

#OCCUPYSANDY

ALL-PROJECT MEETING

NOVEMBER 20, 2012 - 7:30PM

**St. Jacobi Church
Sunset Park, Brooklyn
MINUTES / TRANSCRIPT**

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WELCOME

Brett: If everyone could take a seat, please, we'll get started. So, before we get started, if anyone needs translation or interpretation, we can do at least Spanish." Looking for Pablo. "So, if anyone needs Spanish interpretation, we have the capacity to do that tonight.

"La necesitamos o no?" Seems like we don't need it for tonight, but several Spanish-speakers announce their availability. "Cool beans," says Juan Carlos. "Welcome to St. Jacobi." Whooping from the audience.

Dalit: Hi, I'm Dalit, and I'm going to be co-facilitating with Brett. So we want to check and make sure if it's OK for Brett and I to co-facilitate..." Looks good. "It's so amazing to see so many people; thank you for coming; I'm just excited to be here, and the work so far has been amazing, so I'm excited to hear more from everyone.

MEETING AGREEMENTS

Dalit: So, I'm going to start off by going over some of the meeting agreements: first, step up, step back. We encourage people that if maybe in their lives or communities they haven't felt encouraged to speak, to be empowered here and take the space to share your voices, and for those who maybe have always been encouraged to speak and have felt more comfortable through their lives, to step back and give space for other people in the conversation.

The next agreement is W.A.I.T -- Why am I talking? We have a lot to get through tonight, which is awesome, and we want to hear what everyone has to say. But, to respect each others' time, just try and keep it concise, and keep your comments to things that are relevant for this large group; there'll be an opportunity at the end for people to break out and have conversations about more logistical, nitty-gritty, micro things. So, let's keep that in mind.

The next is active listening -- let's pay attention to each other, and think about what one another is saying and, you know, process that in our responses.

The next agreement is that this is an open meeting; we welcome everyone, but we'd like members of the media or press to ID themselves.

OK, so it looks like we have a lot of people. Great. And is there anyone here that's uncomfortable being filmed tonight?

Bill Dobbs asks the press to ID themselves.

Patrick: OK, I'll start. My name is Patrick, and I'm a filmmaker, doing a documentary about the Occupy Wall Street, and I'd love to be able to create kind of a mini-advertising for what you guys are doing on Sandy."

Sharon: I'm Sharon... and I'm writing an article for the American Prospect.

Stacey: I'm Stacey... I'm a documentary filmmaker from Seattle. Today is the 184th day I've been on the road travelling the country, filming disaster." Saved the best/worst for last. "Film's called Storm Surge -- stories of survival, resiliency and recovery after disaster.

Nick Pinto, Village Voice.

Someone: And I'm from the Daily News.

Dalit: Can everyone hear me?

Brett: Or do you want us to use microphones?

Wow, facilitators now using microphones.

Dalit: All right.

Cheers!

Dalit: Did anyone have a problem being filmed? Do you want to ID yourselves, if you'd rather not be?

No one.

Dalit: The next agreement is regarding hand-signals that will help facilitate the meeting, so just to get everyone on the same page -- later on, when we're sharing thoughts about where we should go, you might want to agree with what someone is saying. If you do, you can go -- I'll take off my gloves to show you -- you can just can up-twinkle to signal agreement; if you disagree, down-twinkle; if you want to express somewhere in the middle, mid-twinkles. If you hear something -- a fact that you think is wrong and needs to be corrected, you can [hold your finger up like that, just to correct a fact. If you think that somebody has made their point and you've heard them and maybe they should wrap it up, you can [spin your hands], but let's do that lovingly and with respect for one another. And if others are talking without a mic, and you can't hear them, you can signal louder [with one finger pointing up in the air.]

The next agreement is let's respect each other's time and voices;

And lastly, to make I statements. There's a lot of people in this room; there's obviously lots of people and voices that aren't represented here, so when we're speaking make sure to frame things in terms of our own experiences.

Those are the agreements.

Brett: OK, so as we get started here, one thing to keep in mind -- Sandy hit New York on Sunday, October 28th. On Tuesday, the 30th, folks in Red hook started to form Occupy Sandy. We're now doing this community meeting on Tuesday the 20th -- so we've been at this for 22 days. So -- that -- an incredible amount of things have happened in 22 days, but it's only been 22 days. So questions of where are we going, what's next, what exactly is Occupy Sandy, are conversations and questions

that have happened in small circles, it's happened in email threads, the community at large, the press -- everyone is asking these questions. This meeting tonight is the first step in trying to address that question.

But before we can just... dive into them and decide where we're going, we have to have a shared understanding of where we've been and what's currently happening on the ground. We need to understand the lines of communication as they currently exist, and power structures that formed in the early -- it's only been 22 days, but in the very early days when this started. We need to understand decisions that were made and power structures that were formed that continue to affect our work, so we can collectively move forward as a community based on equity. As facilitators, we acknowledge that this meeting is not going to meet the needs of every person in this room, let alone the community at large, but what we're here to do is share and gather information so we can continue to do the amazing work we've been doing and move forward together as a community. Like I've been saying, we're 22 days into this; we've built an incredibly expansive network, and it's complicated. We've built an incredibly complicated network. We have at least 3 distribution hubs, dozens of recovery sites across three boroughs and we're expanding every day. Nothing that has been created yet is set in stone; everything can change and evolve. So we request that we be constructive, we be critical, but let's be gentle with one another.

Just remember, it's only been 22 days, so please let's be gentle. We have a -- as you can see, we have a very full agenda. So, we just got through the welcome and the meeting agreements; next, we're going to go into a section of "where have we been" that will be a series of report backs, hitting on all these different topics that I'll get into in a minute, and this is to understand the history of how this project got off the ground -- to understand lines of communication and power structures as they currently exist.

After that, we'll go to "where are we now?" and get report backs from all of the various recovery sites that we've been working in as well as more specific areas like medical dispatch, legal, the housing initiative -- things like that. And the idea of this is not necessarily to get into the intricate details of each site, but to go in

broad strokes to understand the work that's currently happening. So we can see in certain areas where are we no longer doing direct relief, where have we moved into canvassing and damage assessment, to then go into the next step of rebuilding.

