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Gale A. Brewer, Borough President

May 19, 2021 Manhattan Community Board 6 Full Board Report

Full Newsletter: <https://www.manhattanbp.nyc.gov/manhattan-weekly-newsletter-5-10/>

- 1) Statement from Borough President Gale A. Brewer Announcing a Commitment to Direct Funding to Address Violence After Times Square Shooting on Saturday: "The shooting incident in Times Square this weekend was tragic. Crime in our city, and particularly gun violence, is devastating for our communities. In addition, it will certainly hinder our ability to reopen our city and to attract the tourists that we so desperately need to keep our economy strong. While I acknowledge many of the efforts of the NYPD, we cannot simply police our way out of a situation borne out of a pandemic and all it wrought on our city and country. I do not have a single solution, but I know that we need to get guns off the street, we need to provide the mental health services that are lacking particularly for our homeless population, and we need to provide employment and opportunities to all who need them. In my office, we will work with those organizations that are thinking creatively and acting decisively in addressing gun violence. We will craft and pilot anti-violence initiatives that we will then pay for with our discretionary funding. We need to understand why these shootings occur and put in place those initiatives that will prevent them."
- 2) Noise: The Manhattan Borough President's Office has received a number of noise and safety complaints regarding fireworks, ATVs, and dirt bikes. Manhattan Borough President Brewer is drafting a letter to the NYPD, which will include recommendations and a request for a proactive and robust approach in their response to these issues. The FDNY has created a task force in response to illegal fireworks and the Manhattan Borough President's Office has requested that community boards have the ability to participate and share locations in their neighborhoods where illegal firework activity has taken place.
- 3) Legislative Updates: On National Nurses Day, Manhattan Borough President Brewer stood with the New York State Nurses' Association and called on Governor Cuomo to sign safe staffing legislation. Last week, Council Member Rosenthal and Manhattan Borough President Brewer introduced the [Storefront Bill of Rights \(Int. No. 2299\)](#). On March 13th, at 2199 Broadway, in front of La Caridad, Manhattan Borough President Brewer and Council Member Rosenthal were joined by small business owners, leaders, and advocates in calling for its passage. La Caridad, a neighborhood staple for 52 years, closed in July 2020. Brewer and Rosenthal's bill looks to limit vacancies throughout New York City by providing business owners with the Right to Information, the Right to Fair Process and Consideration, and the Right to Government Transparency. As part of the Bill of Rights, landlords must provide tenants with a one-time one-year extension, with a shorter extension if the landlord has another tenant lined up to lease the property. Landlords must also provide prospective tenants with a Certificate of Occupancy, a line-item breakdown of the tenant's costs (e.g., utilities, BID fees, commercial rent tax), a two-year projection of the same costs, and a ten-year history of building violations. For tenants with a lease of one year or longer, a written lease must be provided. Another section of the bill calls on the Department of Small Business Services to create a searchable and interactive guide to city laws,

regulations, licenses, permits, operational requirements, and required certifications for every storefront business. Manhattan Borough President Brewer documented the need for protections and assistance for storefront businesses in her report "[Saving Manhattan Small Business: A Roadmap for Recovery](#)" and in her September 2020 [Broadway vacancy survey](#), which may be found on the Manhattan Borough President's website. Last month, Manhattan Borough President Brewer testified before the New York City Council Committee on Aging and Public Housing in support of Intro 1827-2019, which would establish a NYCHA liaison within the Department for the Aging. Manhattan Borough President Brewer's testimony may be found on her website. If such a liaison had existed during the early days of the pandemic, the process to transfer all NYCHA seniors in the Department for the Aging's records to the Department of Sanitation for food delivery could have been less piecemeal and more coordinated among the agencies. Additionally, many senior NYCHA residents have shared that they do not know where to get the vaccine. For example, Ms. F. is homebound and is eligible for the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. Ms. F. called the Manhattan Borough President's Office because she did not receive any information from NYCHA on how to have someone come to her apartment and administer the vaccine. Manhattan Borough President Office staff helped her schedule an appointment.

