

# AGENDA

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

Monday, June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 5:00 pm

Location: Zoom Meeting/Conference Call

Attendees: Natalie Borneo, Nadine Burnett, Reginal Benjamin, Isma Chaudhry, Melrose Corley, Biena Depena, Charles Dickens, Mickheila Jasmin-Beamon, Kim Jenkins, Kyle Rose Louder, Natalie Mitchell-Cange, 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. Presentations: Guest Speakers

Evlyn Tsimis, Nassau County Deputy County Executive for Economic Development

- Question & answer limited to 5 mins.

Lionel Chitty, Director, Nassau County Office of Minority Affairs

- Question & answer limited to 5 mins.

5. Adoption of Minutes from previous meeting
6. New Business
  - a. Working Committee Updates
  - b. Other

7. Announcements
8. Adjournment of meeting

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

# **Nassau County Minority Affairs Council**

## **Draft Meeting Minutes**

**June 14th, 2021**

### **Opening**

The regular meeting of the Nassau County Minority Affairs Council was called to order at 5:08 pm on June 14th, 2021 by Chair Nadine Burnett.

### **Present**

Natalie Borneo, Secretary

Nadine Burnett, Chair

Isma Chaudhry

Melrose Corley

Biena Depena

Charles Dickens

Kim Jenkins

Kyle Rose Louder (Deputy County Executive)

Natalie Mitchell-Cange

Paul Quintyne

Rabbi Arthur Vernon

Debra Wheat-Williams

### **Absent**

Reginal Benjamin

Mickheila Jasmin-Beamon, Vice Chair (Excused)

George Siberon

### **Approval of Agenda**

Motion to approve the agenda made by \_\_\_\_\_, second by \_\_\_\_\_. Motion carried; agenda approved.

Chair Nadine Burnet acknowledged the presence of our Guest Speaker for the meeting, Evlyn Tsimis, Nassau County Deputy County Executive for Economic Development. Ms. Tsimis was given the floor to share updates on the EOC vertical which was created in 2018 to aggregate various entities working collaboratively for the betterment of Nassau County.

### ***Update from Deputy County Executive Evlyn Tsimis:***

The efforts of this department have improved the effectiveness of outreach work in Nassau County and includes the following entities:

Asian American Affairs, Hispanic Affairs, Community Development, Housing, Human Rights Commission, Minority Affairs and Planning.

*Recent Highlights:*

- **Housing** - for the first time since 2003, the county's waiting list has opened and there is an appeal for additional landlords to enroll their properties.
- **Community Development** – has launched new programs coming out of COVID 19 to address food and housing including home grants and housing services.
- **The Human Rights Commission** - has been very active during the pandemic where disparities and inequities were amplified providing residents with information on discrimination guidelines and rights, in the midst of COVID 19
- **The Nassau County Planning Commission** - has been working to approve several major zoning projects important to the ongoing development of the county
- **The Office of Minority Affairs** - has been working to improve the impact on local businesses in our communities through communications and direct outreach work and has done solid work during the pandemic.
- **The Nassau County BOOST Program** – Deputy County Executive Tsimis shared the launch of a special economic recovery resource program for Nassau County. This will be a one stop shop for businesses and residents. Led by Dr. Regina, the diverse team of experts will be available for residents and business owners to make appointments for advice, support and resources. The website to visit - <https://www.nassaucountyny.gov/5215/Boost-Nassau-Recovery-Resources>

Q&A – Minority Affairs Council Questions:

*Q:* There is a concern that the loans available to local restaurants is limited to dine-in restaurants. Can this be expanded to include the many local restaurants that do not offer dine-in service but need financial assistance?

*A:* When the program was funded it was designed with up to \$10M in loans. The grant program initially focused \$2M for restaurants because they were the hardest hit. Now there is a proposal for \$10M grant programs for all businesses, not including professional services.

Applications are open now but may be limited to 1,000 grants.

*Q:* With regard to the BOOST Nassau Resource Center can tours be scheduled? It might be good to invite representatives from different Chambers of Commerce. Will they receive allocations from available funds?

*A:* Tours may be a good idea for future consideration. Regarding allocation the American Rescue Plan aligns funding to the pandemic. The portal on the BOOST site provides a link for nonprofits to find more information. There are several programs that residents and businesses can qualify for in Nassau County.

An example of a recent program offered in collaboration with Nassau Community College focused on getting adults trained and into jobs. There was \$10M set aside for this particular program. "We need to do more to get folks trained and into careers."

Deputy County Executive Tsimis shared that UBS at Belmont has a plan to hire local residents

The Minority Affairs Council noted that despite programs being rolled out there are still many barriers which prevent them from taking advantage to services, notable in areas related to:

- Civil Service positions (complexity and long timeframe involved)
- The Police Department (lack of diversity)
- Rental Assistance (income based – many residents cannot afford rents on just base salaries and overtime pay, which enabled them to cover the gap, is no longer available – but they may not qualify for assistance. HUD guidelines may also be a barrier.)
- Childcare Services (income based and not easily accessible)

Q: Does the Nassau County Economic Development Department participate in regional Economic Development meetings?

A: We do participate but it depends on whether the meetings address topics relevant to Nassau County.

