

AGENDA

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

Monday, September 13th, 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 Speaker(s)
 - 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

Meeting Minutes
September 13th, 2021

Opening

The regular meeting of the Nassau County Minority Affairs Council was called to order at 5:09 pm on September 13th, 2021 by Chair Nadine Burnett.

Present

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

Absent

Reginal Benjamin
Isma Chaudhry
Biena Depena
Charles Dickens
George Siberon

Approval of Agenda

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

Chair Nadine Burnet welcomed everyone back after the break. There were no invited guests for this meeting. Committee members were asked to provide updates from their working groups

Approval of Minutes

Motion to accept meeting minutes with noted amendments and for posting made by Rabbi Arthur Vernon and second by Melrose Corley. Motion carried; minutes approved

New Business

Working Group Updates:

Economic Development

Rabbi Arthur Vernon provided the update on the Cultural Event proposed by the working group.

- The 1-Day event is now scheduled for Sunday June 26th, 2022, from 12:00pm – 10:00pm at the Lakeside Theatre
- Meetings occurred with the Parks Department and other resource and stakeholder groups over the break
- Audience will be 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 owners
- Upcoming meeting on September 23rd to understand the budget, fundraising needs, logistics, roles & responsibilities

Education Equity

Natalie Borneo shared the status of conversations that the Education working group had prior to the break.

- The group emailed a statement of support to Elaine Gross, Founder & President and her call to create Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Education on Long Island.
- The group also had the opportunity to meet with Dr. Roxanne Garcia France, Associate Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Educational Services Nassau Boces. Issues on her priority list include:
 - Support for BIPOC and African American Teachers (meetings and forums for networking) Early Targeted recruitment (as early as HS)
 - Increased awareness of parents of HS students on the vocational training opportunities that their children have access to through BOCES and tools to advocate for access

Rabbi Arthur Vernon ~ There is a need for skilled workers and technical training. Very few school districts recognize and promote this. Pleased to see that Dr. Deborah Wortham has returned as the Superintendent of the Roosevelt School District. This district is also one which supports vocational education.

Workforce Development

The working group had been planning an event where members of the community could meet and apply to learn/work with organizations, agencies on Long Island which provide train and development with the intent to hire graduates.

The July 21st date was postponed because of the scheduling and priorities of the Office of Minority Affairs. Mickheila Jasmin-Beamon noted that the job training event could still be done by partnering with a specific group (example the Rotary) and focus on getting schools on-board with technical and vocational training.

Real Estate Working Group

This group was proposed in previous meetings and will begin to review the experiences of

homeowners who are BIPOC and experience suppressed home valuations. There seems to be an alarming trend. Next steps include contact with the Board of Realtors

Committee members:

- Nadine Burnett
- Natalie Mitchell-Cange
- Paul Quintyne

Were noted as members who might work in this group. Members are already assigned to existing working groups. A list of members by working group will be shared with the council at a later date.

Other Business

Back to School Experiences/Feedback

Chair Nadine Burnett ~ expressed disappointment that the Long Island School Districts did not offer a remote option to students returning this fall. She asked whether members of the Council were aware of any complaints or concerns regarding this.

Natalie Mitchell-Cagne ~ has 3 children in local school districts and shared that she was not aware of any negative comments. She offered that her children were actually very excited and pleased to return to in-person learning.

Are School Districts Testing?

Natalie Mitchell -Cange ~ The Valley Stream school district is offering testing every Friday but not every school district offers testing.

Kyle Rose-Louder ~ The American Rescue Plan includes funds for testing however schools/institutions need to work out protocols which would include vendors and engagement practices. All school districts are aware of these funds.

Mickheila Jasmin-Beamon asked about the definition of "schools"

Kyle Rose-Louder confirmed the school districts include charter schools but not daycare centers.

Eviction Extension & Rental Assistance

The group discussed the type of assistance available to Nassau residents through Boost Nassau.

Kyle Rose-Louder ~ information on rental assistance is on the website. The problem is that a significant number of residents may not be in legal housing arrangements. This means neither party wants to disclose or cannot apply.

Boost can also be a resource to help residents navigate the Federal site Employment Status on Long Island

Rabbi Arthur Vernon ~ Is information available on the status of the employment rate in Nassau County. Are people able to find jobs?

Kyle Rose-Louder ~ Statistics may not be available, but employers are looking for hires and not finding people willing to come back to work. There is an initiative to explore providing service to connect employers to candidates.

Chair Nadine Burnett recapped what she experienced with Banks being short-staffed or having staff on quarantine in Nassau County. Has the county considered doing a COVID impact survey?

Kyle Rose-Louder ~ This is a long-term problem. The virus is still going to create challenges for employers and staffing will continue to be a legitimate problem. The county may get to the point where they will need to conduct a survey to review the status and trends

Rabbi Arthur Vernon ~ May need to wait until we see how things shake out with schools. Parents are impacted by whether students go back to school.

Small Businesses in the Community

Kim Jenkins ~ Notice that there has been an uptick in business activity on Grand Avenue. At least 3 Dance Schools and a Martial Arts Studio have opened up in spaces previously vacated.

Debra Wheat-Williams ~ Perhaps rents may be more affordable now.

Rabbi Authur Vernon ~ In smaller stores landlords want to increase rents but business has not picked up.

Mickheila Jasmin-Beamon ~ We should get direct feedback from our communities on the impediments they are experiencing.

Members were asked to contact local Chambers of Commerce for:

Roosevelt (Melrose), Freeport (Nadine), Baldwin (Debra), Valley Stream (Natalie), Westbury (Paul).

Question set:

1. Are local businesses having trouble:
 Hiring qualified staff?
 Staying open?
2. What do they need to stay open?

Cost of COVID Testing

There is concern that the cost of COVID testing is becoming cost prohibitive. Recent out of pocket costs range from \$400 - \$800 per individual. Insurance covers at varying levels; not consistent. Could become a major barrier in the future. Testing would be less of an issue if people got vaccinated.

New Community Resource/Assistance

Melrose Corley ~ Introduced the new Acting Director for the EOC Eric Poulson. The EOC has received approval to administer the Excluded Worker fund which residents can find and apply to on the EOC website. The **Excluded Worker Fund** provides financial help to residents who lost income during the COVID-19 pandemic and were left out of various federal relief programs, including unemployment and pandemic benefits.

Good & Welfare Announcement

Rabbi Arthur Vernon ~ Phillip McDowell has been installed as the moderator for Eastern Baptist Association. This group has numerous member churches across various communities and could be a great potential partner to the Minority Affairs Council.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Rabbi Arthur Vernon, second by Melrose Corley.
Meeting adjourned at 6:00pm.

Minutes submitted by: Natalie A. Borneo, Secretary
Approved by: Nadine Burnett, Chair