

(Pending Committee Approval)

Minutes of Aging Committee – Bronx Community Board 8

Thursday, February 13, 2025 at 4:00 P.M.

Bronx Community Board 8 Office – 5676 Riverdale Ave, Suite 100, Bronx, NY 10471

Meeting Recording: <https://youtu.be/IByl5qNF4RQ?si=ovDBCzsfQPtF1r>

Committee Members in Attendance (4): Mary Ellen Gibbs (Chair), Barbara Kail (Vice Chair), Georgia Santiago, E Doyle McCarthy (Community Committee Member)

Absent Committee Members (0)

Community Board 8 Guests: Julie Reyes (Chairperson, Bronx CB8), Farrah Kule Rubin (District Manager), Ardy Malziu (Community Coordinator), Deonte Dewar (Intern)

Guest Attendees: Michael Sharp (NYC Department of Finance), Enrie Morales (Right at Home), Camela Dee (Community Member), Judith Green (Community Member)

Chair M. Gibbs called the meeting to order at 4:05 pm. Chair M. Gibbs welcomed the committee members and guests.

Approval of the Minutes for December 12, 2024

Unanimously Approved:

In Favor (4): M. Gibbs, B. Kail, G. Santiago, E. McCarthy

Abstained (0)

Opposed (0)

Chair's Report: New Vice Chair, Barbara Kail. E. Doyle McCarthy joins as new Community Committee Member of the Aging Committee. Chair M. Gibbs is working on a new community resource guide for seniors. Please send her any ideas. CB8 intern Deonte will be helping out.

Guest Speaker: Michael Sharp of NYC Department of Finance presented on the various housing benefits available to NYC older persons. This information is accessible online at the NYC Department of Finance in a user-friendly environment.

FOR HOMEOWNERS (includes Coop owners)

- Coop condo abatement. Management applies. Let management know this is your primary residence.
- STAR School Tax Relief for Coop and homeowners in five boroughs Showed screen of Department of Finance website and how to find what you need. Benefits for property owners. Brochure also available. Income requirements. Combined income under \$250,000 receive exemption \$300.

- Enhanced STAR Seniors combined income 107,300 or less doubles this benefit
- SCHE Senior Citizen Homeowners Exemption combined income 58,399 or less.

FOR TENANTS

- Rent Freeze. Must be 62 or older, live in rent regulated, household income 50,000 or less and spend one third of income on rent.
- Can apply most easily through tenant access portal.

Question concerning rent criteria: This is set by legislation. Do allow for some deductions from income test.

Michael Sharp then offered material for the office front desk.

Carmela Dee, representing NYC Public Service Retirees, requested our support for NYC Council Resolution 1096 which would preserve the medical care health care promised in retirement, rather than a proposed switch to a Medicare advantage plan.

E. McCarthy asked how this might increase NYC Council support. Carmela Dee responded that this resolution can remind them this will be a campaign issue.

The Chair introduced a resolution in support, the same as last year. B. Kail moved, seconded. Resolution passed unanimously.

**BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 8 – AGING COMMITTEE
RESOLUTION SUPPORTING INTRO. 1096-2024**

Bronx Community Board 8 Resolution to support and advocate on behalf of the New York City (NYC) Municipal Retirees and urging the New York City Council to pass Intro. 1096-2024, which will preserve retiree health care choices by mandating the City to offer Medicare-eligible City retirees and their Medicare-eligible dependents at least one Medigap plan with benefits equivalent to or better than those available to City retirees and their dependents as of December 31, 2021.

WHEREAS, so many constituents have served the New York City (City) and are now enjoying the retirement benefits they earned, and;

WHEREAS, the issue of healthcare is extremely important and must be protected for the 250,000 NYC retirees who worked for their healthcare rights, and;

WHEREAS, Intro. 1096-2024 is in the Civil Service and Labor Committee in the New York City Council (Council) and awaits a hearing so it can move forward in the Council, and;

WHEREAS, the NYC retirees are being forced into a Medicare Advantage Plan (MAP) with no alternative option provided, and;

WHEREAS, this plan threatens retirees' access to the level of health care they have received in the past, in that retirees would be forced into a MAP with limited medical providers and would also be at the MAP's whims for preauthorization decisions that may be based - at least in part - on Artificial Intelligence - instead of the medical decisions from their current regular medical providers, and;

WHEREAS, the proposed plan would draw millions of dollars away from traditional Medicare into a privatized MAP, and;

WHEREAS, the proposed plan sets a harmful precedent for the rest of the Nation, and;

WHEREAS, the NYC Retirees have testified in various forums, including at the January 11, 2023, NYC Council Civil Service and the Labor Committee public hearing, that they have been subjected to unconscionable stress due to this violation of their earned healthcare benefits, and;

WHEREAS, the Bronx Community Board Aging Committee unanimously supported this draft resolution at its February 13, 2025, meeting.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, Bronx Community Board 8 urges all of its elected officials to publicly support the NYC Organization of Public Service Retirees' efforts to enact Intro. 1096-2024. We request that the City maintain the choice of the original Medicare plan and a Medigap plan provided at the time of employees' hiring, and not force retirees into a private, profit-driven healthcare plan, and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, we urge Council Members Eric Dinowitz, Carmen De La Rosa, and Pierina Ana Sanchez to uphold the City's obligations to its retirees, including its obligations set forth in New York Administrative Code §12-126. Consistent with these obligations, the City has for several decades (since 1967) paid the out-of-pocket cost of the GHI Senior Care plan, a Medigap plan which the majority of NYC Retirees have chosen; and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, we urge the New York City Council to exercise leadership by bringing the vote to the floor for membership to vote to enact Intro. 1096-2024.

In Favor (4): M. Gibbs, B. Kail, G. Santiago, E. McCarthy

Abstained (0)

Opposed (0)

FY27 Capital and Expense Budget Priorities: Chair M. Gibbs asked if any additions or comments on budgetary requests.

Adjournment: E. McCarthy motion to adjourn, seconded. Meeting adjourned 4:47pm

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Kail (Vice Chair)