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## COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 2, MANHATTAN

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The Social Services Committee of Community Board No. 2, Manhattan held its regular monthly meeting on September 29, 2022, at 6:30pm by Zoom videoconference.

Committee Members Present: Susanna Aaron (Chair), William Benesh, Keen Berger, Ritu Chattree, Wayne Kawadler, Ryder Kessler, Adam Zeldin (Vice Chair)

Committee Members Absent With Notice: Ivy Kwan Arce

Committee Members Absent Without Notice: John Paul DeVerna

Other CB2 Members Present: Michael Levine

Public Members Absent with Notice: Rachel Yarmolinsky

### Agenda

1. \*DSS/DHS and Center for Urban Community Services: report on opening and operation of Paul's Place, a Drop-In Shelter and Safe Haven for homeless adults at 112-114 West 14th St.
2. Discussion of Human Services priorities for CB2 District Needs Statement, Priority Budget Requests, discussion of future meeting topics

### Panelists

From NYC Department of Social Services/Department of Homeless Services (DSS/DHS):

Hailey Nolasco, Assistant Deputy Commissioner of Intergovernmental and Legislative Affairs, DSS; Leilani Irvin, Manhattan Borough Director, Intergovernmental and Legislative Affairs, DSS; Shane Cox, Assistant Commissioner for Street Homeless Solutions, DHS;

From Center for Urban Community Services (CUCS):

Tracey Erhardt, Program Director at Paul's Place; Linda Shimer, Deputy Chief Program Officer; Abby Nyamekye, Chief Administrative Officer

### Background

CB2 has held several meetings to discuss the development of Paul's Place. Reports from these can be accessed here:

<https://cbmanhattan.cityofnewyork.us/cb2/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2022/02/Report-2018.11.29-Safe-Haven.pdf>

<https://cbmanhattan.cityofnewyork.us/cb2/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2021/05/04-April-2021-Social-Services-Minutes.pdf>

<https://cbmanhattan.cityofnewyork.us/cb2/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2022/02/Report-2020.10.29-Safe-Haven-ii.pdf>

Paul's Place – 112-114 West 14<sup>th</sup> St – opened in early September. This center houses two facilities: a drop-in center on the ground floor and a Safe Haven on the upper floors. As of this writing, it is ramping up occupancy. 18 of the 24 beds in the Safe Haven shelter on the upper floor are already occupied, while the 24-hour drop-in center is already busy with about 60-70 visitors each day. The caseload capacity of the drop-in center is 70 clients. The center has not yet had to turn away drop-in clients.

Drug use is not permitted in the facility and all who enter the site must pass through a metal detector. However, if items are found they are not confiscated; rather, clients are asked to return without them. An outdoor space that will allow smoking is still in development and has not yet opened. Security cameras in the front of the building permit views of the sidewalk east and west.

A psychiatrist has just joined the staff and will be on-site two days a week. Medical services are due to start in mid-October, which will allow the center to provide primary care services to clients twice a week. A licensed nurse practitioner will also be on-site five days per week.

The drop-in center serves three meals per day. Mealtime is divided into half-hour increments, with seating for 24 in each time slot in addition to the residents of the Safe Haven. Paul's Place also offers shower and laundry facilities, 34 La-Z-Boy-type lounge chairs for resting (on a first-come, first-served basis), storage space, crisis intervention and case management services. Peak times center on meals and use of the lounge chairs overnight. This facility is designed to be a low-barrier introduction to services. Clients may come for just a meal or a shower, and the intake process is minimal. If they are interested in more, staff might approach them about their interest in being assigned to a case manager.

Clients looking to sleep at the drop-in center are asked if they have shelter for the night. If they do, staff will coordinate with the assigned shelter; if they do not, but want a bed, staff can seek a respite bed. Respite beds are volunteer-run private programs, often in a church or community center.

The Safe Haven holds 24 beds in individual units. Clients will be referred here through the Manhattan Outreach Consortium, which is contracted to reach out to unsheltered homeless people. The arrangement is designed for clients who may have a more difficult time in traditional shelter settings. Clients can come and go as they please without adhering to curfews, and may leave their rooms for up to 72 hours without losing their bed. They will receive a diagnostic assessment, but not necessarily on the first meeting. In the staff's experience, most clients are in need of mental health services. Expected duration of stay in the Safe Haven is six to nine months.

The center is in regularly contact with NYPD 6<sup>th</sup> precinct, whose catchment area includes Paul's Place. Other precincts in the area are also aware of Paul's Place as a resource.

Community members are encouraged to refer to the center any individual they perceive might need its services, regardless of the client's location. If they prefer not to engage directly with an individual they are encouraged to contact 311 and report that there is a homeless person in need of assistance. (Downloading the 311 app onto one's phone will save time.) That message will be relayed directly with the Manhattan outreach team. This is distinct from calling 911 in the event of an emergency.

The Community Advisory Board for this center has already met and will continue to do so. Any interest or concerns can also be expressed directly to the center's staff, 24 hours a day, by calling (332) 895-6860