

Westchester County Board of Legislators

COMMITTEE OF GENERATIONAL, CULTURAL & ETHNIC DIVERSITY

Minutes: June 26, 2007

COMMITTEE ON GCED

MEMBERS: **Chair:** Bernice Spreckman; Legislators: Jose Alvarado, William Burton, Ken Jenkins, George Oros, Vito Pinto

ATTENDANCE: STAFF: RVinci, AEttere, **OTHER:** Frank Williams, Kelly Johnson, Wanda London, Michael Aterberry, Michael Pellegrin, Liz Mark, Ann Spindel, Valerie Swan, Arthur Muhammad, Jim Bostic,

Meeting called to order at 10:12m.

Westchester County Youth Bureau Directors were invited to speak on the subjects of Youth/Gang Violence. This was a follow up to an initial meeting on the same subject held on 5/15/07. Current programs were discussed and the problem of youth violence in general was addressed. There was a general consensus that the existing problem of gang/youth violence is complex and exists in and affects all communities.

Frank Williams: there needs to be an investment into programs that foster a sense of community and focus on prevention and intervention.

Camille Banks Lee: there needs to be accountability from families and kids need to know about existing programs

Minister Muhammad: they have their own sub-culture and we need to take this into consideration when holding events. I would also like to see more programs that train youth for jobs teaching them labor skills.

Wanda London: its difficult to reach kids that are making money selling drugs or doing other illegal activities – parents need to be more involved

Jim Bostic: we need to educate the young so they are not interested in joining gangs. We need to have continuity with programs – the funding year to year is always in jeopardy. Also, those who have committed crimes and now have criminal records have a difficult time getting jobs so they go back to a life of crime.

Valerie Swan: Westchester County does not always get its fair share of funding – NYC gets the bulk of money and often money comes with strings attached (we can help the child but not the family).

Kelly Johnson: law enforcement is not the answer. Kids, even those in affluent areas, need supervised activities to avoid getting into trouble.

Meeting adjourned at 11:40am. Motion made by Legislator Pinto and seconded by Legislator Alvarado.

-AUDIO MINUTES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST-