

MINUTES
Youth Board/WIB Youth Council
September 22, 2010
The Door
555 Broome Street
New York, New York
8:30 AM to 10:30 AM

Present:

Youth Board/Youth Council members¹:

Ana Garcia Reyes *	John Mattingly * ³	Rae Linefsky *
Anthony Sumpter, Sr. *	John Rhea * ⁴	Raymond Codrington
Arnold Dorin *	Kimberley Hayes *	Reg Foster *
Ellen Chen	Kurt Sonnenfeld, EdD *	Richard F. McKeon *
Erana Stennett	Lena Townsend *	Robert Purga
Gregory Hambric *	Lynette Velasco	Sgt. Margaret O’Gara
Howard Knoll *	Maureen O’Connor *	Sibyl Silberstein, PhD *
Ikra Ahmad *	Milga Morales Nadal, PhD *	Susan Royer *
Issa Spencer	Nancy Wackstein *	Tom Pendleton
Ivelisse Fairchild	Nadine Reid	Victoria Sammartino*
Jane Reiss *	Omoniyi Amoran	
Jeanne B. Mullgrav * ²	Peter Borish *	

Guests:

Philip Weinberg, Mary Kelly, Theresa Nolan, Denise Hinds, Julie Shapiro, Sandra Escamilla, Camelia Pierre, James Peterson, Daphne Montanez, Nancy Ramos, David Vincent, Michael Zisser, Hasan Perez, Jerome White, Bill Chong, Julia Breitman, Susan Haskell and Christopher Cesarani

Welcome and Call to Order

Youth Board Chair Richard McKeon called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone and thanked Julie Shapiro and The Door for hosting the day’s meeting. He next asked the members for a motion to approve the meeting minutes of June 3, located under Tab 1 of the meeting materials. (A motion was made, seconded without objected and then noted approved). Mr. McKeon then introduced Deputy Commissioner Suzanne Lynn.

¹ An * indicates the member’s presence at the meeting.

² Deputy Commissioner Suzanne Lynn represented Commissioner Mullgrav.

³ Ronnie Fuchs was in attendance for Commissioner John Mattingly.

⁴ Kim Toro was in attendance for Chairman John Rhea.

Commissioner's Report

Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)

Deputy Commissioner Lynn began her remarks by informing the members about SYEP 2010, highlighting that the program ran from July 6 through August 21, that it received a total of 143,169 applications, 81% of which were completed online, and that the program enrolled over 35,500 youth. She added that there were over 5,780 worksites, including CVS and Maimonides Hospital. Ms. Lynn then described the piloted use of handheld wireless devices to monitor worksites in real time, which reduced paperwork and allowed staff to spend more time in the field. She also reported that DYCD partnered with the Department of Consumer Affairs to offer free checking accounts with no minimum balance requirements for participants 18 and over, as new components of this year's program. She noted for the latter that over 2,000 accounts were opened with participating banks: Chase, Citibank, Checkspring Bank, Cross County Federal Savings Bank, Municipal Credit Union and New York Community Bank. She further noted that while SYEP was far short of the 52,000 young people the program was able to serve in 2009, DYCD was pleased with the acknowledgement of the program's value and partnerships the agency was able to develop to support the program this year. In particular, she noted that amidst very difficult budget choices by Mayor Michael Bloomberg, the City restored \$1 million in proposed reductions and committed an additional \$9.7 million in the Executive Budget. She also highlighted that this year, in cooperation with the Mayor's Fund to Advance NYC, Goldman Sachs and an anonymous donor contributed \$2 million to SYEP, which provided an additional 1,500 jobs.

Ladders for Leaders

Ms. Lynn next informed the members that on August 9, Mayor Bloomberg presided over the closing ceremony for the 2010 Ladders for Leaders program at Gracie Mansion, marking its fifth year and largest class of interns to date. She noted from among 799 applicants, 190 participants completed the program and worked at 65 partnering employers. Ms. Lynn thanked Youth Board and Youth Council members Erana Stennett, Susan Royer, Reg Foster, Jane Reiss, Rich McKeon, Milga Morales Nadal, Sybil Silberstein and the NYC Workforce Investment Board for their sponsorship and employer outreach for the program this year.

