

COMMUNITY BOARD SIX
BUDGET AND GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2017
NYU LANGONE, 550 FIRST AVE, COLES 101, NEW YORK

Committee Members Present: Pedro Carrillo (Chair), Marty Barrett (Vice Chair), David Colby Reed, Jim Collins, Brian Nieuwenhoven, Gary Papush, Kyle Athayde, Claude Winfield, Karen Moore, Gene Santoro, Eva Marie Lassiter (public member)

Presenters: Sean O'Leary (NYC Campaign Finance Board) and Stewart Armstrong (NYC Campaign Finance Board)

Public: Barry Shapiro

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 PM by committee chair Pedro Carrillo.

First calendar item, presentation by NYC Campaign Finance Board Voter Outreach Program (aka NYC Votes). Presenters included Field Coordinators Sean O'Leary and Stewart Armstrong. They discussed the purpose of the program, to expand the active franchise in New York City and encourage higher levels of turnout. New York State was 46th in the nation in voter turnout in 2014. Manhattan CB6 had only 33% turnout in the last City election cycle of 2013.

Mr. O'Leary explained that non-governmental partners of the program in efforts that include voter education, turnout activities and registration drives include agencies (NYCHA, Department of Education), national organizations with local chapters (NAACP, League of Women Voters), and local community organizations like neighborhood and tenant associations. Mr. O'Leary made clear that the work of this program is nonpartisan.

Mr. O'Leary stated that the program's belief was that low voter participation is due to New York State's restrictive voting laws (no online registration, no no-excuse absentee ballots, no vote-by-mail, no early voting). Also, years with multiple primaries are difficult due to voter fatigue and Albany could consolidate primary dates. The program participates in "Voter Day" where volunteers go to Albany to lobby legislators for better voting laws.

Mr. Armstrong mentioned that voter information is a big part of the program. Private funds have been made available to expand multimedia efforts to encourage turnout and inform voters on candidates in their districts. A useful tool is www.voting.nyc which features easy links to poll site locators, registration verification and other voter data. Additionally, their guides have been expanded by an additional seven (7) languages. The Board of Elections is also expanding languages for voter registration forms.

Messrs. O'Leary and Armstrong announced their upcoming Voter Guide which will feature all the races in the 2017 City Election. The guide is forthcoming and will have candidate info in all districts.

Question from Mr. Carrillo: When was the program started and what's its budget? Mr. O'Leary stated that it began in 2011 and that the budget for the outreach program is small.

Question from Mr Barrett: As the program involves registering the homeless, including those on the street, how is physical address accounted for? Mr. O'Leary replied that the address is whatever location the individual indicated.

Suggestion by Mr. Reed that they include text messaging (with info on poll site and reminders on election days) in outreach efforts. Mr. Armstrong stated that they were exploring it but was a matter of budgeting.

Suggestion by Mr. Collins that State mandate that as many legal forms as possible (real property contracts and leases, bank account paperwork) have a checkbox where individual can request voter registration form be mailed to him/her.

Suggestion by several committee members that Community Board Six have voter guides available when they are distributed and that registration forms and program info be available at full board meetings when possible.

The presentation concluded and the presenters mentioned that they'd follow up with more documentation regarding turnout. [This information was sent: <http://www.nycfb.info/chart/VAAC-report-2015/index.html#/Borough/2015>]

The committee meeting was paused for a public hearing.

7:20 p.m. Public Hearing on the Mayor's Preliminary Budget was called to order. No members of the public attending with comments. Committee members agreed that the agency responses were disappointing as they were mostly negative, vague or in some cases incorrect. A member suggested that agencies consistently reference a budget line item for easier reference in future budget registers.

Public hearing was adjourned at 725 p.m. Committee meeting resumes.

Chair's Report. Mr. Carrillo highlighted certain items that were labeled as "not recommended for funding" but were in fact funded. Timing of submissions may make it difficult for some agencies to respond appropriately/correctly. Mr. Barrett stated that some agencies are improving their responses to budget requests vs. years past. Mr. Collins reported that he was working to get additional letters of support for some items.

Mr. Carrillo also stated that the CB6 Letter of Comment to 2018 Preliminary Budget was being edited and that committee would receive copy for final review before deadline of February 23.

He announced that the City Comptroller's office would present to the committee on March 13 regarding its budget observations as well as upcoming audits. Questions were sent to Comptroller as submitted by committee members in advance. Mr. Carrillo asked that committee think of new audits to suggest to Comptroller's representatives at the meeting.

No new or old business.

Meeting adjourned 750 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Pedro Carrillo.