

CB12M-Youth and Education Committee

Meeting Minutes

Monday May 11, 2015

Meeting #5

Location: 530 West 166th Street, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10032

Committee Members Present: Fe Florimón, Chair; Alyce Smith, Assistant Chair; Manny De Los Santos; Ayisha Oglivie

Committee Member (s) Excused: Maria Luna;

Community Member(s) and Guest (s): Lourdes de la Cruz; Jennifer Araujo; Maxine Mahaga; Denise Hykes, Inwood Academy; Bryan Braswell; Joel Yoffie; Denise Carnif, Development Manager-IAL; Zahaira Curiel, Project Director-Statement Arts

The Chair Fe Florimón opened the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Members of the Committee and attendees were introduced by the Chair.

❖ **Discussion was conducted as indicated below:**

- ✓ Ms. Zahaira Curiel, Project Director of the *Statement Arts: Art for a Conscious World organization* made a presentation introducing the goal and services available of the organization.
- ✓ Statement Arts is a not-for-profit organization that was created 13 years ago with the mission to provide creative visual & performing arts program for underserved and/or low-income individuals. According to Ms. Curiel, the organization channel creativity to educate, enhance intellectual performance and to build self-esteem among students; it is also committed to give students an intercultural and interdisciplinary arts experience to which they do not have access.
- ✓ Effective July 2015, in partnership with the United Palace for Cultural Arts, the program will be providing free music and theater program for elementary and middle school students. Additional information can be found at: www.statementarts.org

❖ **Under the New/Old Business:** Brief reports on each of the following events were provided

- ✓ On April 13th in combination with the Health and Environment Committee the pending “Youth Mental Health” event (part II) was successfully delivered. Guest speakers (Panelists) from diverse organizations were invited by Steve Simon, Chairman of the joint committee, which included:

Dr. Lourival Baptista Neto, Director - Psychiatry, Morgan-Stanley Children’s Hospital, NY-Presbyterian Hospital

Mary Taveras Garcia, LCSW, Director, Mental Health Unit, Inwood Community Services

Yerany Marasco, Director, Youth Mental Health Program, Acacia Network / Asociacion Comunal de Dominicanos Progresistas (ACDP)

Dr. Rosa Gil, CEO and Founder, Comunilife – Life Is Precious Program

Jennifer L. Humensky, Ph.D., Research Director, NYS Center of Excellence for Cultural Competence, New York State Psychiatric Institute

Elizabeth Figueroa, LCSW, Clinical Supervisor, Child and Adolescent Clinic, Upper Manhattan Mental Health Center

- ✓ Chair also reported that on April 30th she was invited to a meeting discussion with the NYPD to learn about a new pilot program to be implemented in the community by both 33rd and 34th precincts. The new initiative has been titled “NYPD Neighborhood Coordination Officer-Washington Heights.” At the

meeting she told the NYPD that the participation of the community including young people was an important step. Ms. Florimon invited Police Officers to the next Y&EC's Saturday meeting and the invitation was well accepted. She also asked for the committee to support the discussion, which will be focused on community participation and collaboration with NYPD. The meeting will be on June 6th at Isabella Geriatric Center @ 10:10am, however, still pending for guest confirmation.

- ✓ Chair reported that on May 6th she attended the CB12M's Land Use Committee meeting for a presentation facilitated by representatives of "The Equity Project Charter School" also known as "TEP" Charter school. TEP serves almost five hundred middle school students and has announced that is expecting to be relocated by fall season of 2017 upon the approval of their pending application, which was recently submitted to the NYS Board of Standards and Appeals. The new school will be located 153-157 Sherman Ave New York, NY 10034 and they also hope to obtain CB12M's support for their pending project. At the end of the presentation, the Committee presented a resolution in support of the initiative, which was overwhelmingly approved by all participants including a group of parents who came to support the project.
- ✓ Participants were highly encouraged to attend the "Pack the Palace event"- Wednesday May 13TH an initiative provided in conjunction by Community Education Council of School District 6 and Urban Art Partnership.
- ✓ The "New strategies for strengthening schools-the Renewal & Community School Models" event was successfully held on Saturday May 2, 2015 @10:30AM. Among the topics discussed include the failing schools in the community Washington Heights/Innwood; what measures are being taken to prevent these schools from being closed and which organizations are working with these schools. The guest speakers at this event included: *Mr. Manuel Ramirez*, Superintendent of School District 6; *Ms. Katrena Perou*, Director of Programs of Urban Arts Partnership; *Mr. Juan I. Rosa*, Community School Coordinator of HS for Media & Communication of Catholic Charities Community Services of NYC, Alianza Division
- ✓ On May 7th Ms. Florimon and Alyce Smith both attended to the "Comunilife for a Symposium on Latina Adolescent Suicide with EmblemHealth." The speakers addressed the challenges facing many young Latinas, which includes peer pressure, home environment situations and also financial problems. Ms. Florimon suggested that the community should pay close attention to this problem and hopes the present administration (NYC Mayor) increases the financial support needed on every school to help improve the problem of mental health among young people, especially to reduce the high rate of suicide among Latinas teens. Member Ayesha Ogilvie echoed the concern about the lack of financial resource to address this problem and said that "our community always has a deficit as far as comes to mental health services compared to other community.
- ✓ Y&EC's June 27th-community event- GWEC/Community Block event- still pending for main guests' confirmation.
- ✓ Committed also learned about the lack of gyms among many schools in district 6, especially middle like I.S. 528- Bea Rogers; I. S. 223-Mott Hall schools. This subject was recently discussed by Comptroller Scott Stringer who has expressed concern about the problem. Ms. Florimon suggested the committee to consider the possibility to introduce a resolution in regards to this issue for the next Committee meeting- June 8th
- ✓ Denise Hykes, expressed concern about the possible funding cut to DYCD, which may be detrimental for summer programs, but Ms. Florimon stated that this proposal is not final yet. City council will be reopening their budget hearing discussions on May 8th and final on June 9th, and the Mayor's final executive budget decision will be in effect on July 1st. Ms. Florimon stated that with all the community advocacies citywide we need to remain optimistic about the summer programs' outcome.

❖ **Meeting Adjourned at: 9:31pm**