

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8
MINUTES OF THE AGING COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON DECEMBER 12, 2019 AT
BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 8 OFFICES

Committee Members Present

Eric Dinowitz, Chair
Lisa Daub
Marvin Goodman
Jyll Townes

Committee Members Not Present

Daniella Fuchs
Dan Padernacht
Karen Pesce
Rita Pochter Lowe

Other CB8 and Guests

Sylvia Alexander
David Gellman
Rob Jacklowsky
CO Cintron, 50th Precinct

The meeting commenced at 4:10 pm
Eric Dinowitz, Aging Committee Chair, welcomed everyone

Scams and Crime Prevention

Chair Dinowitz welcomed Officer Cintron from the 50th precinct to the Aging Committee meeting. Officer Cintron opened by saying that scams affect everyone, but that seniors are particularly vulnerable to phone scams.

Officer Cintron shared information about package theft. He advises community members to use delivery services that do not leave packages on doorsteps. Examples of this include Amazon lockers, requiring signatures, or leaving packages with neighbors. He also said that package thieves are usually known to police, and if you have a camera or security system, that people could send videos to the police. He distributed a flyer with tips to prevent package theft. He then went on to talk about phone scams. This year, there have been 115 felony phone scams on seniors alone. He advised community members to “act like New Yorkers” when it comes to telephone conversations, which means to be tough and street smart. He spoke about the grandma scheme, where a scammer will call and say “grandma, I’m in trouble, send me money.” Often the same person is victimized multiple times. Caller ID may not work, because scammers now have technology to pretend their number is a known number. Scammers often pose as the IRS. They get seniors to buy gift cards from stores, and tell the seniors that stores charge more for gift cards for the IRS so seniors may lie to store clerks about who the gift cards are for. CO Cintron explained that the IRS will never contact anyone by phone. Scammers also scare seniors by telling them to wire money or buy gift cards under threat of arrest, though office Cintron explained that if the police need to arrest someone, they will arrest them. Office Cintron explained the process of check washing, whereby a scammer will fish checks from a mailbox, and wash off the name of the recipient and replace it with someone else. He advised people to bring checks directly to the post office or leave with a mail carrier.

In response to this, David Gellman suggested that seniors learn how to do online banking. Officer Cintron added that once you are done with big purchases, like houses and cars, you can freeze your credit for free.

Key Food on 235th street is a target for pickpockets. Officer Cintron agreed to share documents with board to distribute to community.

Lisa Daub added that the affordable senior housing residents would benefit from these talks.

Old Business

Chair Dinowitz reported that the full board overwhelmingly passed the resolution in support of our seniors with regard to changes in express bus service that was passed by the aging committee at November's committee meeting. He thanked the members of the committee and the full board for supporting the needs of seniors. As Officer Cintron stated that seniors are disproportionately affected by phone scams, so too our seniors would be disproportionately affected by reduction in service to our express bus service.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:10

Minutes prepared and submitted by Eric Dinowitz