And then... so, hopefully we can do all that in an hour, that series of reports backs, and then we'll go into a discussion of "where are we going?" So once -- the idea is to get everyone here onto somewhat the same page of information, because the network is very compartmentalized. We have our different areas where we've been focused on, so in order for us to have this community-wide discussion of where are we going, we need to know what other people are doing and what work is happening across the network.

And then, we want to open up space for kind of a -- general questions and announcements -- for example, to hear what is going on for Thanksgiving in various sites, or if there are things that have come up in the meeting. We're going to try not to do direct response and questioning here, but we'll have space for it later, as well as time for people to connect, exchange contact information, so that more intricate information-gathering or connections can happen outside of this meeting space. The idea is to utilize this time for information that is relevant to the whole group, so try to keep that in mind as you're -- if you're one of the folks giving a report back. Please try to keep it as broad as possible.

WHERE HAVE WE BEEN?

Brett: So, I think with that, we'd like to go into the "where have we been?" section -- which, again, you know, we're trying to utilize this time to understand how this project got off the ground. And it's not necessarily to find fault or criticize any decisions that were made -- because this project started because there was crisis and people on the ground needed support. So we want to understand how it came about.

Do we have someone who feels like they can speak to origins? What the, you know, first day was like.

ORIGINS

Bre: Hi! My name is Bre. So, this whole thing kind of originated with a number of occupiers sending text messages to each other asking if they wanted to start a relief effort. So, that first day -- actually, the night that it hit -- so when the storm hit -- we had a Facebook page made, a Twitter account made, and a WePay account. And by the next morning, we were out in Breezy Point bringing food to people who were actually on the ground. And by that night we had a space in Red Hook and a meeting with a bunch of volunteers. So that's, like, where it came from.

DISTRO HUBS

Brett: Does someone feel comfortable speaking about where Jacobi came from? Like, how did we get established in this space?"

JACOBI

Tammy: The day after that, that was Wednesday, we... the site in Red Hook was already overwhelmed; there was a lot going on there. And several people had connections to -- well, and Juan Carlos lives here -- and he opened up [Jacobi] for us to cook, and have volunteers come here so we could distribute food. And that night was Halloween -- that was the first night we went out to the Rockaways, and also volunteers came here, and we organically realized we could send them out from here...

CLINTON

Dalit asks for a report from Clinton.

Sam: It became clear pretty quickly we'd outgrow this spot, so some other folks from Occupy Faith reached out to our networks and the folks at St. Luke and St. Matthew at 520 Clinton offered their space. We moved in I think on Saturday - yeah, Saturday - and it grew extremely quickly to have a kitchen, a distribution center, and a really large volunteer intake and training. From there we were able to send folks out to the other hubs and I think we've also started sending canvassers straight out from there.

RED HOOK

Dalit: We heard a little from Tammy about Red Hook... is there anyone else from Red Hook that wants to fill us in?"

Vincent: Red Hook was one of the first sites set up on the ground and this was a coalition of neighborhood volunteers, community organizers, OWS-affiliated individuals, a representative of councilwoman Christine Quinn, and Red Hook Initiative, a local non-profit which opened its doors for the operation to run in. The operation was running out of there for about a week, and during that time, an assumption was made that RHI itself was autonomously organizing the Red Hook recovery effort...and there was a bit of disconnect in communication between the Occupy-affiliated organizers there and the overall structure. That structure has continued to morph - distribution sites have changed about three times- lots of different coalitions of organizers with different political affinities are forming.

FINANCES & WEPAY

Brett: So next, is someone able to talk about financials and WePay and where all that originated from? Just so that we have an understanding - a WePay got set up, I think many of us know that it exists, but just so we have an idea of where that came from, who set it up, that kind of thing...

Bre: When this first started... the sense was that it was going to be about \$200 and 40 volunteers, which is obviously not the case anymore. The WePay was set up originally in my name; we immediately got fiscal sponsorship from the Alliance for Global Justice, so we are a project of Alliance for Global Justice, which means we are essentially a tax-deductible organization but can still do the things we need to do without having to deal with red tape. So the WePay, then -- there was a meeting that happened -- I don't know what day -- where we agreed to split the funds essentially into a 30% or \$100k for emergencies and 70% to long-term. The 30%, or 100k, went to short-term, immediate direct aid and infrastructure where we couldn't fill in with in-kind donations, and the 70% was going to go to long-term real recovery and rebuilding efforts.

INTEROCCUPY

Brett: Can someone speak to the role that Interoccupy has played so far?

Badger: At Interoccupy -- for the last year, we've been using that website to basically organize around different issues for the Occupy movement. So as soon as Occupy Sandy started, it made sense to start what we call an Interocc hub on the new website, which brought the Facebook feed, WePay, Twitter, all that kind of stuff. Very quickly, we needed a space for the public to be able to see where the locations were that we were organizing out of - this space, and Clinton and all of that. So we ended up kind of repurposing it as a public-facing site, and then we re-designed it so that it would look a little bit prettier. So, I mean, it was just a sort of very natural progression of how we ended up in the space that we are now.

FEMA, RED CROSS & THE STATE

Dalit: Next we want to hear from someone who can talk about about FEMA, the Red Cross, and the state. If anyone knows about the communication with those different groups and what the relationship has been so far?

Rasul: I've been out in Rockaway since the Sunday after the storm, and just a few indications of that relationship -- Red Cross and FEMA. The first day we went out, a number of parking lots in Rockaway had perimeter fences guarded by police and National Guard. And they were sitting there waiting for people to come to them so they could give out water and those pure bricks of sodium in our hypertension epidemic community - called 'Meals Ready to Eat'. FEMA was involved in that. The day of the Nor'easter, that afternoon, we saw a convoy of school buses going across the bridge and thought there might be a mandatory evacuation, so we called the FEMA project director at Breezy Point, who told us very easily, "Oh, I don't know what's going on; we sent our staff home at 7pm last night to take the day off for the storm." That evolved, because they suddenly realized that they had no idea- both FEMA and the Red Cross- had no idea what was going on, and so they began

to talk to us. Of course the Red Cross early discussions were, “if you need help, we’re working through Office of Emergency Management -- call your public health liaison.” Within a short period of time, they realized they had no idea what was going on, and they had to find out.

