members to provide the labor perspective at Community Boards.

Organized labor is a key component of many agenda items before Community Boards. Subjects ranging from education, land use, construction and quality-of-life could all have imprints of the organized labor. Collective bargaining and industrial actions do have an impact on the communities themselves. Union members live, work and shop in all neighborhoods across New York City. Work schedules, labor conditions and benefits are all part of the interwoven fabric of community life. In short, if union members suffer, the whole community suffers too.

About a quarter of New York City workers are union members. Having a voice from the organized labor at the Community Board level is vital to having a Community Board that is truly representative. Community Boards usually hears little from the organized labor unless there is a dispute. To expand labor participation in everyday community life, NYCCLC is now looking into new ways in which union members could provide a united voice in various issues and increase its intersection with the Community Board and the wider community.

NYCCLC began a pilot program in 2015 to assess land use projects and community concerns and determine if organized labor could have purview in the matter. In the process, it found that a number of labor issues could easily have a labor component that would trigger advocacy from the unions. For example, in case of bus service cuts, unions can advocate on behalf of workers who will face inconveniences due to the cuts, and it can partner with Community Boards to voice concerns.



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Land use and construction projects are the bread-and-butter of Community Board and labor union work. Community Board often calls for community benefits, area infrastructure improvements and affordable housing. Labor union could further assist in community and workforce development by calling for unionized local hiring and offering training programs for local workers. Unions are committed to giving every worker an opportunity to have a “good job” with fair living wage, a career path forward, acquisition of tangible skills and ability to save for retirement, especially as 64% of New York City residents do not have enough savings to afford retiring at all. Labor unions welcome the opportunity to meet with Community Boards to discuss what “labor” means to the community.

NYCCLC is also encouraging labor union members to apply for the Community Board. It has been giving union members a snapshot of Community Board work and level of commitment required. Serving on the Community Board takes up as many as 20 hours a month, with meetings often lasting up to four hours. Vinny Alvarez, President of NYCCLC, is heading efforts to bring awareness to union members to ensure that they will attend Community Board business diligently once appointed. Union members not on the Community Boards are also encouraged to attend full board and committee meetings to announce union opportunities for community residents and spread the word on becoming a union member.

NYCCLC has also been engaging in outreach to the clergy, with a legislative breakfast between the clergy and Transport Workers Union (TWU) recently taking place. The nexus between the two helps faith-based social services to report their observations and lean on the expertise of union trades in their advocacy efforts. An example of such nexus concerns lack of accessible buses; union expertise can help to indicate that it is often due to aging vehicle fleet and obsolete devices. It provides an avenue for both to advocate for newer buses and swifter replacement of aging fleet.

McVay Hughes (CB 1): Re-authorization of the Zadroga Act would not happen but for the advocacy of union members on health and safety fronts.

Fine (CB 7): Community Boards tend to see union representatives present only if a building project is under review. Presence and recognition will be needed to bring about awareness to organized labor.

Borough President Brewer: Some Community Board members are union members. To the credit of outreach by NYCCLC, union members with the necessary expertise and commitment have applied and been appointed to Community Boards. Union members are community members who participate actively in neighborhood affairs.



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Community Board applicants should definitely highlight their union background during the application process.

Lyle (CB 10): How could the Community Board help identify union members and encourage them to become involved in trainings and community participation? Can NYCCLC help connect them to the opportunity and prepare them to serve?

Isaacs (CB 7): Outreach could include presentations in the “Life in a Day of...” format to provide additional exposure to the public as a whole. It helps to inform the public that their issues and concerns have impacts beyond the neighborhood itself.

Thomas (NYCCLC): Organized labor is a “family in diaspora” spread across job sites, employers and organizations. Many union members serve on Community Boards and have an active and vocal presence there. Community Boards and labor unions have a positive and intertwining relationship. Union members observe community issues and contribute in all major community dialogues. Much of the metropolitan press prefers to “compare and contrast” labor and community. Organized labor would like to see the press observing the intersection of the two in a comprehensive manner and see how both could “fight for the same.” It is very much about getting union members to see the community aspect of labor as well.

