

# AGENDA

## Nassau County Minority Affairs Council Meeting Office of Minority Affairs (OMA)

Monday, February 8, 2021 at 5:00 pm

Location: Zoom Meeting/Conference Call

Attendees: Reginal Benjamin, Natalie Borneo, Nadine Burnett, Isma Chaudhry, Melrose Corley, Biena Depena, Charles Dickens, Mickheila Jasmin-Beamon, Kim Jenkins, Natalie Mitchell-Cange, Kyle Rose Louder, Paul Quintyne, George Siberon, Arthur Vernon, and Debra Wheat- Williams

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85411756488>

Meeting ID: 854 1175 6488

Join by Phone use phone# and Meeting ID

Phone – (646)558-8656 Meeting ID - 85411756488# US (New York)

1. Call to Order/Welcome
2. Roll Call (Attendance & Sign-in Sheet)
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Presentation: Kyle Rose-Louder
5. Presentation: Office of Minority Affairs Report
  - a) Question & answer session 5 mins.
6. Adoption of Minutes from previous meeting
7. New Business
  - a) Working Committee Updates
  - b) Other
8. Announcements
9. Adjournment of meeting

\*For All Question & Answer sessions ~ 1 question per member

# **Nassau County Minority Affairs Council**

Meeting Minutes  
February 8, 2021

## **Opening**

The regular meeting of the Nassau County Minority Affairs Council was called to order at 5:06 pm on February 8, 2021 by Chair Nadine Burnett.

## **Present**

Natalie Borneo, Secretary  
Nadine Burnett, Chair  
Isma Chaudhry  
Melrose Corley  
Biena Depena  
Mickheila Jasmin-Beamon, Vice Chair  
Kim Jenkins  
Paul Quintyne  
Kyle Rose Louder (Deputy County Executive)  
George Siberon  
Rabbi Arthur Vernon  
Debra Wheat-Williams

## **Absent**

Reginald Benjamin (excused)  
Natalie Mitchell-Cange  
Charles Dickens

## **Approval of Agenda**

Motion to approve the agenda made by Rabbi Art Vernon, second by Debra Wheat-Williams. Motion carried; agenda approved.

Presentations –

*Nassau County Health-Equity Taskforce*

Chair Nadine Burnett recognized our guest speaker and invited Deputy Director NC Kyle Rose-Louder to introduce her to the council members.

## **Andrea Ault-Brutes, Director Health Equity, Nassau County**

Following introductions by Deputy Director Kyle Rose-Louder, Ms. Ault-Brutes shared important information with the council:

The Health Equity Task force has been advocating to ensure the equitable distribution of vaccination. There are plans to strategically address zip codes with high incidences of positive diagnosis to get needed vaccination dosages in the right communities. There is

also a plan develop new software programs to ensure that glitches encountered by many residents trying to make appointments, and exposure to data breaches are minimized.

While Nassau County has received the highest supply of vaccination dosages country wide, it is still not enough to meet the demand. Deputy Director Kyle Rose-Louder added that the County does not control the distribution. That is handled by the Federal government and the state designated distributor, Northwell Health. The state allocates dosages on a weekly basis factoring in the changes in eligibility guidelines and testing statistics.

The taskforce is actively working to battle dis-information regarding the COVID 19 vaccinations. Residents in the communities who need it the most are reluctant to get the vaccine. Director Ault-Brutus offered to conduct webinars and meetings in communities that the council might recommend. The taskforce has found that having meeting in locations that the community trusts yield positive results.

Council members raised the following questions:

*Paul Quintyne - Many people are having trouble getting appointments. Are there recommended ways to schedule appointments?*

The state system is admittedly difficult; Nassau County is working on a better system. Until that is in place, we must work with what we have and encourage everyone to keep trying to schedule appointments.

