

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

COUNCIL MEMBER GALE A. BREWER

CITY HALL

NEW YORK, NY 10007

TEL: 212-788-6975

FAX: 212-513-7717

www.council.nyc.gov



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 14, 2011

Contact: Will Colegrove
(212) 788-6975
(347) 461-4329

BREWER SECURES MILLIONS FOR WEST SIDE AND CLINTON

Despite difficult fiscal situation, Brewer and Council avoid teacher layoffs, firehouse closures, and daycare cuts; libraries and cultural maintain service

City Hall – On Wednesday, June 29, 2011, after months of negotiation with the Administration, the City Council approved a \$66 billion budget for Fiscal Year 2012. Thanks to the savvy leadership of Speaker Christine Quinn and her commitment to budget priorities that meet the real needs of New Yorkers, the Council prevented the elimination of over 4,000 Department of Education teaching positions and restored \$40 million to save 20 fire companies, \$47 million for children’s services, and \$30 million for senior services, including funding for 10 new innovative senior centers. Locally, Project FIND has applied for a local innovative center, and SAGE has applied for a citywide spot.

In addition, starting in 2013, several key services will be baselined, including \$14 million of the Department for the Aging’s budget that funds senior services, \$20 million of CUNY’s budget for the community colleges, and \$1.8 million for SART (Sexual Assault Response Team). SART is staffed by specially-trained forensic examiners and rape crisis counselors and is available at each of the Health and Hospital Corporation’s (HHC’s) acute care hospitals. SART services provide immediate state-of-the-art forensic and counseling services and allow for sexual assault victims to receive sensitive care within one hour of their arrival. SART programs, which operate 24/7, can minimize trauma to the victim and reduce the risk that evidence critical to law enforcement will be lost, damaged or overlooked. For this reason, the five District Attorneys supported the restoration of SART funding. Without a SART program, victims of sexual assault would be examined and assisted by doctors and nurses only. Finally, a portion of the funding restoration for the District Attorneys will also be baselined.

The City Council was particularly concerned about lay-offs to teachers and to day care workers, and restoring the positions and the services was complicated. With the support of the UFT, the Administration, and the ingenuity of the Speaker and the wonderful Council Finance staff, led by Preston Niblack and Jeffrey Rodus, teachers were not laid off because (1) sabbaticals for 2011-2012 are cancelled; (2) teachers in the Absent Teacher Reserve pool (ATR) will replace substitute teachers when needed, saving money on substitutes; and (3) 2,600 teachers are expected to quit or retire who will not be replaced.

In day care, the Mayor allocated \$40 million in his proposed budget to restore some pre-K slots and shift school-age children to Out-of-School Time (OST). These OST programs may or may not have been at their school, and might have meant displacing other children already enrolled in the OST programs!

Again, the Speaker, the Council staff, and General Welfare Committee Chair Annabel Palma devised a much better allocation of funds and a solution to the challenge of limited funding in childcare. With a \$46.89 million restoration, funding is allocated in the following manner, averting the cut of 16,500 day care slots used by working families: 197 classrooms are paid for with \$12 million, preserving the classrooms in current day care programs. In addition, \$13 million is allocated for vouchers for childcare so that families can stay in the program that they are currently in. It is not likely that new vouchers will be available but because enough 13 year olds age out and 4 year olds turning 5 will be enrolling in school, there is sufficient funding in the childcare voucher system for one year. This allocation restores funding for 4,942 childcare vouchers for school-age children, who would have been displaced by the proposed reduction of Priority 5 and 6 childcare vouchers. City Council funding will be supplemented by funding from the Administration in the amount of \$10.9 million for an additional 2,802 childcare vouchers for school-age children and 1,168 family day care slots. All school-age vouchers are at a rate of \$2,748 per voucher; previously, they were worth \$4,700 per voucher, making it hard on the finances of the day care provider. Finally, of the 119 childcare classrooms that were to be eliminated, this budget process saved 60 of them. How the 59 remaining classrooms will be cut is to be discussed with the Administration for Children's Services and the City Council; the goal is not to close any childcare center.

