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**The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan
Health, Seniors, and Social Services Committee
June 21, 2022 – 6:30 PM
Conducted Remotely on Zoom**

Minutes

Board Members Present: Meryl Brodsky*, Rebecca Dangoor, Wilma Johnson, Ellen Polivy*, Barbara Rudder, Judy Schneider, Rami Sigal, Lynne Strong-Shinozaki

* Public Member

The meeting was called to order at 6:36 PM.

Item 1 – A continued discussion with Shawn McMahon, Chief of the Crime Strategies Unit, and Estelle Strykers-Santiago, Director of the Community Partnerships Unit at the Manhattan District Attorney's office. Topics include Bail Reform, Rikers, and updates on crime prevention. How does the state budget affect criminal justice reforms previously made?

As promised, DA Bragg's office revisited the committee to discuss some outstanding issues. The community has many questions about bail reform and what happens after the police apprehend a suspect. Representatives from his office provided the following information and answered questions from committee members and the public. A judge can set bail based only on the ability of the suspect to return to court, and not on the severity of the crime.

For small crimes, DA Bragg created the Small Business Alliance to monitor looting. He believes it is best to work with the root of criminal behavior to prevent crimes from happening. He has established Pathways to Community Safety Division to elevate the use of diversion and evidence-based programming, ensuring individuals involved in the criminal justice system receive necessary services to reduce recidivism and enhance public safety. Programs such as Saturday Night Lights are being set up in schools so that youths have a positive activity to do on weekends. But more funding is needed, and the programs must be integrated into other agencies, to increase the programming necessary. The DA's office is working with other agencies to increase the number of programs.

In January of 2020, almost every suspect of a low-level crime was given a desk appearance ticket and told to return to court in about 20 days instead of bail because those crimes were not bail eligible instead of bail. Most are released within hours but returning to court is mandatory. Only violent felonies were bail eligible, and the Judge had no discretion. In 2021, a small addition of crimes were made bail eligible. Repeated offenses of the same bail ineligible crime does not make further offenses bail eligible.

In our community, there is a group of youths who are menacing middle school students. The DA's office will work with the 19th Precinct and the schools to set up programs to engage the youth. These perpetrators, because of their age, are heard in a more lenient family court. There are some legal exceptions when a youth will be heard in criminal court, such as completed sex crimes, ownership of a weapon proven to be real, or the cause of severe physical harm.

The DA overhauled the Sex Crimes unit to make sure it is as victim focus as possible. Because of overcrowding in Rikers, bail eligible cases have been reduced. We asked why suspects are incarcerated for a very long time before having a trial. In response, they explained that it is necessary to increase the number of ADA's, defense attorneys, judges, and court space so cases can be heard more speedily.

We were promised that the dialog between the District Attorney's office and Community Board 8M's Health, Seniors, Social Services committee will continue.

Item 2: New Business

No New Business was brought up.

Item 3: Old Business

No Old Business was brought up.

The committee adjourned at 8:26 PM.

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