So FEMA and the Red Cross began to come to Occupy Rockaway to ask what was going on. And then they were finally ready to put boots on the ground, and came in with the arrogance assumption- “That’s ok, we have it” - which lasted just long enough for them to realize that they didn’t. And so they were back to asking Occupy what’s going on. Most recently, last Sunday, I saw first Red Cross truck, and then the night before last, the first Red Cross truck on a corner giving stuff away. If you look at the Red Cross donations, they were advertisements for the Red Cross. I never saw an Occupy sign on anything we gave anybody; they’re out there marketing better than they’re distributing stuff. That’s my sense of that relationship.

Brett: Tammy, do you want to speak to how we communicate with them on an institutional level?

Tammy: Others might be able to talk about this better... there was a sense early on, I don’t remember when, that there was a real need for communication, because if there were resources out there that we could have access to, we wanted to find that out. And so they were trying to contact us, and eventually they got - we had a contact at FEMA, who’s actually [inaudible]... I think the most useful thing, from my perspective, on an institutional level, was they they do have these conference calls, these VOAD conference calls, with everyone doing aid work, and we got access to resources like the Disaster Distress hotline, mental health [inaudible] and some medical support -- so there have been some useful things that we’ve been connected to that way. Other than that, this contact of ours has been very kind and quick to respond to phone calls, however has not actually brought us anything yet. But some lines of communication were started in order to find out if there were resources that could help people that we could connect them to. [inaudible] Others might know more.

Brett asks to keep these short so we can find out in broad strokes what our relationship has been, “don’t need to get into what’s happening on specific street corners.”

Stayc: I just wanted to say, as far as Sheepshead Bay, even though we’ve had difficulties with the RC, they’ve been a lifeline in terms of hot meals -- we haven’t been able to get hot meals always, we’re a very small pop-up site, and we’ve been using Red Cross to try to communicate with them and point out the needs, because they don’t know where to go and they’re from out of town and don’t know the area. They’ve been our lifeline in terms of hot meals; just wanted to say that, and if we can work closely with them in that way to tell them where to go, that could be really helpful. And they can’t hand-deliver meals, but we can.

That’s clearly not an across-the-board type of situation - we got one shipment of hot meals at B113 Rockaways. It was delivered in a container, and the horrible-looking beans and pork in the container had slid sideways in the box and were falling into the bottom, and the so-called pork tenderloins were questionably pork and certainly not tender.

Medic: My experience with FEMA and the Red Cross -- the Red Cross was more interested in, instead of going into the high-rises, asking me, after I had come out of the high-rises, what it was like. They did set up their own station, but it was far away from medical needs, and I have not seem them provide medical care. FEMA was also set up outside areas of need and were not accessible to the folks who needed it- elderly folks and people who couldn’t walk, and all those things...

Sam: It seemed like for awhile FEMA and the Red Cross, but particularly FEMA and the National Guard were taking orders through the Mayor’s Office of Emergency Management -- a representative was going around to a number of sites, came to 520 and was introduced to a number of other sites... and I think the broad strokes of that were there were different relationships depending on the different sites. Some have maintained a very close relationship with those organizations; others have had almost no contact. From what I’ve heard, they were focusing on NYCHA housing, and then FEMA and other insurance companies are going house-to-house for paperwork reasons -- however, they are not running the same types of

canvassing operations we are, and they are trying to find out and coordinate more with what our medics are doing, what our legal groups are doing. We have been reached out to by some folks from the State Senate because they have offices in a lot of these places and they live there. They have been coordinating different kinds of canvasses - I don't know where that relationship is at this point, but...

Brett says one more hand on this.

Someone: I got involved with Occupy Sandy via the text loop; today was my first day volunteering... I had a comment and a question -- first, a question for the facilitators -- have you reached out to FEMA and the Red Cross representatives? And if yes, what was their answer? I just mean, because it would have been also helpful to hear what they have to say to respond to many of the comments from the members. And secondly, my comment is that I understand that any institution has its... its flaws, and any... [group of] experts has its professional myopia. Right? And patronizing attitudes towards non-experts. But from just my experience from the ground, so in Brighton Beach, I didn't see any other relief workers other than Red Cross trucks distributing meals. And there were lines, so it means that there is need, and they're responding to this need.

Brett: Sorry -- so, OK, I am going to have to cut you off; we'll have space later for questions and feedback; right now we'd just like to do very specific reportbacks on these topics. But there will be an opportunity to address some of your questions later.

PRESS

So, our next topic is the press.

Dana: Hi, I'm Dana; I work with the Occupy Wall Street PR team. So, just a quick history -- we got, you know, just one day info -- after Sandy hit -- there was an effort to put something out -- what I would lovingly call an ad-hoc press release -- that did not come through the Occupy Wall Street PR team. But after that, we rallied and have been doing outreach -- you know, trying to let members of the media who have been -- you know, who we've been in touch with for the past year

and beyond -- on what's happening as best we can on the ground -- letting them know, trying to do our best we can to connect the dozens of calls that come in every single day -- we haven't had phone calls like this -- press hotline: 347 292 1444 -- since last November. And... we've (inaudible) -- oh, just a little bit of the structure: there is a press email that comes in through Interoccupy; they get forwarded to the press team, and then there's all sorts of folks on the ground that I call, and others -- Luke, he picks things up -- I know Brett -- and I know the press is also -- just members of the press -- just come here, and we direct them just to the churches, and then we do our best to try to encourage them to go out with the crews to sites; a lot of members of the press want to talk to people out there and then there are the stories about what we're doing as well.

Dana passes the baton to Bill Dobbs.