John (CB 9): Most communities have union members covering various trades and professions. Community Boards, however, only see them if there is a construction project or a business-related issue. Community will need to see the full spectrum of union advocacy to realize the vital role unions play in people’s lives.

Council Member Levine: It is often the case that unions appear at the Community Board if there is a planned development. Negotiations do lead to union labor jobs, and the unions promptly disappear from the Community Board. The general public has little understanding and recognition of unions and is susceptible to the “union vs. affordable housing” narrative. Affordable housing with union labor and safety for workers is possible, but labor perspective has to be a part of the Community Board discussion before it could have a realistic chance.

Thomas (NYCCLC): Admittedly, unions have traditionally not done much in public relations. The gap is especially glaring now given the seismic shifts in media and government. NYCCLC thanks Borough President Brewer for the recent efforts helping linking unions, Community Boards and elected officials to each other. As for affordable housing, AFL-CIO has a housing investment trust, first established 32 years ago, that finances low-income, mid-income and seniors affordable housing



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developments. These developments employ 100% union labor with prevailing wages. It shows that the Sophie's Choice of "union vs. affordable housing" is false.

Deputy Borough President Washington: The general public is often unclear of the path to join a union. Many believe that it is through employment only and feel that they are unable to join.

Rosa (NYCCLC): Members join a union mostly through either organizing or union-based apprenticeship. Aside from organizing one's own workplace, unions offer apprenticeship for a number of trades, with automatic union membership; the program is free and may lead to trainings scholarships and paid employment. Opportunities exist for multiple job titles and trades, not limited to construction.

Falk (CB 8): The stereotypical image of a union member is one that is exclusively blue collar, which often results in the "us vs. them" mentality ever present amongst community members in white collar, professional or creative industries. Unions must spread the words that it is not a zero-sum game and that union success helps to lift all boats, blue or white collar. Actors and producers in the city, including the ones on hit musicals such as *Hamilton*, receive healthcare coverage via the unions. Unions also engage in discussions with the City on helping union drivers to comply with the Vision Zero-related rules on the road.

Smith (CB 5): Outreach to union members will require making sure they have an eye on the monthly meeting agenda and schedule. It helps to note agenda items of union interest and for the union to provide comments from labor perspective.

Archer (CB 9): One must understand that Community Board is often a skewed cross-section of the community. As unions are no longer the main agenda driver in the day-to-day public life, the public does not feel how vital labor unions are.

Rosa (NYCCLC): Organized labor has a membership that it wishes to activate for an array of causes. It is the vehicle through workers express what they want to see from their unions. Partnership with neighborhood organizations is always welcome.

Deputy Borough President Bonilla: Community Board application for Manhattan has a check box to self-identify as union member and to list the union name and local. This office has the metrics and knows that 23% of Manhattan Community Board members appointed in 2015 are union members. A complete member profile helps to keep Community Board composition compliant with all Charter and local law provisions and ensures a composition consistent with the community profile.



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Office of Borough President Report

Deputy Borough President Washington: Borough President Brewer will soon issue the response to FY 2017 Preliminary Budget. Staff assistance during Community Board review of the preliminary budget is available. A coordinated response at the Borough Board level will take place in due course.

Deputy Borough President Bonilla: State of the Borough event will take place on Sunday, January 31st, at 2:00 PM, at the New School. RSVP is required.

Community Affairs Director Songhai: Deadline for Community Board application is Friday, January 29th at 5:00 PM. All community liaisons will be sending reminders to all current members up for re-appointment. Social media campaign featuring a number of Community Board members and telling their stories has been launched. Please remind the district managers that community liaisons are requesting 2014 and 2015 attendance records. Application review begins next week.

