

Community Board 12M-Youth and Education Committee

Meeting #10

Monday, December 13, 2021

Minutes

LOCATION: VIRTUAL MEETING

Committee Members Present: Fe Florimon, Chair; Miriam James; Michelle Lee; Gabriela Estrella Jonathan Nunez-Frometa; Daniel Bonilla; Curtis Young.

Board Member: Absent: Glennis Aquino-Gil; Waldys Cruz, Assist Chair.

Board Member: Excuse: Maria Luna; Wendy Pena.

Board Member NONE

Public Member: Absent: Guillermo Perez.

Guests: Alvin Bragg, Attorney and incoming Manhattan DA.

Keisha Sutton-James, Assistant to incoming Manhattan DA.

Joselinne Minaya, Director of Manhattan DA Office (WHAI).

Ingrid Renderos, Director of CUNY in The Heights;

Tatiana Mahoney, Inwood Academy for Leadership and student team- Eleany Pozo; Fabian Acosta, and Max Mejia.

Evette Camacho, and Elizabeth Ramos, Representatives of Boricua College.

Students: Youth Leader Luis Cruz.

Julio Batista, Director of Community Affairs of Presbyterian Hospital.

Rachel Cytron, Executive Director of ROW NY.

Dr. Mara Minguez, Pediatrician and Adolescent Medicine, from I.S. 143 WHEELS.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Fe Florimon at 7:05 pm.

The following discussion took place as indicated below:

On behalf of the committee, Chair Florimon welcomed and shared sincere appreciation to the guests, school community- students, and general participants for taking the time to be part of this important discussion. She asked members of the committee to introduce themselves for the record and went over the agenda.

Introduction of guest: Chair thanked incoming Manhattan District Attorney, Mr. Bragg and his assistant for accepting the committee's invitation. It was mentioned that Mr. Bragg is the first person of African American descent to be elected for the position of District Attorney. Congratulations sir!

Mr. Bragg thanked the committee for inviting him and stated that he really loves the youth dialogue and stated that he is a Sunday school teacher. He teaches high school class at his church. Mr. Bragg is a former Harlem literally coach and he loves engaging with the youth.

Ms. Florimon commented that we are living in difficult times when it comes to safety. There are a lot of armed people in the street, including public places. As the next District Attorney, Mr. Bragg will be one of the most important voices in NYC. The committee felt compelled to bring this face-to-face interaction with him to give the community, especially

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students, the opportunity to share some of the community's concerns and receive his feedback. Ms. Florimon suggested to Mr. Bragg to elaborate on his views on the Criminal Justice Reform, Gun Control Laws and the Supreme Court's position on this matter and his plan to increase safety in our communities.

Mr. Bragg stated that he has been pushing for reform for the past 20 years, particularly on transparency. An example would be the case involving Eric Garner where he was killed seven plus years ago and there are details about the officers involved that are still unknown. Because of this it was repealed on a key law called 50-A, which allowed police personnel records to kind of be hidden from public view and that's now changed. Mr. Bragg thinks we can have a lot more transparency on that. He also commented on the workflow issues in the DA's office that need to be addressed and streamlined since currently there have been instances where a defense team would not get him information until very late in the day (creating a trial by ambush).

Mr. Bragg went on to discuss the issue on bail reform as he thinks there's been a lot of confusion and misinformation. According to Mr. Bragg, bail has been a tool, particularly in upper Manhattan, that has kept people in custody based on wealth. He states we need to move away from that wealth based system. In regards to gun control, Mr. Bragg considers this a very serious matter. Part of his work agenda may be based on the ability to track down guns that come into our state illegally. His concern is over whether the Supreme Court strikes down gun laws that are going to change what's lawful and unlawful. Mr. Bragg is considering guns and gun laws his top priority.

The following participants were able to ask questions and share their comments. Please review soon link at the end of this report for further details:

Committee members: Gabriela Estrella, Miriam James, and Jonathan Frometa

Boricua College representatives: Evette Camacho, Elizabeth Ramos.

Presbyterian Hospital: Julio Batista

Inwood Academy for Leadership Charter School: Tatiana Mahoney & Students team -Eleany Pozo; Fabian Acosta, and Max Mejia.

Community Youth Leader: Luis Cruz

Introduction of guest: Ingrid Renderos, Director of the "CUNY in The Heights" Expansion in the Upper Manhattan.

Mrs. Renderos thanked Chair Florimon and the Youth and Education Committee. She was very excited about her presentation because CUNY in The Heights has been in the Community, for years; but during the pandemic they were sort of dormant, doing construction and expanding. Mrs. Renderos also provided the location/address of the CUNY in the Heights (213th and Broadway).

Mrs. Renderos invited the community in general, including residents in Washington Heights/Inwood, and the surrounding Bronx communities to learn about their precollege programs, career pathways and education pathways. She encouraged organizations interested in having classroom presentations either on the CUNY's site or at the organization's location. Just contact Mrs. Renderos at: [Email irenderos@bmcc.cuny.edu](mailto:irenderos@bmcc.cuny.edu)

Key Program areas discussed include:

- Credit-bearing Coursework that lead to Degree Completion
- Continuing education and Workforce Development
- Student Supports
- Community Programming

Mrs. Renderos provided additional information regarding their programs and also was open to questions.

New and Old Business:

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→ **Dr. Mara Minguez**, Pediatrician and Adolescent Medicine, from I.S. 143 WHEELS

Discussed how to end this pandemic and what is the best tool to do that, which is the vaccine. There has been new development in the last several days and that is that those who are 16 and 17 years old are now eligible to receive boosters. This is key in our community. Dr. Minguez explained that they are still working really hard to vaccinate children, especially those five to 11. The vaccine is still the only tool and with the new variant that has shown some different characteristics, not really severe mild, yet they have some breakthrough. She goes on to say that the booster has been proven to be protective. Lots of places are going back to wearing masks indoors, so there are some restrictions that have been stricter, which we will see that in the next couple weeks. She encouraged the audience to continue to take care and let all of our wonderful youth know that they can now be vaccinated.

→ **Rachel Cytron**, Executive Director of ROW NY.

Announced that ROW NY is expecting to break ground on a new boathouse that will be ready in 2024. This year, coming back from COVID, they are only serving high school students. She hopes the next year they will also serve middle school students. This program does not require swimming or rowing experience. The program teaches those who want to be part of team how to row.

It's a really physically demanding sport; it gets kids into fantastic shape, and they have a choice about whether students want to row three days a week or five days a week. The specialized part of this program is how they marry the academics with the sport. So, for those in the program will receive academic support as well. Ms. Cytron calls it student support and success programming. They also teach kids about social justice, about health and wellness and about communication skills. Further information can be obtain by contact **Rachel Cytron** at: rcytron@rownewyork.org

→ Representative from Jazz Power Initiative would like to be added on the next Y&EC's agenda- January 10, 2022

The meeting was adjourned at 9:11pm.

NOTE: To view this meeting, please access the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I0QzTH3FQQ4>