Bill: I'm Bill, and just a little survey of the coverage, which is -- there's been a lot of it, in all kinds of platforms, print, TV, radio, online, local, national, and international - - much of it has been extremely sympathetic, as I'm sure you've seen; it's certainly got Occupy Sandy, Occupy Wall Street, and sometimes even the message of Occupy Wall Street in there. Much of it, though, is surface coverage; the deeper stories have not -- we have not yet begun to tell them.

And I want to also give two quick cautions: which is, let's not -- let's be careful about believing our own clippings, and I say that because you don't want that stuff to go to your head. It's important to keep this all in perspective and realize that, with everything else in mainstream media, we know to think about other sources of information we've got. And that's healthy. And the other lesson is that right now the press is with us. The press moves in a pack, and from our experiences last year with a huge amount of coverage, there are moments when you can see the press tugging at little threads, hoping to unravel everything. So the caution is, we've got to have our house in order. And just last weekend, there were some stories that -- some of which we were able to get to fairly quickly, about a connection between somebody arrested and Occupy. So be on the alert for that, and also realize that it's the good work that counts. Sometimes you get credit for it and it gets amplified and projected through the media, but don't confuse that with what we've done.

Rebecca: We're getting a -- I'm Rebecca. We're getting a lot of queries from local publications like New York Magazine and Time Out asking us about the most up-to-date information about volunteering, and the press team has been kind of scrambling to call, like, Coney Island, Staten Island, Red Hook, whatever, to get that information. So if you have projections going into the next two weeks for what kind of needs you're going to have. You know, is it distribution, is it rebuilding, what kind of volunteers you're going to need -- please do email press@occupywallst.org? Because I just got like five calls like that today, and it's impossible for me to project two weeks in advance.

COMMUNICATIONS STRUCTURES

Brett: OK, so our next one is some of the communications structures we've been using. Specifically, there are a handful of Twitter accounts, there's a Facebook page, and then there's also this internal Google Group. So we thought it would be a good opportunity if we, you know, identified some of the folks who are doing this outside communication, so we know who those folks are and who to talk to from our different sites if we need to get information out there. You know, so that we can identify who is doing that work.

TWITTER & FACEBOOK

So if anyone can speak to the Twitter groups... Lopi?

Lopi: Hi; I'm Lopi; the day after the storm, Bre and Bobby called me and said they were going out to the Rockaways and they'd started a Twitter and Facebook, and a WePay. And so I sat on Facebook all day and just gathered information, put it out... it went really viral really fucking quick. We have a Twitter; it was a few of us tweeting; it was really overwhelming... so that was the beginning of it. And then we got other people in to help us manage that, and then we... brought a group together, and then we were doing the @OccupySandy twitter, which grew so quickly... and then 520 Clinton started one and Red Hook has one, just sort of organically happened. So it basically evolved and grew exponentially, and now we have something like 15 managers on the Facebook page, we started a New Jersey

page, we started a Haiti page. So, yeah -- and somebody else can talk about the other Twitter... I know there's a new Yana twitter, which I don't think has been announced yet.

TWITTER & CELLY

Carrie: I would just augment that; I've been doing Cel.ly and the Occupy Sandy Twitter, and also Facebook now -- this all grew out organically as things happened, and they were being done by a diverse group of people, and not necessarily that consistent. We've been working this week and last week to make them more consistent. So updates will go out on the cel.ly, Twitter, and Facebook, and it will all the same information and not different. And definitely all the locations, now that Interocc has created new Twitter accounts for each location, so we're organizing with those different accounts in those different locations.... so we can all have the same messaging. Everybody should be following @OccupySandy and also the other locations' Twitters. ...And there's a lot of admins going on, because there's a lot of people asking questions, so if anyone has experience with Facebook and Twitter and wants to help, we can always use help answering the questions on the @OccupySandy Twitter and cel.ly loop... But the big message is that we're getting it to be more consistent across all our social media platforms so that.... it'll all be coming from the same people who have verified information.

Brett: So, the one other thing that I'd like us to hit on before we move on is... there is a Google group that's being used for coordination and communication. I got on it somehow, and I have no idea how. So if anyone knows how other folks can join it, I feel like this is a good place to announce that.

GOOGLE GROUP

Lopi: There's about four admins on the Google list; I'm one of them, if you want to email me, I can add you... " Someone suggests that there's a way to email to subscribe. We'll put the info on how to join on the wall before the meeting is over. [You can send an email to sandyrecoverycrew+subscribe@googlegroups.com to send a subscription request. -Ed.]

Dalit: All right, great. So we're going to move onto where are we now, this is... yes?

LOCATION-SPECIFIC TWITTERS

Badger wants to explain the different locations' Twitter accounts.

Badger: About the Twitters at the different locations -- on the website, we've been trying to get all the Twitter accounts to use them as comms, to get info from sites as quickly as possible. It's been challenging keeping up with the flow of info coming in, and that effort has started, but we need more people, particularly in the Rockaways.. need someone to really be on it. And then we do have a special Twitter account, @SandyUpdatesNY -- anything that gets tweeted from @SandyUpdatesNY lands on the homepage of the website. And that's for a specific purpose; this should be for current needs and requests for the different locations. And we also want to share that we have a separate Interoccupy hub which is for kind of internal coordination needs, and that's interoccupy.net/sandycoord. And what you'll find there is links to a bunch of forms for different things, like you need to make an update to a locations that we have listed on the site; if you need to post needs for a location -- things like that. If you need to add a new location that we don't know about, there's a form for that. If you want to post requests for the Amazon registries -- I think we have four registries going now. So if you're at a location and you need stuff to be sent from Amazon, there's a form for that as well. And then there's also a form for -- we're sending out emails a couple of times a day out to all of the volunteers with volunteer opportunities, and there's a form on that page, also, where you can submit, you know, requests for that email, to go out that night.

AMAZON GIFT REGISTRY

Sam: Just two things that I wonder if they should be added to this section -- it doesn't have to be if no one's interested -- but we also have an Occupy Sandy wedding registry on Amazon, which is an enormous way that goods have been coming in. So, if there's time... I can speak to that. And also I think another question, of the origin story of the recovers website and what our relationship is to recovers and the hotline. I can't speak to that, but that might be another thing...