Summer of Service

Ms. Lynn highlighted this year's Summer of Service activities, which is a DYCD initiative to encourage volunteerism, as part of the Mayor's Service NYC. She informed the members that as part of this year's activities and with a generous donation from Neuberger Berman, 16 community-based organizations received awards of \$1,000 to \$1,500 to fund service projects in all five boroughs for five weeks. She noted that the program was a tremendous success and culminated with each project CBO showcasing their various projects at events on August 13.

Low Wage Immigrant Worker Conference

Ms. Lynn next informed the members about the Low Wage Immigrant Workers Conference, which took place on September 21, and was done in conjunction with the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs. She noted that the event "Building an Informed Workforce: Strategies to Support New York's Immigrant Communities", took place at the CUNY Joseph S. Murphy Institute.

Miguel Almodovar

Ms. Lynn concluded her remarks by thanking the members for their outpouring of condolences for friend and colleague Miguel Almodovar, who passed away in July. She informed the members that the support was a tremendous comfort to his family.

Youth Board Chair Report

Mr. McKeon reminded the members that the September meeting is the Youth Board's annual meeting and thanked all the members for their support and work for the year. He noted that a cumulative list of accomplishments of both the Youth Board and Youth Council was included under Tab 2 of the meeting materials. He also reminded the members that the annual meeting is the time when the Youth Board approves a slate of recommended candidates as Officers. He highlighted that the Youth Board Standards, Rules and Nominations Committee, chaired by Ellen Chen, is charged with proposing the slate and then reaches out to the full board for feedback. He noted that the committee recommended for reconsideration the current slate of Officers - Erana Stennett as Vice Chair, Sybil Silberstein as Secretary, and Lena Townsend as Corresponding Secretary – and then asked for a motion to approve these members as officers. (A motion was made, seconded without objected and then noted approved). Mr. McKeon then called on Peter Borish for a brief update on the work of the OST Sustainability Committee. Mr. Borish briefly recapped successes achieved in partnership with DYCD, the Mayor's Fund to Advance NYC and private and corporate philanthropy, in particular with OST middle school programs and SYEP. He noted that public private partnerships and dialogue are critically important during this economic downturn. He also noted that a new committee meeting will be announced soon and that he welcomes everyone's comments, suggestions and participation as next steps are formulated.

Presentation – All Our Children: Strategies to Prevent Homelessness, Strengthen Services and Build Support for LGBTG Youth

Rich McKeon next introduced Assistant Commissioner Susan Haskell and panelists Theresa Nolan from Green Chimneys, Denise Hinds from Good Shepherd Services and Julie Shapiro from The Door. Ms. Haskell began with an overview of DYCD Runaway and Homeless services, highlighting four main service categories: Borough-based Drop-in Centers serving 8,462 youth annually, Street Outreach Services making 8,000 contacts and transporting 117 youth transported to safety a year, Crisis Shelters with 100% utilization of 116 funded beds in FY09, which served 1,713 youth, and Transitional Independent Living (TIL) programs with 137 funded beds 82% utilized, which served 275 youth in FY09.

Ms. Haskell highlighted that Mayor Bloomberg, recognizing that LGBTQ youth are exceptionally vulnerable and have complex needs requiring a coordinated response, formed the LGBTQ RHY Commission. She also highlighted that LGBTQ youth are disproportionately represented among runaway and homeless youth, are often stigmatized in schools, the workplace, within communities and at home, have higher incidence of mental health and substance abuse, sexual violence, victimization and HIV/AIDS infection, and that Transgender youth face relentless harassment. She informed the members that numbers on RHY vary due to differences in definitions of “homeless youth” and research methodologies, and the fact that RHY are mobile (e.g., Empire State Coalition’s definition was youth and young adults ages 13 to 24, in contrast, New York State defines RHY as youth under 21). She noted that, according to DYCD crisis shelter statistics, LGBTQ youth represent an estimated 20% of youth utilizing DYCD funded beds, and that nationally, LGBTQ make up 15 – 25% of the runaway/homeless youth population, with some estimates as high as 40%.