Finance Chair Domenic Recchia Jr. was instrumental in working with the Administration to restore \$20 million for Cultural Institutional Groups (CIGs) on city land, and an additional \$15 million for other cultural programs, as well as \$61 million for libraries and almost \$8 million for parks, in particular for the restoration of funds for salaries of seasonal workers and playground associates. Riverside Park alone desperately needs at least four (4) seasonal workers; and each Council District will receive one playground associate, as has happened in the past.

As chair of Governmental Operations, and as a former member of Community Board 7, I support the work of community boards and their small staffs. With the support of Speaker Quinn, her staff, the Mayor, and Mark Page and Larian Angelo at the Office of Management and Budget, \$8,000 was allocated to each of the 59 community boards to increase staff salaries commensurate with the City's collective bargaining agreement, something that has never been done before and that is very deserved.

The Council and the Administration restored approximately \$385 million. This was achieved by: (1) cutting the \$10.2 billion contract budget by 10 percent, saving \$140 million; (2) by recognizing better collection of outstanding and owed taxes, fees and fines (Council Member Brewer asked the Independent Budget Office to produce a report on this topic, which can be downloaded here: <http://www.ibo.nyc.ny.us/iboreports/signedletter3711.pdf>); (3) recognizing the Speaker's suggested cuts to DOE contracts (such as school bus contracts), saving \$75 million; and (4) \$672 million in FY12 from the Retiree Trust Fund which was included in the Mayor's Executive Budget released in May. No more was added to the budget during negotiations from the Retiree Trust Fund. The approximate total in that Fund is now \$1.9 billion.

By shaving money off of the DOE technology contracts, the Council was able to add \$30 million to the DOE budget to eliminate PCBs from schools at a faster pace than was proposed by the DOE. Council Member Vincent Ignizio was instrumental in this effort. On the West Side, PS 75, the Joan of Arc campus on West 93 Street, and the Brandeis High School campus are being stripped of PCBs this summer 2011.

Overall, a remaining structural gap of \$3 billion will need to be addressed in the out years.

As New Yorkers know from the press accounts, funds jointly controlled by the Municipal Labor Committee (MLC) and the City of New York were not part of this year's budget solution. Despite many discussions between the MLC, ably headed by Harry Nespoli, President of the New York City Uniformed Sanitationmen's Association, and the City, an agreement could not be reached in relation to use of the fund. The fund was established by a 1982 supplemental health insurance agreement between the municipal unions and the City. Under the agreement, each year the City is obligated to contribute the HIP premium cost for those who take the GHI/BLUE CROSS Plan, and an additional \$35 million. The Fund may be utilized only upon consent of both parties. The unions proposed taking more than \$262 million from this Fund to avoid all City layoffs for one year and to mitigate a proposed reduction in services. The City rejected the MLC proposal.

In the enacted FY12 budget, the City negotiated contractual savings with the United Federation of Teachers to avert the proposed layoff of 4,100 teachers. In addition, service reductions were mitigated. However, the fiscal plan calls for the layoff of 700 to 1,000 city employees.

Due to a struggling economy and a decrease in federal and state aid, this budget is far from ideal. Class sizes will increase due to a reduction of 2,600 teachers (3.5% of all teachers) through attrition. Libraries may have to cut back to five-day service, though New York Public Library staff members have told us that they are doing everything possible to retain the current six-day service. The hundreds of letters that I received on behalf of our libraries were critical to the \$61 million restoration, though somewhere between \$81 and \$90 million would be preferable. In addition, the overall city workforce is to be cut by 3.7%.

Despite these difficult circumstances, Council Member Brewer (Manhattan-6th District), who co-chairs the Manhattan Delegation, allocated millions for capital projects on the upper West Side and Clinton. Some include:

1. \$5 million for the New York Public Library Research Libraries, and an additional \$400,000 for a new ADA Compliant entry/vestibule at the Riverside Branch, 127 Amsterdam Avenue at West 65 Street
2. \$3 million for roof repair for the American Museum of Natural History (with an additional \$2 million in FY13)
3. \$1.2 million for the renovation of an unused parking lot into a landscaped overlook of the Hudson River, complete with a green building and public restroom. This project is a partnership of the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Riverside Clay Tennis Association, under the auspices of the Riverside Park Fund
4. \$920,000 for John Jay College to upgrade aging technology infrastructure
5. \$445,000 to upgrade stage equipment at the Metropolitan Opera
6. \$400,000 to complete a renovation of Dante Square Park, to add to the \$600,000 that Council Member Brewer allocated in FY11
7. \$300,000 for two grants for a new education media center at the New-York Historical Society
8. \$500,000 for a smoke purge system at the New-York Historical Society, via the Manhattan Delegation
9. \$350,000 to reconstruct the façade at the Museum of Arts and Design (in FY13)
10. \$240,000 for new computers for Chess-In-The-Schools (for the many school chess programs on the West Side and elsewhere)
11. \$50,000 for Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts to purchase production equipment (Out-of-Doors)
12. \$25,000 for Ballet Hispanico to purchase audience risers (to complete a building project)