Dalit: Do people want to hear about the Amazon registry? Briefly? I see some uptwinkles; no downtwinkles, so that's a yes.

Brett: Can you do it quickly?

Sam: A couple of folks came in, wanted to volunteer, saw that we were getting a lot of things we didn't need and not the things we did, and they independently set us up a wedding registry on Amazon, and listed stuff there that they thought would be good. And then started working with me to ask the sites what would be good. The process is imperfect, and the construction crews have also asked and talked directly to the folks that are managing that project -- it's three folks. And there are now other Amazon wedding registries specific to sites, and there's a google form for getting things on the registry that if you need more information about you can talk to me.

Dalit: And the Recovery.org pages? Do people want to hear about that? Those were the websites that in the beginning were affiliated with Occupy and were also sourcing volunteers....

Brett: Premo can talk about it.

RECOVERS.ORG

Premo: Hi; my name is Michael Premo. A little bit on recovers.org -- it was a project of 350.org as well as some other people who were involved with the technical aspects of Occupy Wall Street, who were developing a platform to allow communities to create community-driven microsites on their site to be able to direct volunteer support, as well as donation support, to disaster relief in particular communities. I believe this is maybe the 5th or 6th use of it, but the first sort-of full-scale disaster - large-scale disaster -- use of the website, and I think the first site was Lower East Side, and then Staten Island, and each site also had a hotline, which was a Google voice number, so people who had power or aren't in the affected areas could see and know what was going on and direct resources to people who needed it.

Rasul: Just a question -- I thought I was clear; I'm at Yana; I need stuff; I've been putting it on cellybot and sometimes it comes and sometimes it doesn't. What's not clear is all of these other routes being described -- do they invalidate mine? And the other question is, once it goes out, is it going out to Jacobi or 520 and what's the coordination between them in getting us what we want?

Sam: I can speak to some of that; I don't think that there's any one thing that invalidates any of the others; I think that everyone has been reaching out for what they need, and most people have been very successful. I can speak specifically to the Amazon registry stuff -- the main one, the mailing address is 520 Clinton; UPS brings it to us, and -- but they've also been incredibly helpful with... helping to distribute, as well, to the sites that request those things. The tools have been routed specifically to the construction crews that have requested them; they're not, kind of, generally available.

Josh: So, when you have a need, I'm not sure how the needs get filed, but the Google drive that has all this information has a form with all the needs and the orders of every site so far. And then it's real-time updated between St. Jacobi, Clinton, and RH. And when a group is sending out an order to one of the sites, they'll mark it as sent. But there's not a system in place to keep track of the things they did not manage to include in that order. So... how do I say this? If you don't get one of the needs in one order, there's a lot of flow, so please ask again and we'll make another order, and that will get sent out.

Rasul: OK, so when it goes out on cellybot, whatever we need will -- the Google or whatever --

Josh: Yeah.

Brett: OK, we need -- we need to stop the back and forth.

Rasul: Sorry.

Brett: We have a lot here to still get through, and hopefully when we move into this next section, “Where are we now?” and folks report back about the work they’re doing on the ground, they can also share concerns and feedback for how it’s been going for them, so then as we move into the “Where are we going?” we’ll figure out ways that we’ll be addressing all of these issues.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Dalit: So, the next section is “Where are we now?” We’re going to do the same format of getting reportbacks from people. The big overarching thing that we’re looking to kind of figure out and hear about is in what stage different sites are at, and I know within each site there’s a lot of sub-sites, but to get a general sense of whether different sites are still engaged in active... direct service relief -- meeting basic needs; this is what we were doing most of at the beginning -- feeding people, if they don’t have heat and water... sort of meeting those basic needs. Once sites have sort of gotten a handle on that, as electricity comes back, as heat comes back; sites have been transitioning into doing recovery work, which is assessing the situation and canvassing and seeing what the needs are as we move out of that first phase. And then the third main area is rebuilding... which is the more big project, you know, as it sounds -- actual construction and things like that.

RECOVERY SITES

So... we’re going to start with the Rockaways. Is there someone that can speak to what’s going on over there?

Someone: There’s a lot of different sites.

Dalit: Right.

Someone: There’s a lot of different things going on.

Dalit: Is there someone that has a sense of the whole area, that’s been...?

ROCKAWAYS

Diego, clowning: I know I'm short, but come on.

Laughter.

Diego, still clowning: They're like, stand up, stand up!

More laughter!

Diego: So, like, an overall of the Rockaways -- my name's Diego. So, pretty much, you know, the day after the Red Hook Initiative -- stop it Rasul. The day after the Red Hook Initiative was established, a group of us went out to Rockaway to scout - - I've got to give props to Premo, Bobby, Shlomo, and, like, mad props to [Laura?] who's not here, but, like, she really made Jacobi happen with Juan Carlos and everything to, like, initially start that -- we were promised just storage for just a couple of bags -- just, like, a couple of bags... and then it turned into, like, a shitshow. Which is very well organized.

More laughs!

Diego: So we went out there in Yana -- and Yana is at 113th Street... completely destroyed a block; I think a lot of you have visited, and we sort of were looking for a location, and there was a man there whose name was Sal who said his business was destroyed. Premo, Shlomo and myself were like, "Hey, can we use this location?", and he was -- gave us the keys and was like, "That's exactly what I want to do, I want to make a community center." And the rest is history, and it was beautiful. I got to give mad props from Yana -- you know, from Chris, Jessica, Sofia, Miguel, Christine, Terry, Gabi, doing a kick-ass job.

Went out to, then, 100th Street, where a church just like this one was completely established as a distribution center. We focused on doing community building; getting a lot of the folks who were doing -- who were living in the -- in the communities, who were affected themselves, to take over the jobs that -- that we

were initially doing. And so -- that -- we were successful with that at Yana, and that's why, like, 100th street was able -- like, completely run by the community.

And then, from there, you know, Bobby and some folks were doing Veggie Island stuff.