- 4) Reopening Senior Centers: On April 21st, Manhattan Borough President Brewer, along with representatives from the city's leading aging advocacy and senior nonprofit institutions, stood outside of the Goddard-Riverside Community Center, and called on Mayor Bill de Blasio and his administration to finally re-open New York City senior centers, which have been closed for more than one year. Mayor de Blasio continues to keep senior centers closed, while the Governor has announced that restaurants, offices, retail stores, theaters, museums, barber shops, amusement parks, gyms and fitness centers will be allowed to operate at full capacity for the first time. The Mayor's failure to re-open senior centers is a serious crisis that threatens the mental, physical, and nutritional health and well-being of older New Yorkers, particularly those who cannot afford restaurants and similar establishments. Centers have been told that outdoor grab and go meals may resume soon. However, this announcement lacks specifics and serious engagement with the senior center providers. Seniors at sites that are not able to scale up without better planning and notice from the Mayor now risk being left out. Consequently, Manhattan Borough President Brewer held a Day of Action on May 4th. May also happens to be Older Americans Month. Manhattan Borough President Brewer has visited a number of senior centers across Manhattan and she has been urgently advocating for the reopening of hundreds of senior centers across the Borough of Manhattan and New York City as a whole.
- 5) Anti-Asian Federation Briefing: Recently, the Manhattan Borough President's Office attended the Asian American Federation's briefing on its "Hope Against Hate Campaign" in response to the rising anti-Asian hate and violence. The Asian American Federation is seeking a total of \$30 million dollars over two fiscal years towards a campaign to address the ongoing hate crimes against the Asian American Community. The Asian American Federation hopes to secure at least \$10 million in FY 22 and it has already secured \$2.3 million in private funds. Current supporters include the Bodega Association, Council Member Ayala, Council Member Reynoso, and Council Member Powers. The Manhattan Borough President's Office continues to support the Asian community in Manhattan and it has been advocating for the resources necessary to combat hate.
- 6) Task Force Updates: At Manhattan Borough President Brewer's Manhattan Vaccine Task Force meeting two weeks ago, representatives from CUNY and Columbia University spoke about the schools' efforts to vaccinate students, faculty, and staff. Many CUNY locations are vaccine sites open to the public, promoted in the [#VaxUpCUNY](#) campaign. All Columbia students will be required to be vaccinated starting this fall semester, while CUNY has not yet made a determination. The Manhattan

Vaccine Task Force also heard from several senior center administrators about why the City should allow outdoor senior center programming and work on a plan toward fully reopening senior centers. Last week, Manhattan Borough President Brewer's Manhattan Recovery Task Force focused on restaurant recovery and housing. The Manhattan Recovery Task Force was joined by Rachel Fee from the NY Housing Conference and State Senator Brian Kavanagh's Office, who presented on housing initiatives, and Andrew Rigie from the New York Hospitality Alliance, who spoke about New York City's restaurant recovery. If you would like to join these task force discussions about vaccines and recovery, please email info@manhattanbp.nyc.gov. Lastly, Manhattan Borough President Brewer has been working with high schools, the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, and other stakeholders to find outdoor spaces for school graduation ceremonies. High schools can request outdoor graduation space through the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, or they can email Shawn Jean-Louis, Education Policy Analyst, to discuss what they are looking for in a space.

7) Newly Available Resources:

- Low-income households and households that lost significant income in 2020 or 2021 can now get \$50 off high-speed internet and \$100 off a computer or tablet, thanks to the new [Emergency Broadband Benefit Program](#) from the Federal Communications Commission. Click the link for eligibility guidelines (such as income or receiving public benefits or a Pell Grant) and the application. The State passed a law requiring internet companies to provide broadband for \$15/month for low-income customers. Check the [NYS affordable broadband portal](#) for low-cost plans. Manhattan Borough President Brewer [wrote to the Governor](#) about ensuring that the companies do not reject applicants who previously had unpaid balances. It is crucial that we provide a pathway for households with past arrears to switch to a low-cost service rather than face automatic rejection.
- NYCHA is now hiring for the [City Cleanup Corps](#), including [positions in NYCHA](#) grounds maintenance, playground maintenance, floor care, pest control, and community projects. Positions are full time (40 hours/week) and pay \$19.33/hour. Apply [here](#). City Cleanup Corps jobs are also available through the NYC Parks Dept. [The positions](#) run through the end of 2021 and pay \$15/hour for applicants with a driver's license and \$12/hour for applicants without a license.