Council Member Brewer secured millions more for capital projects at the public schools in District 6. Some include:

1. An auditorium upgrade at the Brandeis High School Complex (to complete current project)
2. A computer network upgrade at Beacon High School
3. A technology lab at the Frank McCourt High School
4. A technology upgrade at Global Learning Collaborative
5. A new library media center at LaGuardia High School
6. A computer lab and technology upgrade at the Manhattan Hunter High School of Science
7. A classroom technology lab at The Center School
8. A technology upgrade at The Dual Language School
9. A computer upgrade at The Computer School
10. A schoolyard renovation at P.S. 9
11. A technology upgrade at P.S. 166
12. A 3rd floor media center at P.S. 191
13. A library media center at P.S. 199
14. A technology upgrade at The Anderson School
15. A technology upgrade at P.S. 84
16. A technology upgrade at P.S. 75
17. On-going work on the façade of MLK Jr. High School campus

Council Member Brewer also funded hundreds of non-profits and community organizations on the West Side, including:

1. **Funding for senior services** such as Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty for their handyman services; Older Adults Technology Services (OATS); New York Foundation for Senior Citizens; Goddard Riverside Community Center for home delivered meals; Project FIND; Lincoln Square Neighborhood Center for their NORC program; the Age-Friendly program at the New York Academy of Medicine; One Stop Senior Services; JASA for Café 76; J-PAC; Project Open; SPOP; Vocal Ease; DOROT; Lincoln House Outreach for their NORC program; Council Senior Center; Selfhelp Community Services and Project Pilot; St. Martin's Housing Corporation for their NORC program; SAGE; and the West Side Inter-Agency Council for the Aging.

2. **Funded health related services:** St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital Center for Comprehensive Care PEER Support Program; the American-Italian Cancer Foundation for free mammograms; SHARE; Callen-Lorde Community Health Center; Gay Men's Health Crisis; Medicare Rights Center; Planned Parenthood of New York for family planning programs; Asian Pacific Islander Coalition on HIV/AIDS; the St. Luke's-Roosevelt Crime Victims Treatment Center to provide sexual assault-related services and programs, including those that benefit survivors. The entire Council supported the restoration of HASA Supportive Housing Case Managers (several residences on the West Side need this funding).

3. **Allocated funds for youth programs, after-school and in school programs for Council District 6 schools** including Teen RAPP; Border Crossers; Landmark West! Program at PS 199 and PS 87; Learning Leaders; Computers for Youth at West Side Collaborative Middle School and Dual Language Middle School as part of the Federal Broadband grant for Connected Learning; New York City Center's after-school program; YWCA; MOUSE; Reading Reform Foundation of NY; Reach Out and Read; Common Cents; WorldofMoney.org; Positive Influence's basketball program at Amsterdam Houses/Addition; Chess-in-the-Schools; PFLAG to support anti-bullying efforts; ParentJobNet; Peace First; Police Liaison Group; After-School programs at The Computer School, Center School, PS 9, and PS 75; Goddard Riverside's After School Program; Lincoln Square Neighborhood Center for their youth program; Wellness in the Schools; Cornerstone Learning Center; the DOME Project; Counseling in Schools (through the United Way of New York) for students at PS 191; GrowNYC to support environmental education programs, especially at the High School for Environmental Studies; CUNY's Creative Arts Team which works in the high schools; and others. The entire Council, especially Speaker Quinn, Finance Chair Dominic M. Recchia Jr., and Youth Committee Chair Lew Fidler, supported restoration of the YMCA's Teens Take the City and the Y After School program, OST I and II, Urban Advantage (an extraordinary, citywide middle school science program which I helped to start), After-Three Corporation which partially pays for the after-school program LA CASA at PS 84, and Beacon after-school programs (at Goddard Riverside in our area). The Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) will employ 28,000 young people this summer 2011, with at least \$4 million in private funding from Walmart, another \$3 million from other private sources, including Goldman Sachs, and \$20.6 million from the City of New York. There are also a number of other government grants dedicated to SYEP, including \$8.5 million in federal TANF funding, another \$2.3 million and \$1.6 million from other Federal grants, and

\$1.71 million from the State of New York. In total, over \$41 million has been allocated to the program (DYCD press release: <http://on.nyc.gov/mEv8iz>).