Council Member Reports

CM Kallos: CB 8 heard presentation on the proposed Second Avenue protected bike lane. Per a CB 8 resolution adopted in November 2015, crosstown bike lane project is moving forward, with CB 8 to hear the proposal in February. The next First Friday with constituents is February 5th; cake will be served. Policy Night takes place on the second Tuesday of each month. Residential building and tenant association visits are also available. City Council will hold hearing on the two zoning text amendments shortly. Efforts are underway to prevent construction of outsized “super-scrapers” on East 57th Street and in Sutton Place area. Annual HOPE count will take place on January 25th, from 10:00 PM to 4:00 AM the next day. The count will help the City to have a real sense on what is happening on the street. City Council hearing on school food, breakfast, salad bar and after-school snack matters will take place on January 25th. Hearing on NYCHA Next Generation proposal will take place at NYCHA Holmes Houses on January 26th. Community has consistently stated that public housing and infill do not mix well. Public housing communities should be fighting with NYCHA Holmes Houses residents; no one knows if one’s own community will be the next one up for infills. City Council will also hold a hearing on the legislation on healthy lifestyle advertising to children on January 26th.

CM Levine: FY 2017 Preliminary Budget is scheduled for release today. The budget will call for \$5 million to hire 67 new Park Enforcement Patrol (PEP) officers, an increase that amounts to 30%. These PEP officers are much needed for the safety



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and the security of City parks. The budget will also call for funding to add ambulance service shifts to reduce EMS response time. Budget for mental health and public services will also increase. City Council will move to prepare a response to the proposed FY 2017 Preliminary Budget.

Community Board Reports

Community Board 1: A new elementary school is officially sited at 77 Greenwich Street; construction and school incubation is a long way ahead, but the community is excited for this development. The City has been awarded \$176 million of HUD National Disaster Resiliency Competition (NDRC) funding; details to follow. This funding will be combined with City-pledged \$100 million toward resiliency projects from coastal areas from Montgomery Street to the northern end of Battery Park City. City is set to issue request for proposals for the engineering study by the end of this month; the study will last two years. CB 1 thanks for all the support on Zadroga Act re-authorization, in which Federal funding for 9/11-related healthcare needs is now guaranteed for the next 75 years. CB 1 has had concerns over the loss of automated postal unit (APU) in the district and difficulties in locating mailboxes. U.S. Postal Service recently provided update to CB 1 and indicated that its contractor has now updated the mailbox locator interactive map nationwide. CB 1 remains concerned on South Street Seaport and requests that Howard Hughes Corp. present its master plan for the area; Freedom of Information (FOIL) request may be necessary. CB 1 asks that elected officials and area stakeholders push for Howard Hughes Corp. to present the plan before Seaport Working Group, especially as the concern over the planned 160 ft. tower remains unresolved. CB 1 is concerned regarding insufficient law enforcement in Battery Park City after a recent assault, especially as Battery Park City Authority is terminating Park Enforcement Patrol (PEP) services.

Community Board 2: CB 2 has been trying a different format for the chair's report at full board meetings. The idea is to make this part of the meeting an opportunity to shed light on various aspects and segments of area communities. Instead of what is happening, it speaks more about what CB 2 is promising to do and how it will move to enact the promises. CB 2 is moving toward transparent committee assignments, with members drawing up their lists of preferences and the chair allocating member assignments with "as high as possible" preferences. During the most recent round of committee re-assignments, all members received third preference or above. It also helps to reduce over-subscription of certain hot-button committees and permits a volunteer organization, such as the Community Board, to give its members a sense that they have power over the situation. CB 2 is currently looking for an assistant district manager; application is still open.



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Deputy Borough President Bonilla: These innovative value-added ways of doing Community Board business could be beneficial to all chairs and officers.

Deputy Borough President Washington: As former Community Board chair, I also look into what my counterparts do in their districts and search for ideas. Chairs can learn a lot from what their fellow chairs are doing. I encourage that all chairs engage in outreach and dialogue amongst Community Boards.

