

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING, CB #6 - MAY 2, 2017

Members Present: Jannie Armstrong, Virginia Bird, Evonne Capers, Claudette Coles, Sahre Davis, Margarita Espinoza, Maria Garcia, April Hurley, Sara Mejia, Floretta O'Brien, Rosa Peraza, Wendy Rodriguez.

Official(s) Present: Tom Lucaina from the Bronx Borough President's Office.

Others: John Sanchez, District Manager and Carla Leon, Community Assistant.

The meeting was called to order by Wendy Rodriguez at 6:30 PM.

The minutes of the March 22nd meeting were reviewed, A motion was made by Ms. April Hurley and seconded by Ms. Jannie Armstrong to approve the minutes with one correction noted (Item #3 on Page 2, the event listed should be the Mace Ballfield/It's My Park Day). A unanimous vote accepted the minutes as amended.

The following items were discussed:

CB #6 LOGO:

After moderate discussion, the current logo (copy attached) was accepted as one of two models previously presented. It will be presented at the next general meeting to the full board and if there are no objections, we will accept this model as the official CB #6 logo.

CB #6 BOARD REPRESENTATION AT COMMUNITY PUBLIC EVENTS:

It was suggested that part of the surplus funds from the FY 2017 budget be used to purchase T-shirts for members to wear at CB#6-sponsored public events. Tom Lucaina reported that there are funds in the overall city budget that can be used to purchase T-shirts, hats and other CB-sponsored paraphernalia for certain events (e.g.: health fairs, information forums), but they must receive OMB authorization. Such expenses could not be taken out of the community board's budget & can't be used to advertise individuals or independent companies. It is proposed that this be tabled for further discussion among CB members and that the proposal be put together to present at the June meeting.

COMMUNICATION:

There was a lively discussion regarding the continuing lack of communication between the DM and the board chairperson, as well as between the DM and committee chairs. Several examples were cited in which neither the board or committee chairpersons were informed of events until after they had taken place, despite previous non-event related meetings with those sponsoring the event.

Other examples included the fact that even when CB #6 public events are conducted, there is no mention of the chairperson(s) who spearheaded or organized the event. Some of these events, which should be conveyed to the appropriate chairperson, are only learned of by reading of them in the Bronx News publication or by viewing them on the CB #6 website. Wendy continues to voice her frustration with what she says is the DM's failure to communicate and/or update her and committee chairs on matters. She expressed that John has good ideas, but feels he needs to inform her of his plans before an event takes place as a matter of mutual respect. She says it remains a significant problem despite the fact that she has voiced her concerns to John on many occasions during her weekly office visits and at other times. Several other committee chairs concurred that the lack of communication between them and John is a constant irritant. It was expressed that there was hope that this matter would be corrected and that a relationship built on mutual respect between the board and the DM would develop.

Both Sara and April reported that committee meetings are not well attended and suggest that we should be doing more networking. We all felt that committees needed to focus on community needs and that they needed to think of long-term goals, events and committee expectations. It was suggested that a perfect project for utilizing interns would be to help to gather community input in order to acquire a better assessment of community needs. It was also voiced that board members need to be more respectful at general meetings (i.e., stopping the use of cell phones, frequent breaks and private conversations during meetings). It was announced that awards will be handed out at the June meeting for board members with perfect attendance and for members of the Fire and Police Departments who had performed exemplary work in the community.

BUDGET FOR FY 2018:

The budget line items were reviewed individually and discussed. After receiving clarification on some items, practically all of the items were approved, including the addition of more hours for the cleaning service. However, two line items required further and lengthy discussion. Because one of the items requiring this discussion involved salary and promotion requests, both John and Carla were asked to recuse themselves from this portion of the meeting.