*Minority Affairs Council Update:*

The Economic Development working group shared plans for a cultural event geared toward residents of Nassau County as well as out-of-town visitors. It will feature live cultural entertainment, a food court, a children's corner, and activities for the entire family, highlighting local artists and artisans, dancers and musicians, small restaurants, and small business owner.

***Office of Minority Affairs, Director Lionel Chitty***

Director Chitty discussed some of the upcoming activities and projects being worked on by the Office of Minority Affairs.

The June Calendar of events include:

- The County Juneteenth Program – Saturday June 19<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm
- Caribbean Heritage Month specific programming is not yet confirmed
- Grand opening of the Westbury Arts Center which will include space in the lower level for commerce and cultural events. The center is located at 255 Schenck Ave, Westbury, NY 11590.
- Terrace Avenue Day will be on June 12<sup>th</sup> a day of outreach and sharing of resources for students, mental health services and anti-violence collaboration by the Hempstead Police, Family & Children's Services, other associations, and vendors.
- National Gun Violence Prevention Day June 4<sup>th</sup> – Town of Hempstead in collaboration with the Asian American and Hispanic Affairs Councils
- Ongoing workshops on how to navigate Civil Service website – June 15<sup>th</sup> in collaboration with the Asian American and Hispanic Councils

Diversity Study ~ June 29<sup>th</sup> program at 10am & 4pm to connect with small businesses

*Additional Discussion points:*

Nadine Brunett shared that the Name of the African American Museum in Hempstead has been changed in recognition of the great efforts and contributions of their long-standing Directors. The Joysetta and Julius Pearse African American Museum of Nassau County" was renamed in May 2021

Director Chitty shared that Ms. Joysetta passed away shortly after the renaming event. "This is an extreme loss for the community" The museum is open to the public with oversight from Professor Alicia Evans to ensure that it remains operational. There has been an uptick in attendance following the re-naming.

Director Chitty made special mention of the importance of Apprentice Programs. More young people need to be involved. They need to see people like them working in those spaces. Parents also need to understand the opportunities out there in nontraditional careers.

Nadine Burnett noted that School Districts should also be involved in the dialogue. They may not be seeing the full picture.

Per Director Chitty the Roosevelt School District was the only school that offered technical colleges to students. There are numerous opportunities in technical careers. Students should be given the option to pursue micro credentials so that they can work and get paid decent salaries.

Isma Chaudhry – Traditionally high schools have been the pipeline to college. We need to coach them to break the pipeline and introduce other possibilities.

Charles Dickens – It is critical that we change parents' mindset. We are seeing that the college degree is not for every child.

Paul Quintyne – Unfortunately as minorities we have been conditioned to need the picket fence, yet we see in history black towns like Tulsa existed and thrived. Our communities need to get back to focusing on approaches that worked in the past. Our children are not learning this in schools.

**Approval of Minutes**

Motion to accept meeting minutes with noted amendments and for posting made by Isma Chaudry and second by Biena Depena. Motion carried; minutes approved

**New Business**

*Working Group Reports*

- 1) Economic Development Group (reported under conversation with *Deputy County Executive Evelyn Tsimis*)

2) Workforce Development Group

- a. Plans of a Resource Fair tentatively for July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021, ~ reported to Biena Depena

*Summary*

The focus is to host an event where organizations with training programs which result in job placement share information on how to apply and participate. Some of the organizations which have been approached to participate include:

- Hempstead Works, Nassau Community College Urgent Program, Northwell Community Health Worker Program, CUNY Early Childhood Education, Suny Farmingdale Free 10-week program
- b. In addition, the plan is to understand who the larger employers on Long Island are and how they are working to ensure equity in hiring and advancement on Long Island.

Chair Nadine Burnett ~ noted that the committee should contact all 3 Directors to get advice and support. In addition, the best timeframe for this might be 5pm – 7pm.

**A. Other Business**

Nadine Burnett, Chair shared that there is a trend on Long Island where homes owned by minorities are being undervalued and suggested that the Minority Affairs Council should invite members from the Appraisal Association to address the concerns of this group.

Natalie Mitchell-Cange is connected to many appraisers and expressed interest in working on this initiative.

Paul Quintyne noted that legally there needs to be a relationship between the realtor and the seller. This should provide a check and balance to the system.

Isma Chaudhry noted that there should be a working group created to do the research and lead the council's work.

If this is to be a working group, the parameters should at a minimum be:

- Focused on gaining a better understanding of the facts surrounding the trend (education)
- Meeting to strategize on goals and measures/action steps

The Chair Nadine Burnett again expressed concern about irregular attendance of Council members.

Members will be reminded to review the terms and conditions of the attendance requirements in the Charter. If members are not able to participate the Charter outlines provisions for their voluntary resignation from the Council. We understand if individuals are overextended but they need to communicate with the Chair and Council.

The council will take a 2-month break and return to session in September. Working groups can meet to continue their work at their discretion.

**Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn was made by Paul Quintyne, second by Biena Depena. Meeting adjourned at 6:30pm.

Minutes submitted by: Natalie A. Borneo, Secretary

Approved by: Nadine Burnett, Chair