

Housing & Human Services Committee Minutes - Thursday, June 4th, 2020
Called to Order at 7:30pm Virtual Meeting via Webex

Committee Members Present:

Chair Ariel Miranda, Asst. Chair Osi Kaminer, Naysha Diaz, Ayisha Oglivie, Bruce Robertson

Committee Members Absent:

Waldys Cruz , Carolina Charles

Public Members Present:

Marshall Vanderpool

Public Members Absent: Alexander Melendez, Richard Habersham

Additional Board Members Present: Edda Santiago

Community: Nancy Preston

Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Introductions
3. Inclusive communication in the Human Services field - Presented by Naysha Diaz
4. Excluded Worker Relief Fund / Billionaire Mark to Market Tax Act
Assembly Bill: [A10414](#) Senate Bill: [S8277](#)
5. Refugee Safety Net Fund Resolution
6. The City Council of New York's efforts to address the COVID-19 pandemic
7. Old Business
8. New Business

1. Chair Miranda welcomed committee and community members to the meeting
2. Introductions
3. "Inclusive Language in the Human Services Field & Beyond" presented by Nyasha Diaz

Exclusive/Non-Inclusive Language

Guiding Principles of Inclusive Language

- People-First Language (noun then adjective)
- Active & Positive Language
- Universal Language (no coding, jargon or idioms)
- Gender-Neutral Language
- Don't Assume a Person's Pronoun

Source: Unitarian Universalist Association Inclusive Language Guidance

Questions & Comments:

AO- motioned to put these Guidelines into resolution form and present at a General Meeting for a vote to adopt them for CB12 general practice. This would help to inform our community about inclusive language practices in all communications.

ND- will consult with CB12's LGBT Task Force, and check other sources including other CB's and MBPO to insure comprehensive before presenting at the General Meeting in September.

AO- Motions:

1. Put Naysha guidelines into Resolution form for Board to adopt as formal practice
2. Institute practice of crediting authors of Resolutions, such as this one.

ES- introduced herself as a new CB12 member and a housing attorney at Legal Aid Society. She applauded ND's presentation and noted that she's has had similar language training at work that has

made a huge difference in her relationship with clients and others. She'd like to see General Meetings be made more of a "safe space" for open discussion.

4. Excluded Worker Relief Fund / Billionaire Mark to Market Tax Act

Assembly Bill A10414. Senate Bill S8277

AO— “political will & backstory” What’s likelihood that this would proceed. Discussed in April reso re CV, reference that Reso here?

Chair Miranda – have language and articles past few weeks to support this resolution
Assembly Bill A10414 – Sponsor Carmen De La Rosa, 4 Co-sponsors, other signatories

5. Refugee Safety Net Fund Resolution

Provides Immediate Relief to Immigrant Workers Excluded from the Cares Act

“Make the Road New York” 2020 report quantifies the overwhelming damage that the COVID-19 pandemic has wrought on immigrant, Black, and Brown communities. Survey data and the lived experience of community members reveal extraordinarily high rates of illness, death, and economic devastation. Community members—healthcare workers, food delivery workers, janitorial and maintenance staff, warehouse workers, cab drivers, construction workers, and more—are not only worried about protecting themselves and their loved ones from the virus, but are also worried about being able to pay for food, rent, and other essential utilities. Meanwhile, most of these New Yorkers have been largely excluded from the government’s recovery funding.

See Legal Aid Society Press Release: “As NYS Legislature Reconvenes, Legal Aid Urges Passage of Key Bills before the End of Session to Protect New Yorkers Disproportionately Affected By COVID-19”

... <https://bit.ly/2YbhHBX>

OK- What percentage of people who are undocumented pay taxes, and if they pay taxes they should get relief.

ES – many people who are undocumented don’t have Social Security Numbers but have ITIN’s*. NY State has 190K people with ITIN who won’t qualify for benefits under Cares Act.

AO- 2019 CNN article states that 4.35 Mil people who are undocumented paid \$13.6 Bill in taxes to ITIN. (2015 data)

(* An Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) is a tax processing number issued by the Internal Revenue Service. IRS issues ITINs to individuals who are required to have a U.S. taxpayer identification number but who do not have, and are not eligible to obtain a Social Security Number (SSN) from the Social Security Administration (SSA). ITINs are issued regardless of immigration status because both resident and nonresident aliens may have a U.S. filing or reporting requirement under the Internal Revenue Code.)

OK – How much was the increase in the green card fee recently. Stringer advocated against it. It’s an IRS Fee, not immigration dept. It’s required regardless if the individual is not paying taxes. References in our resolutions to data and facts should have sources noted.

AO – References should become standard practice in our reports and resolutions

Chair Miranda – maybe a separate document of references related to a resolution

ES – saying how poor helps resolution

Chair Miranda – diff between non-resident and citizen evokes where support is needed

AO – sell bill to remedy the current needs due to pandemic

ES – are we concerned with how poor they were prior to COVID. They contribute, pay taxes, essential workers, strong argument to say how hard they've been hit.

AO– Strong argument despite they pay taxes, they are not getting return as do other citizens or residents. Resource poor.

OK – They pay into the program why can't they benefit from when they need it.

Chair Miranda – highlights their contributions and their current difficulties across entire US.

AO– why should they be poor if they pay into the program but don't get benefits from it

ES – Despite their financial contributions made by immigrants who are non-citizens, other state govts. Are creating funds to aid low-income families impacted by COVID. See California.

Resolved: Manhattan Community Board 12 strongly supports the passage of Assembly Bill A1014 introduce in the Assembly by Assembly Member Carmen De La Rosa along with the companion Senate Bill S8277 introduced by Senator Jessica Ramos.

All agreed on language as is.

