

**COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8 BRONX  
MINUTES OF THE HEALTH, HOSPITALS & SOCIAL SERVICES  
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON NOVEMBER 15, 2010**

**PRESENT**

Steven Froot  
Maria Khury  
Sylvia Alexander  
Steve Balicer  
Beverly Fettman  
Thomas Durham  
Alan Mucatel  
Dana Lennon  
Lyn Johnson  
JoAnne Certo  
F. Badoy

**AFFILIATION**

Committee Chair  
CB8  
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CB8  
Committee member, Leake & Watts  
  
James J. Peters Bronx VA Medical Center  
PCI Home Care Group, Inc.  
PCI Home Care Group, Inc.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:40 pm and welcomed the attendees.

The minutes of the October 18, 2010 meeting were considered and approved.

The Chair then introduced Lyn Johnson from the James J. Peters Bronx VA Medical Center.

**Presentation**

Lyn Johnson, Outreach Specialist at the James J. Peters Bronx VA Medical Center in the Bronx, addressed the Committee. He pointed out that there are 47,000 veterans in the Bronx, but only one-third of this group is receiving VA benefits, and his goal is to get the word out to this community about the availability of benefits to veterans of all wars, including Vietnam and both Persian Gulf conflicts. Mr. Johnson reviewed for the Committee a number of improvements in Veterans' benefits as the result of legislation passed in the last two years. The improvements include:

- Loosening eligibility for benefits by expanding what is meant by a "service connected" disability
- Additional benefits for female veterans and their children, including housing and child care
- Expanded coverage for post traumatic stress disorder
- Expanded number of illnesses considered causally related to exposure to Agent Orange
- Ability of veterans' family members to receive benefits after the veteran's death
- Relief from foreclosure, by transferring an FHA loan to a more lenient VA loan
- Increases in educational benefits, including housing allowances for full-time students and transferability of tuition benefits to a veteran's spouse
- Services and health benefits for primary caregivers of disabled veterans
- Changes in income limits for benefits for non-service connected disability
- Changes in offsets against VA pensions for amounts received from SSI
- Immigration benefits, including eligibility for citizenship upon an enlistee's discharge

It was suggested that Mr. Johnson may want to address the Aging Committee or make a presentation during the gallery session of the general Board Meeting.

### **Follow-up Business**

**Budget process:** It was determined, in Budget Chair Phil Friedman's absence, to postpone further discussion of capital and expense priorities to a later meeting.

**Health forum update:** A discussion took place about the upcoming Health Forum, to be held Wednesday, December 8, from 7:00-9:15 pm in Leo Hall on the south campus of Manhattan College. Board and HHSS members signed up to drop off newly printed flyers promoting the event at various locations, including schools, houses of worship, senior centers, nursing homes and local businesses. Advertisements in the Riverdale Press were scheduled to begin running soon. It was suggested that answers to any questions submitted by members of the audience that are not able to be answered by the panelists due to lack of time, might be posted on the Board web site or emailed to the questioner after the conclusion of the Forum. Although it is contemplated that questions from the audience will be written down on index cards and presented by the moderator to the panel, it was suggested that hand-held microphones be available for audience members to follow up on their questions.

Meeting Adjourned 8:45PM

Prepared by Steven Froot, Chair  
Health, Hospitals & Social Services Committee