And from there, you have 59th Street, where... Jessica, and a community member, Bre who's here today -- and just holding it down, like, the projects over there which is just -- just mad crazy, and just really, really, like, important, you know to have the places that were not, like, had any -- like any support at all.

From there, you had 38th street, with a lot of good folks, who were great -- who went down there, and we had a lot -- I don't know if the -- the French folks are here. Where's... [Rockaways crew starts clowning: "Bruno... bruuuno!"] Where's Bruno? And -- yo, those guys are awesome. But anyways, from there -- I'm almost done. From there, we continued down to the Red Fern projects where homeboy Luke over here has been holding it down, working with a lot of community folks and just doing a lot of the grassroots mobilizing, and...

We've even gone down to 25th Street and on, where a bungalow was donated to us. It's sort of like guerilla warfare out there, and it's just been, like, you know, turning, like, private property into, like, public property, right? [Whooping from everyone for that. -Ed.]

That's really what it's been, and it's been an amazing, incredible journey.

Diego pauses for a second, speaking to others from Rockaways.

Diego: You want to continue? You good? Right, because transitioning is really, like -- we're now focused -- as, like, initially it was, like, emergency relief, right? Just, like, our emergency recovery -- everything, like, food and water, and as fast as you can -- everyone's, like, you know, really really in a hurry -- but then, as we're transitioning more, it's, like -- it's a longer-term, like, political education -- we're doing a lot of one-on-ones with a lot of community members, sitting them down

and being like, “Hey, like, you know, let’s talk about disaster capitalism; let’s talk about how to build community; let’s talk about how to do some of that community, like -- what it means to be an organizer.” That transition is happening, and also, like, a lot of the stuff that, like, Andy and Terri and Gabi are doing -- that team of folks, going into, like, the actual homes and gutting a lot of the -- you know, the process of gutting is a very rigorous process, and it’s very important, but it’s very hard for folks, you know, to see their homes literally be destroyed... and then, you know, that’s -- and then of course now the health issues.

So we’re transitioning more to, like -- pivoting from a more, like, you know, emergency recovery to a more, like, longer-term, you know, issue-based, you know... just building community. Because we know -- you know, the long term is what we’re thinking of. So that’s sort of where Rockaway as a whole is going. Oh, yeah, and alternative energy, which includes, like, political education -- we have to address, like, why this happened, you know, what is happening now with developers and disaster capitalism, and, like, what is possible. And so those are sort of, like, our main framework -- like, what is possible? It’s sort of, like, what we’re going to start using Thanksgiving for is, like, this huge platform to really launch, right, what is going to happen? And, like, the whole political education aspect.

Oh, and Greenpeace -- oh, fuck yeah.

Laughter, cheers. “Whoop-whoop,” someone shouts.

Diego continues: Greenpeace has been on the ground from the beginning, fucking powering our asses. Josh is here -- I saw his long, sexy hair.

Laughter.

Diego: And Jesse -- yes, Jesse. Oh, man. So that -- I want to just shout out that a lot of Greenpeace folks have been on the ground and just, like, really doing a lot of the hard work. I’m sure I missed a lot of folks. But that’s sort of, the, like -- the overall picture -- I’m sure I missed a lot of folks.

And yes, yes -- we did turn a fur shop into a medical center, but...

More cheering at that.

Luke: I would just -- just -- not to repeat anything Diego said, but just the numbers for what happened out there? Which is now... at one point, I guess 14 different sites -- again, community-run, and what actually happened from all those sites was direct distribution.. it was outreach, for assessment, and also to return with emergency supplies. And it's now down to... I think 6 plus... 3? I guess 9 in -- or maybe 10 in the Rockaways? Sites that are still active and still community-run. And...

Folks are chiming in around him.

Luke: 7? 7 is the number? It's 9, I think -- I just did the math in my head. So, it's going well -- we'll be in the conversation, I'm sure, later on again. Thanks.

Whoops again from around them.

Dalit: Anyone want to add to that... who has a sense of the overview of the Rockaways?

Corey: I just want to add a quick thing, that -- something that I experienced. I was at Yana, and when... I was just hanging out, waiting for an assignment, I was talking to a woman, and I can't remember her name -- her name might have been Lisa? She had expressed that on Sunday, that the overall amount of work coming in -- requests for people to go out on jobs to do cleanups and houses -- has significantly gone down this past weekend. I don't know if that's what anyone else is experiencing; this is just what she had told me, just -- on Sunday.

Someone talking to him from Rockaways zone of the pews. "What's that?"

Someone: I'm actually waiting for a woman, Aria Doe -- she's supposed to be here. But I've been working with her now for about two weeks, out in the Far

Rockaways at Beach Channel Drive and 57th Street, at the Action Center, and it's still an emergency mode out there. They were reporting today that everyone had heat -- on, you know, NYCHA was saying everyone -- but floor-by-floor, people still don't have heat. All of the FEMA claims are being denied; you know, you go into an apartment, they're 14 people, and their babies in wet, moldy cribs. There are some serious health issues. It's been... you know, Aria's been working out there and run these after-school centers since 2001, and... she's really deeply affected by what she is seeing. And... so we have started huge drives to do what we can to get media, people, attention, as people are coming in really sick. We finally -- I've been on the phone all day with the Red Cross; got the Red Cross out there to deliver cleaning supplies. But the only people who've been out there have been, you know, some mothers' groups, and then calling Occupy Sandy, who's been delivering stuff off and on, but it's been hit-or-miss. We really need people; we really need volunteers. There's not a lot of people out there -- we really need people to help to go into some of these apartments in the projects, help people clean their apartments... help them so that they can then get their kids to doctors. We've set up a little medical center inside this afterschool program, and it's really been an exhausting, Herculean task with very few people, trying to support -- you know, officially there are 10,000 people living in the projects -- if you look at the stats, that's, like, 2.5 -- 2.3 per apartment. The apartments we go into there are 14 people living in there. So there are a few people who are really trying to support the needs of a small city. And this small city still doesn't have heat; it still doesn't have electricity in all the units. There are children who are really, really sick. So, I'm wrapping it up; I wish she were here, but that's what's going on in the Far Rockaways.

