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The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan
Health, Seniors, and Social Services Committee
March 23, 2022 – 6:30 PM
Conducted Remotely on Zoom

Minutes

Board Members Present: Elizabeth Ashby, Lori Bores, Meryl Brodsky*, Rebecca Dangoor, Wilma Johnson, Ellen Polivy*, Barbara Rudder, Barry Schneider, and Russell Squire

*Public Member

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 PM.

Item 1 - Introduction to the new Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg's office.

Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg attended Community Board 8's Full Board meeting but was not able to answer questions. The Health, Seniors, and Social Services Committee therefore invited representatives from the DA's office, Joyce Smith, Chief of the Trial Division and Estelle Strykers-Santiago, Director of the Community Partnerships Unit to answer our questions. They restated DA Bragg's commitment to balance public safety and fairness with every case.

When asked what the DA will do so we feel safe on our streets, subways, etc., ADA Smith stressed that the pandemic and judicial reforms have changed how we deal with crime. Courts are backed up, and many crimes, such as low-level looting, and certain youth crimes, can no longer be prosecuted. It is known that what has been done in the past has not worked. Therefore, DA Bragg wants to institute a multipronged approach. First, it is necessary to separate the dangerous perpetrators to prevent repeat offenses. He wants to deter repeat crimes, by understanding what caused the act, by providing social services, and by working with the at-risk community. DA Bragg is coordinating with the NYPD to provide activities for the youth such as Saturday Night Lights and school-based programs with the hope of averting criminal acts.

When asked how they provide the services when there isn't funding, ADA Smith agreed this was a major problem and that they continue to work with the city, state and Police Department as well as other agencies to gain resources.

We asked the speakers to return for further discussion about other issues such as bail reform, Rikers, and privacy laws.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 PM.

Rebecca Dangoor, Wilma Johnson and Barbara Rudder, Co-Chairs