*Debra Wheat-Williams - How is Nassau County prioritizing the scheduling seniors for vaccinations?*

This has been a challenge. Nassau County had a plan in place however it was halted following restrictions in state guidelines senior citizens which limits authorization on who can vaccinate seniors. The guideline currently limits authority to pharmacies, doctor's offices, or Northwell Health sites. There is an appeal in progress for concessions which would help the county to vaccinate more seniors.

Director Ault-Brutus added that most recently seniors are getting calls to schedule appointments.

*Biena Depena - What is the office doing to educate seniors who encounter language barriers? Seniors who are not getting information in their language do not know what to believe.*

Director Ault-Brutus acknowledged the hesitancy in many communities and agreed that there is a need to conduct information and webinars in other languages including creole



and Spanish. In addition to language there is a history of mistrust which will be difficult to overcome. She closed by sharing her direct email for any member of the council to contact her for additional information or resources.

#### *Police Reform Update*

#### **Deputy Director Kyle Rose-Louder**

There is still time for public comment to be submitted, however it is ending. This body along with others have submitted a letter with recommendations and all submissions will be reviewed, relevant updates added to the existing draft which then goes to the County Executive and Legislators to review and add their own comments.

Council members raised the following questions:

Mickheila Jasmin-Beamon – Do you have any ideas when the window (for making recommendations) will close?

Public commentary has been coming in steadily. Since the County Executive and Legislators need to determine when the window closes because they must ratify and submit their final version to Albany by March 31, 2021.

#### *Report from Office of Minority Affairs,*

#### **Director Lionel Chitty**

The Disparities study has progressed to a point where Department heads are being updated on progress and given an opportunity to review the protocol used in community forums and outreach. Their feedback will be incorporated.

There was a forum for the Bay Park Outlet Pipe project at the end of January where 80 of the 130 registrants attended. The office is working with the MWBE liaison to ensure equity in the process.

Director Chitty also highlighted upcoming events to be hosted by the OMA: COVID 19 Conversation on Facebook and the Black History Month Recognition Event.

Chair Nadine Burnett noted that we received a copy of the Office of Minority Affairs End of Year Report and encouraged everyone to read it.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Motion to accept meeting minutes made by Arthur Vernon and second by Mickheila Jasmin-Beamon

## **New Business/Announcements**

### ***A. Updates from Working Groups***

#### *Police Reform Working Group*

The police Reform Working group has completed their assignment. The Council agreed that the working group (although not currently active) would wait to see if additional action is needed once the official Reform details are ready to be implemented.

#### *Education Equity Working Group*

The working committee is continuing to work on recommendations (actions) from the meeting with Larry Levy. The committee is reviewing work being done by Community groups, the availability of block grants to address education gaps, and ongoing COVID 19 consequences. There is also follow-up being done with Elaine Gross on the survey which Erase Racism had launched to assess the state of school districts.

### ***B. Other***

The Council discussed the formation of additional working groups. There is a maximum of 6 members on each committee. The suggestions were:

- a. Workforce Working Group – Identify barriers to employment and recommend solutions for elimination or minimizing and introduction of broader and less complicated resources that can add needed support to men and women in our communities understand and find better pathways to employment. Many face challenges in seeking fair employment because of post incarceration limitations, immigration status, complex and bias application processes and lack of information.

Members: *Biena Depena, Mickheila Jasmin-Beamon, George Siberon, Natalie Borneo*

- b. Economic Development working group – Focus on state of small businesses in hard hit communities. Reviewing the status of properties which have been abandoned or foreclosed and review options to bring viable business back to those communities. A prior study on the Village of Hempstead business indicated that \$200M in revenue has been lost. Hempstead has very few anchor stores, the businesses are mostly ‘mom & pop’ stores.

Members: *Kim Jenkins, Debra Wheat-Williams, Arthur Vernon, Biena Depena, Paul Quintyne*

The next general meeting will be at 5pm on March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

**Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn was made by Rabbi Arthur Vernon and second by Debra Wheat-Williams. Meeting adjourned at 6:19pm.

Minutes submitted by: Natalie A. Borneo, Secretary

Approved by: Nadine Burnett, Chair