K: I went out three weeks ago; been working with Diego, Greg... and my commentary... what I'm trying to do is facilitate. from back here... better logistics and support for the guys who've been out in the field for 2 or 3 weeks more -- or, 2 weeks more than when I got here. So, talking to Bre and Jessica, who are working at B57 -- I'm going to be -- I'm going to be short. Talking to them when I first got here, and working in the housing project there, and the commentary to the woman over there -- I think there's a lot of sites that are doing better and well, based on what the guys have been out there -- like Yana, like 38 -- but I think there's a lot of

need for, like, Mrs. Doe in the 57s down there, that need to be addressed as well. I think we're doing a lot of good work; seeing the overarching system, I think there's a lot more help that needs to be done. Am I right Bre?

Bre: Yes, you're right.

K: So, I just want to make that point, that -- I know we all know this, but we're not done in the Rockaways. At all. And I think there's a lot of places, in town, in the 50s and otherwise, that do still need the same amount of attention that we have to 113 and other places.

Someone: (inaudible)... you know, we're just barely touching... Far Rockaway needs a lot more help than what we have right now. FEMA and Red -- Red Cross, I mean... yeah, they show their face; but showing they face is not enough. Actually, we need more than them to come out, the National Guard -- we actually need to knock on people's doors, because there's a lot of people that can't come out. They're used to routines that they do every day -- and now that we have this Occupy Sandy coming in -- I mean, this Hurricane Sandy coming in -- "Hahah. "Excuse me. Now that we had Hurricane Sandy come in, it has stopped their lives. And due to the fact that they stopped, they're depressed; they're getting lonely. So we need more than just water, food -- we need love, unity." Applause. "We need help. We need more than one person speaking. It's a village, not just one person. So if we all can just unite and learn from each other, we might just get somewhere further than what we are now."

"That's right," many murmur in the crowd."

K: We had a lot of people going out, and it's starting to peter down. So, one thing I want to do -- this is my agenda, in terms of recruitment -- we need more volunteers immediately. And we can keep on doing the work we're doing, and I'm -- and I'm... not nervous; I am encouraged and challenged, that we need people to start doing that immediately. So, that's my overview of what I see out there. So.

Brett: So I'm seeing a handful of hands; people are starting to repeat each other. So, if it's things that absolutely need to get to everyone in this room, so that we understand what's happening on the ground, like, we can take it, but we should start moving forward. So I saw one over here, and then one in the back.

Someone: I just want to point out that electricity is up in a lot of the projects because of outdoor, massive generators. That is a health crisis in the making, and we are gonna see -- and we are seeing already, enormous symptoms coming out of that. Symptoms coming out because of the generators that are plugged into these buildings. That's how they're getting lights right now. That is a disaster in the making. The people that are out there -- the police officers that are directing traffic; you see them sometimes wearing those flimsy masks -- that's even worse than not having it at all. It's concentrating whatever fumes that are -- noxious fumes inside of their masks. So, that's just in terms of civic workers, but the kids that are standing by bus stops; people going to plug in their phones -- all of that; they are getting -- we are all getting, who have been out there, and I've been out there now for weeks too... That has to be addressed, because that's their long-term solution to put electricity on, and that is -- it's really serious. We're going to see what we saw after 9/11. We're going to see serious increases in health conditions in people living out there and working out there.

Brett: We're going to take one more, and then we're going to move on.

Someone: Speaking to the Far Rockaways-- we need to... most effectively learn how to route willing and able health care professionals, who've already been out there. At 57-10 Beach Channel Drive, there's been a clinic that opened up Friday, and guess who prompted the clinic -- was Tyson Chandler's wife, right? So that it wasn't -- it wasn't us, but Occupy Sandy -- Ms. Doe requested whether or not Occupy Sandy could get some medical health professionals out. So, Mt. Sinai, [Montefiori], NYU have been sending, and have teams ready and willing -- and they don't know where to go now, because the clinic petered out after Monday. And we don't know if that's the site that is the best site for this clinic. Right? Because there is a clinic called the Adobo Family Health Clinic that's open in the area; the local

pharmacies have re-opened.. but there are tremendous health needs in that community. But how do we match them? What do we do and where do we site it?

Someone: I've been in the Rockaways, and I -- there's not enough time to go into it, but there's definitely some restructuring going on, so... we'll have news.

Brett: We will have a section for medical dispatch; we'll have a section for legal; we'll have a section for housing -- so we can address some of that as we get to it.

Dalit: And also at the end, you know, we encourage obviously everyone to talk to the people that you had a question for, and, to, you know, get in touch via, you know, the Internet and other ways that we can find each other.

So, the next area that we're going to talk about is Staten Island.

Goldi: Hey, I'm Goldi. Just before Staten Island -- is the Lower East Side on that list? Because it's probably not?

Dalit: It's not.

LOWER EAST SIDE

Goldi: So, the Lower East Side was out of power for a long time -- well, 4 days, 5 days. And... we operated out of CAAAV and out of GOLES down there, and sent over a thousand people to the tops of every building to make sure people were OK. And we did that before any other organization got there, so... kudos to Occupy GOLES and CAAAV for that.

STATEN ISLAND

Staten Island... is kind of a different territory. It's not as densely populated; the people there are really... they love their homes and they stand by their homes. So what we did originally when we first got out there was identify a few key hubs, and supplied them with volunteers and supplies. More recently, we have a hub now at 1128 for Occupy and St. Margaret Mary Church, where we're operating for the last

week. Receiving supplies; we have a Free Store there, and an office set up to intake volunteers and dispatch them on work jobs or supply runs.

It's still... large areas without power... we went canvassing -- we've sent some crews out canvassing -- every day we send out canvassers. And on Saturday, people in one household were cold, hungry, and needed water. And there is probably more of these people, and winter is coming on, and we're really getting worried that there may -- Occupy Sandy may need some kind of emergency heating system, because I'm sure FEMA and everyone else is not even thinking about people that do not have heat. We're really lucky, due to global warming right now, but... it's going to get cold, and it would be really cool if Occupy Sandy prompted that through even... some kind of -- we have the infrastructure here just to send out a release and a grand plan to take care of anybody for anyone to request heat from OS- we give them a generator or a solar panel, or whatever it takes; I think it would be a great idea and may prompt the federal government into action by following our lead.