Ms. Haskell provided an overview of the Commission, which consisted of 24 members, including national experts, and divided its work among 3 subgroups – prevention and family support, strengthening services and building support. She informed the members that the Commission developed 10 recommendations – 1) Adopt an increased focus on families and develop family and alternative family support strategies, 2) Test innovative approaches to develop family support for LGBTQ youth to prevent homelessness or shorten its duration, 3) Create a broad system of services for LGBTQ runaway and homeless youth that operates within a positive youth development framework and incorporates best practices, 4) Broaden access to runaway and homeless youth services for LGBTQ youth, 5) Create comprehensive and coordinated health services incorporating best practices for delivery of medical care to LGBTQ adolescents and young adults, 6) Improve access to coordination of mental health, substance abuse, and trauma treatment services for LGBTQ runaway and homeless youth and young adults, 7) Identify and implement effective public education strategies to combat homophobia and transphobia and promote acceptance of and support for LGBTQ youth and their families, 8) Create an LGBTQ-competent City workforce and develop policies and practices that are sensitive to LGBTQ youth issues, 9) Forge public and private partnerships that include the adult LGBTQ community to increase support and garner support for the Commission’s recommendations, and 10) Ensure accountability for improvements to services to LGBTQ runaway and homeless youth.

Ms. Haskell then posed a question to the panel to start a dialogue by asking how each of the represented organizations make LGBTQ youth feel welcome. Theresa Nolan explained that her staff focuses on how individual differences are something to celebrate. She added that the staff focuses on building strength through fostering personal development, a good example being encouraging youth to obtain a GED. Jane Reiss asked how differences can be addressed while also balancing this with workplace expectations. She also commented that each employer is different; for example, the work environment at an advertising agency is different from the financial sector. Denise Hinds noted that her program utilizes intentional peer-to-peer relationships with adults, so that youth can learn to gauge work-related relationships and protocols. Howard Knoll asked the extent to which City agencies were involved in the Commission’s work. Ms. Haskell responded by explaining that many of the youth serving

agencies were involved and focused on better coordination of services in support of this segment of the RHY population. Ikra Ahmad noted that she's aware of the Department of Education's efforts to address and educate students against bullying and respecting peers. Kurt Sonnenfeld asked if the programs implement steps to ensure that staff are sensitive to the needs of this population. Ms. Hinds noted that her program staff daily reflect on routines and operations and there is also a process for participants to provide feedback.

Ms. Haskell thanked the panelists and the Youth Board/Youth Council members for their support of the Commission's work and that the members would be regularly updated on initiatives being implemented.

Youth Council Report and Presentation

Mr. McKeon introduced Reg Foster and the Youth Council report. Mr. Foster noted that he had some brief updates, first that the Workforce Investment Board met September 16, 2010 at the Pace University Schimmel Arts Center, where City Council Speaker Christine Quinn provided remarks. He added that following the Speaker's remarks, Literacy Specialist Jacqueline Cook provided a presentation on literacy and the workforce, with an overview of the current situation and opportunities. Mr. Foster reminded the members that Ms. Cook authored the DYCD report "Our Chance for Change: A Four-year Reform Initiative for GED Testing in New York City", and that supporting efforts to improve literacy skill levels is critical for those seeking to complete GED's. Mr. Foster next noted that the WIB voted on its 2011-2013 strategic plan, which DYCD and Youth Council members worked actively with the board to create. He noted that the plan will serve as a framework for putting into action specific goals over this span of time. Mr. Foster also informed the members that a new Business Engagement Committee was formed. WIB President Phil Weinberg noted that the Business Engagement Committee is an example of the strategic framework being created to address goals going forward.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.