Community Board 3: Lunar New Year falls on February 8th this year. CB 3 is deeply concerned that Rivington House is closing. It was formerly an AIDS hospice, now a nursing home. City has lifted its deed restrictions limiting its use to nursing care and is planning to allow the building to go on the market. CB 3 is seeking help to put a stop to the sale and prevent it from becoming another luxury tower. The loss of this facility will take 219 beds away from the community. People will not be able to age in place, may be moved to facilities in Brooklyn, and may lose benefits associated with community gardens in this neighborhood.

Community Board 4: As new chair of CB 4, I would like to thank Borough President Brewer for ideas stemming from leadership development training sessions. CB 4 did a survey to see how to engage its members and provide opportunities to be more active; 40 of its 50 members responded. CB 4 finds that Community Board could also hold its own training sessions to supplement the ones offered by the Borough President. It is also now looking to devise education programs and social media campaigns aiming at activating new appointees and younger members. Governor Cuomo recently made the announcement regarding Javits Convention Center and the Moynihan Station project; there will still be a lot for discussion and details for CB 4 to find out. Former Bayview Correctional Facility has been awarded to NoVo Foundation and will become “The Women’s Building” for activism and engagement purposes. Renovation will be an all-female construction effort. CB 4 hopes that it will become a fitting facility for this community.

Community Board 5: Representative unable to stay to deliver report.

Community Board 6: CB 6 will co-sponsor State Senator Hoylman’s “Bag the Plastic” discussion event, as well as another event on clean energy. CB 6 had a successful forum on homelessness, in conjunction with Council Member Mendez and Council Member Garodnick. Community will soon ask what to be done with the finding from the event. CB 6 has the largest men’s shelter citywide, with 800 beds. The solution must be one that balances all needs. CB 6 continues to work on the land use front, with East 25th Street sanitation garage, re-zoning efforts and “super-



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scrapers” in Sutton Place area as the major ongoing projects. The father of a CB 6 area community partner was recently killed in a pedestrian-motorcycle collision. The incident brought to the forefront that Vision Zero has not been reporting at the micro level. Its data are all citywide figures, not even at the borough level, let alone at the community district level. Communities are not seeing as much progress on Vision Zero as the City is claiming. CB 6 district manager has resigned; search for the new district manager is underway. CB 6 thanks Borough President Brewer and staff for their support in the interim.

Community Board 7: CB 7 continues to work with City agencies and stakeholders on Vision Zero implementation. Re-configuration of Columbus Avenue is complete; additional pedestrian islands for crossing distance reduction are now planned. CB 7 heard the presentation on Amsterdam Avenue protected bike lane and pedestrian safety measures; vote at the committee level was split, and the committee motioned to bring the item to the February 2nd full board meeting for discussion and motion for vote on final adoption. CB 7 NYCHA task force will hold an open house on February 24th. CB 7 is starting a “Know Your Committee” education series; first session is on March 7th and will cover Land Use committee. City is now seeking to place 135 veterans at the single-room occupancy (SRO) facility at West 95th Street and West End Avenue, despite that this SRO facility is not particularly suitable for housing the homeless. CB 7 met with its operators on December 13th, community is so far receptive to the proposal but continues to feel that this SRO facility is “not good enough” of an accommodation for the homeless veterans. CB 7 plans to call for a community advisory group for this facility and would like to have information on the method of operations, especially as the facility is now under a ten-year lease with a number of guarantees that community wants to see fulfilled.

Community Board 8: CB 8 held a meeting on the Second Avenue improvements proposal; meeting was well-attended and received media coverage. CB 8 adopted a resolution in November 2015 supporting painted crosstown bike lanes with long-term safety design. With CitiBike now expanding to Upper East Side, safety is now of paramount importance. CB 8 has heard from Dept. of Transportation that there will be three new crosstown bike lanes, in the 60s, 70s and 80s, and they will be painted lanes and will not result in any loss of vehicular traffic or parking lanes. Market under Queensboro Bridge is now vacant after Food Emporium went bankrupt. CB 8 hopes that an extraordinary tenant meeting the needs of the community will occupy the space in the very near future.