Regarding salaries and promotions for both John and Carla, they were requested at a rate of 12% each. Separate memos from John and Carla were submitted to justify why they were requesting these increases and in Carla's case, a promotion. They both feel that in view of their track records of what they've achieved to date, it will be concluded that their requests are justified. After vigorous discussion, it was determined that a one-step promotion from Community Assistant to Community Associate and a salary increase to \$41,562.08 for Carla was justified. It was determined that a two-step promotion for her to Community Coordinator was not justified at this time, but a position she could aspire to in the future. The decision was unanimous to bring this to the full board to be voted on.

Regarding John's request, it was decided that while John had done a good job for the nine months that he had held the position, the decision on his salary request should be held off until August which marks the first anniversary of his employment. Many of the items that he lists as his

achievements were performed as a regular and/or annual community activity, already a part of his listed job description, or had been conducted or spearheaded by committee chairpersons and/or some of the interns in their capacities. Therefore it was felt that a 12% increase in his salary was not justified at this time. Tom Lucaino of the Borough President's office was very helpful and explained to us some of the procedures for merit increases as per the BP's office practices. Since no booklet or set of salary guidelines exists, it's up to each community board to decide this process. Because the BP's office does not involve itself in the hiring process, it would have been practical for us to include a probation period in his hiring contract at which time his performance would be reviewed or evaluated. However, since no such stipulation was included in his original contract, we cannot revert to something that was not in that contract at this point. For example, while some other DM's have applied for raises after 6 months of hire, this was because of a stipulation that was discussed at the time of their hire. A stipulation with a review process included would have given a basis to decide whether a salary request was justified. Tom also informed us that as city employees, DM's get automatic raises in July of every year according to negotiated contracts. It was voted upon (12=yes, 1=no) that John's salary request would be revisited at his one-year employment anniversary and that our objections to his current request would be stated to him in writing. John and Carla were re-admitted to the meeting and informed of our decision to revisit salary requests and promotions in August at the anniversary of his employment. John did voice his objection to this delay in his request and it was so noted.

The other budget item that prompted further discussion was what was listed as Item 662, Temporary Services, and is proposed to be used to cover paid internships. John explained that the plan is to hire 12 interns for year-round service at a rate of \$11/hour. Three of those hired are expected to come from and paid by the SYEP (Summer Youth Employment Program) to include youth from our district. Further discussion ensued with members asking for job descriptions for interns, as well as where they were recruited from. John provided a job description, explained their roles and his reasons for wanting to pay them (they are currently unpaid) and informed us that they were mainly recruited from colleges & universities. He further informed us that they had helped on 17 community events and had done excellently in this capacity. He felt that paying interns acts as an incentive for them to participate and gives them an opportunity to learn about local government and community service. Some board members suggested that instead of hiring so many interns, that part of those funds be used to hire someone from the community in a full-time position instead (such as those from other youth organizations). Other board members discussed what they perceived to be the role of interns and suggested that they be used for specific projects. On a conciliatory note, Tom suggested that we initiate a paid internship program for the summer only and try this for one year to see how it works. The paid program would be for the months of July and August and those interns used during the rest of the year would not be paid, but would be earning college credits. It was further suggested that their roles be assessed or evaluated after each project's completion. Tom further informed us that the proposed budget was a baseline budget, with room for modifications once line items had been approved. Our proposal, therefore, is to initiate a summer paid internship program (July-Aug.) and it will be presented to the full board for a vote. Other modifications that we suggest will be presented as part of a revised budget and will

be voted upon at the full board meeting in June. In addition, we need to convene a special meeting of the full board in August to vote on the question of John's salary request.

TRAINING:

Announcement was made that two Coro training sessions will be provided for all board members on two Saturdays in June (3 & 10) at the CB office. Coro conducts experiential training to promote interaction, improve communication, enhance awareness and provide new insights on dealing with interpersonal relationships between board members. It is felt that this training will enhance and facilitate communication and interaction between board members, their committees and all other aspects of community board involvement. All are urged to attend.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Floretta A. O'Brien
Secretary