4. **Provided monies for local cultural programs and organizations**, some of which also work in schools and senior centers: Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation; Lincoln Center Theatre; Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts; Symphony Space; Carnegie Hall; Opera America; Pan Asian Repertory Theatre; Shadow Box Theatre; Caribbean Cultural Center; Wingspan Arts; Cool Culture; American Folk Art Museum; Education Through Music; Children's Museum of Manhattan; Jewish Children's Learning Lab; Folksbiene Yiddish Theatre; Jazz at Lincoln Center; Ballet Hispanico; Jazzmobile; Kids Creative; New York Classical Theatre; Riverside Symphony; Women's Project and Productions; Arts in Action; Vital Theatre Company; Frog & Peach Theatre Company; Lotus Music & Dance; New York City ACT-SO; Young People's Chorus; Big Apple Circus; the Kaufman Center; West Side Cultural Center; Workmen's Circle/Arbeter Ring; Risa Jaroslow and Dancers; and Cultural After School Adventure (CASA) grants to after-school programs for cultural enrichment (much thanks to Finance Chair Dominic M. Recchia, Jr.).

5. **Allocated funds for community programs that try to prevent hunger**: The West Side Campaign Against Hunger; Momentum Project; New York City Coalition Against Hunger; City Harvest; City Meals on Wheels; God's Love We Deliver; The Bridge; Stratford Arms Meals Program and food pantries (to be designated).

6. **Provided funds for organizations that work to improve our city, our neighborhoods and our parks**: Friends of Hudson River Park; New Yorkers for Parks; the West 87th Street Park and Garden; the West Side Community Garden; Big Apple Greeter; Open House New York; JCC of Manhattan to support single parents and their kids when challenges exist, as well as to support families needing assistance with autistic children; New York Women in Film and Television to preserve and exhibit films in which a woman has had a creative major role; Per Scholas which recycles computers and other equipment for schools and non-profits; NYC Community Cleanup which puts low-level offenders to work repairing conditions of disorder in our neighborhood; NonProfit Help Desk; Committee for Environmentally Sound Development; Samaritans Hotline; NYCHA Tenant Associations (funds for 9 TAs) which work to improve maintenance and produce Family Day events in their respective developments.

7. **Funding to non-profits to support those who are trying to find permanent employment**: Nontraditional Employment for Women; the Lincoln Square BID which employs young people from nearby high schools during the summer as Tourist Information Ambassadors; the Broadway Malls Maintenance Fund which employs horticulturalists from Goddard Riverside's Greenkeepers program and from the Brandeis High School campus; Seedco's program for vets; CUNY's Murphy Institute Center for Worker Education.

8. **Supported programs that keep West Siders and New Yorkers in their homes**, including New York State Tenants and Neighbors; Housing Conservation Coordinators which provides free legal assistance for those living in Clinton and up to West 71 Street; Legal Aid; Legal Services NYC; Housing Court Answers; Interfaith Assembly on Homelessness and Housing; Make the Road NY; MFY Legal Services; Coalition for the Homeless; Strycker's Bay

Neighborhood Council; Urban Justice Center which with Goddard Riverside's SRO Law Project runs a free Housing Clinic once a month at Goddard Riverside. Funding is thanks to the Housing Preservation Initiative and Housing Committee Chair Eric Dilan. Both the Urban Justice Center and the Goddard Riverside SRO Law Project were also funded as individual entities to maintain their legal support services.

For more information regarding the FY12 budget, see the Council's Schedule C: <http://council.nyc.gov/html/budget/PDFs/2012/FY2012ScheduleC.pdf>.

For more information regarding the FY12 Capital budget, see the following supporting detail: <http://council.nyc.gov/html/budget/PDFs/2012/supporting.pdf>.