Community Board 9: CB 9 sent a letter of support on behalf of an HDFC property that suffered a fire. There is a piece of legislation proposed to take rights away from



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owners, and CB 9 is looking to host a conference on this matter with agencies and elected officials. CB 9 is now receiving Dept. of Environmental Protection bi-weekly update for North River Wastewater Pollution Control Plant formaldehyde level and will request determination on the reason for the elevated level observed and the emission levels of other gases. Preparation is now underway for the Hudson River marine transfer station plan. Mt. Sinai presented at the committee level its plan to sell four buildings, two landmarks and two not, of St. Luke's Hospital and the search for developer; committee is due to report it to full board today. CB 9 is also working with Mt. Sinai to ensure that services through DSRIP program funding aligns with the community needs. CB 9 is now engaged in a "Then & Now" project to compile images from West Harlem 15 to 20 years ago and contrast with the images today. CB 9 is also working on a project on the community make-up, with highlights on the committees, goals and objectives; it hopes that it will provide CB 9 members with a better idea of the community. Take Care New York public consultation forum for West Harlem will take place on January 29th.

Community Board 10: CB 10 is experiencing server problems as of late; City has requested that CB 10 upgrade the server, which costs \$900. CB 10 will reach out to agencies and elected officials for help on server cost and iPads for meetings. CB 10 had an incredible celebration for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day at PS 175; a new CB 10 member was instrumental to its success, and CB 10 thanks Borough President Brewer for the staff support. Harlem Partner for Parks is looking join forces with Whole Foods and other organizations to start a local booth program for food vendors in the community; CB 10 is looking for similar partnerships for area public school. CB 10 member Tamara Martin, who chairs the Public Safety committee, attended the forum for parolees organized by the office of New York County District Attorney Vance. It provided opportunity for about 18 participating parolees to find resources to stay off criminal activities and instill a strong message not to re-offend. This program is very informative and could be a model for other communities.

Community Board 11: East Harlem continues to move ahead with neighborhood planning, with another public meeting is scheduled for January 27th at El Museo del Barrio; all topics of interest and feedbacks will be addressed at this meeting. CB 11 still has analog Internet services, is still without Verizon FiOS and is experiencing telephone system problems. City currently does not support Time Warner, which is the service covering much of the CB 11 area, and CB 11 could not afford it at its own expense. CB 11 will reach out to Borough President Brewer for options for reliable services with features necessary to carry out the work. It would like to have features that support services and options in Spanish to enable CB 11 to better serve its large constituency of Spanish speakers. AEG Coachella Festival is coming to Randall's



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Island for a three-day event this year. CB 11 will be meeting with them to discuss possible seasonal jobs for local residents and measures to mitigate quality-of-life disturbances. African Burial Ground on East 126th Street is deemed in a condition where it is layered with soil and with remains displaced. CB 11 is looking for ways to address the bus depot footprint issue and the effort to provide for a proper memorial within this project.

Community Board 12: As new chair of CB 12, I continue to find that lots of issues, events and concerns are present in Washington Heights and Inwood at any given time. Associated Supermarket at West 187th Street and Ft. Washington Avenue was denied lease renewal; property owner has agreed to rent the space to Walgreens. Community is circulating petitions and organizing to bring attention to demographic isolation and “food desert” conditions in the area. The petition has gathered over 4,200 signatures and rallied outside the court house during hearings. CB 12 will be hearing findings on the proposed Inwood re-zoning shortly. Renovation of the West 215th Street steps has completed; the steps will re-open January 29th. Construction is scheduled to begin at Inwood Nature Center for Hurricane Sandy-related repairs; it is scheduled to run until 2019. CB 12 initiated a “Leadership Academy” in-house education program, where members with specialized expertise provide training for their fellow members. CB 12 is also putting together member profiles to highlight outstanding contributions and get more of its members engaged and involved.

Borough Board adjourned.