Chair Miranda called for a vote on Resolution

Vote: Aye 7,0,0

Aye 5 - AO, OK, ND, BR, Chair Miranda

Public Members: Aye - MV

Other Board members: Aye - ES

ListServe Discussion:

ND- suggested that the HHS Committee use a ListServe to post articles, that it's more efficient than sending links. AO- replied that she attempted that before but the effort failed, partially because not all members had Gmail and they couldn't decide on a universally acceptable ListServe app. OK- said that email addresses can be FOIL'd and we should check with Jim Berlin about legality. ND said we would use it not to do business but to post articles like a library for anyone to access, such as other Board members not just the HHS Committee.

AO- commented she prefers Facebook rather than email threads which are often confusing and difficult to manage. FB is structured so all comments are attached to an original document or statement, and comments easy to see and to respond to. Chair Miranda said he's never worked with a specific List Serv and will ask the office about it.

ND mentioned the Black Lives Matter event in Washington Heights, Saturday June 13. (2:17)

"Resolution in Support of Establishing a Safety Net Fund for Refugees, Undocumented Workers and Detainees Which May be Released in Our Community Without Notice" (v-2:18:50)

This resolution in June 2019 was in response to actions at that time by the Federal Administration was dropping off people who are undocumented into what we're being called "Sanctuary Cities".

Chair Miranda pointed out that this resolution was never released as being ratified by the Board in June 2019. He was told by the office that if it was not on the website it was not officially ratified and couldn't be released to the community at large.

AO- "Safety Net Resolution" was voted on in June of 2019 and never ratified though I asked about it more than once last year and most recently on May 22nd by email. At this point it's more than a year old and the spirit of it could have served to benefit specifically undocumented individuals in our community during the crisis we are currently experiencing. The Board Secretary confirmed that the full

Board passed this resolution 38, 1, 1 in June 2019, but it was never ratified. The web site is no indication of what the status is of Board work. The Board office responsibility includes moving work to the next level but they've done so on some occasions.

ND – Should establish a formal process through By-Laws for the Secretary to track resolutions and to streamline the process to monitor Committee and Board actions

AO- noted that when she was Chair of IT Committee she worked with Microsoft to propose a community data system that would track all sorts of local data about buildings, infrastructure, etc. It was halted because of opposition to her. We lost the potential for an important system that could have been valuable in data gathering about our community.

OK – HHS Cmte voted on this resolution and passed by the full Board with several edits and friendly amendments from the floor, so why are taking this up again?

AO– already passed but not ratified in June 2019.

ND - Motion to Table. We have a duty to the community.

AO– Counter motion, nothing to table. Bring discussion to Exec Cmte why it was never ratified. Put spirit of reso in motion to do its intention.

AO– opposed to any 2nd not necessary, only needs to be ratified by Chair.

AO– already communicated in past with Chair, 1st Chair, Carmen De La Rosa, etc. about them dropping the ball. Lis Ritter agreed it should have ratified by Lewis, the record is there.

ND – Chair Bueno should have ratified

AO– spirit of culture within Board is big part of the reason why it's not been ratified

AO– passed June 20, 2019: 38, 1, 0, 0. Chair didn't sign it (Richard Lewis) so not ratified to release to community and elected officials.

Chair Miranda – Will present to Executive Committee to ratify

6. COVID-19 relief package (2:43) New York City Council passed less than half of the bills in its COVID-19 legislative relief package on May 13. One amendment that passed adds to the definition of harassment any threats against those with Covid-19. CCM Mark Levine – supported moratorium on taking of property by city marshals and sheriffs for up to a year due to the impacts of Covid-19. Bill is laid over, kept in committee. Already statewide court case landlords upset with current eviction moratorium. Will take actions of the state to oversee the impact on small business and landlords.

7. NEW BUSINESS (v-2:48:10)

AO– 3 other issues (v-2:37:0)

(Ariel -- note I moved this to New Business above because AO had to leave the meeting, and it seems to be new to me?)

(1) Tipping practice. Minimum wage lower for tip-based work than others getting minimum wage income. Derived from slavery. ND asked for documentation and may add to her language guide.

(2) Expartee evictions – landlord allowed to bring case against tenant and convicted despite tenant not being present in court. Major threat, especially now and should be addressed by the Executive Committee quickly.

(3) Covid succession – Normally 2-years succession rights for family member. Now, some family members are resident less than 2 years and are in threat of eviction; can't establish succession rights. Get background information

ND- offered time and space for anyone to talk about racial justice with her, and offered resources to assist those having troubles.

Chair Miranda - Board should address race and racism issues that are upsetting everyone. We not have always allowed neutral forum to discuss these concerns, especially in the Executive Committee. "Race & Racism" issues and concerns require sensitivity and accountability with action to follow.

AO- (returned to meeting) Should have an honest dialog about unique experiences on the Board and within the community. Recognize that everyone's experience is different. Richard Lewis distributed a 21-page document issued from a retreat many years ago. Confirms what is being said about how serious the race problems are. Inclusion resolution stalled, not voted nor ratified. Unfair.

OK – how to fix that? AO– Should be a systematic structure created including an active By-Laws Committee. The lack of both shows willful lack of accountability.

ES – What is the HHS Committee's mission statement? Should have a social and racial justice component for quality and affordable housing and community values, with committee goals and objectives?

Chair Miranda – Our first meeting in March when I became Chair was supposed to be dedicated to Committee goals and planning. Intention is in September to re-focus on topics and invited distinguished groups such as Furman Center, Medgar Evers College Center for Law and Social Justice and others to help set our agenda and goals for the year. Inwood Re-zoning likely to become a hot topic again. More joint meetings would be beneficial, e.g., Youth & Education Committee, Business Development regarding homelessness and small business challenges.

In closing, for the work you've all done and have a good summer.

Meeting Adjourned 10:16pm