George: And quickly, I'm George... [I'm organizing at (inaudible) with (inaudible)...] Antonia. Also at St. Margaret Mary's, we're building a tool library to start on reconstruction; we're contacting some carpenters, electricians, plumbers in the area that have been coming to volunteer, to see if they can go out and assess homes - also give trainings to our volunteers in the region, on demolition and very simple reconstruction work. We're trying to partner out with team that's going out to the Rockaways to eventually get some help over there as well. Another really interesting and amazing thing that's happening in the center that we opened - much like what's happening in the Rockaways - is a lot community members are coming to us as they're getting on their feet to run the center, and so we're trying to start up a little education on that front. Also Make the Road, a community organization that deals primarily with hispanic immigrants and the laws they have to - the legal issues they deal with around immigration - have partnered with us and are renting out a space in the center that we have to canvass the hispanic community in Staten Island. So I think it's a really interesting and great partnership, and it could be a model for all of these hubs to partner with issue-based organizations to get this information out to communities to organize around those issues and to build

together and connect all of these issue. So hopefully some really great things can come of that. Again, Staten Island is utterly devastated; there are people coming every day with medical needs; we need more and more doctors to come and fill prescriptions and get that to the elderly and homebound. Today we had to pick up morphine for a man with cancer and deliver it to his home; he hadn't had his medication for 2.5 weeks. So this is something that's incredibly serious and we need as much medical help as we can get out there right now."

Someone: I was at SI a few days ago and helped set up an impromptu medic clinic out there. Since we got there, we've been able to get tetanus shots to people and we're also working on getting flu shots. Medical need has been hard to supply because people who need help don't know where we are - there has been a lack of communication between groups, so there will be groups on corners far away who don't know that we're there - so it's been really hard to get together to find where folks are, because the communities differ so much. So there needs to be more communication. But that's being worked on, which is really great. We've got the nurse's union helping us... it's going pretty well, there just needs to be more communication. That's (inaudible); that would be great... (inaudible).

Arielle: [Inaudible section begins at 1:14:06 and ends at 1:15:40; it's the only sizable gap. Sorry Arielle! -Ed.] Another issue we're having is getting out to Staten Island and routing people through, especially 520 - we were hearing on past weekends it was taking 2 hours from the time they left 520 to get out to 1128. Also from here it's a little bit closer but not quite close enough, so we're working on how we can route people directly out there without coming through here, but we also need supplies and other things going out there with people, so those are some things we're working on.

CONEY ISLAND

Brett: So, we really need to keep going -- we have a lot of sites that we need to get through. So, can someone speak for Coney Island? Er, about Coney Island. Not for it.

Dan: The status in Coney Island is... it's kind of right on that, right on the cusp of getting out of that first response state right now. Although a lot of parts of it are very much in that first response kind of state. Right now we know that we're working out of 6 NYCHA public housing developments where we have distribution centers - storage centers where we keep things down there; sort of like mini-hubs so that we can do canvassing and outreach to homebound populations. We're working with a group called The People's Relief who was down there the Tuesday after the hurricane, and has developed a list of about 700 homebound people who they know across NYCHA and across different neighborhoods around Coney Island, roughly from Stillwell Avenue all the way out to Seagate, where they've been canvassing on a daily basis, kind of scheduling routes... We have a couple medic trailers down there now that are for the long term; they have no plans on rolling out, or phasing out, right now. As far as our church at 2828 Neptune. We do know that as of today, a FEMA crew went to one of our sites; I was talking with them - they're shutting down operations with FEMA and OEM as of Friday at the MCU station, which I think is a pretty bad idea. We're talking about what the other presences there are out there today, and who is really going to be able to kind of be out there, if FEMA and OEM aren't - not that that is that big of a presence. And it basically it comes down to, Occupy Sandy working with City Harvest; we're making scheduled deliveries down to the public housing sites of a ton of food and different supplies. We're sort of trying to sort of craft as much as now with FEMA and OEM that that is probably not the best idea, that they need to be there at least through December, and they need to be prepared for that. So as people see this in other areas of the city, they'll approach you... and they're doing needs assessments this week. I think by the end of tomorrow they're trying to file all of the needs assessments for all of the affected areas of the city. So if you see them, be very honest with them about what is actually needed on the ground, and be honest about with them about how long the FEMA, Red Cross, OEM presence is actually needed. If they do pull out and it is just us, we just heard from City Harvest that Mayor's office is expecting City Harvest and us to be the presence down there. NYCHA is as well -- there is a NYCHA tenants association meeting tonight, where most of the TAs came out to talk - it was not as - the issues that were discussed were not wide-reaching at all.

Someone shouts: What's NYCHA?

Dan: Sorry. NYCHA is the New York City Housing Authority, the authority that maintains all the public housing in the city. They have, I think, somewhere around 9,100 apartments in Coney Island, which we're hopefully kind of capturing with coverage down there. NYCHA kind of took the credit for the canvassing that we did down there, but we're going to sort of shake that off. We're working hand-in-hand with them, they've let us into their spaces to run distribution centers; we're thinking of opening up some more localized medic centers down there the week after Thanksgiving that can have a longer-term presence. Although we are losing two sites as of Friday, we plan on being down there for the long run. And we're working directly with the tenants associations there, who are overseeing that as well.

Premo: Just to add to that, a little context -- the history of the specific sites. The first couple sites -- the first site was Ms. Reed, a tenant association president who running a shop on her corner, who we were supporting with the chaos she was dealing with by setting up a pop-up stand on the corner. The second two sites were at a mosque down the street as well as Coney Island Tabernacle Church. The mosque is run by Brother Sharif and the mosque community -- it's community-led, community-staffed, community-sourced - they engage directly with the recovery lines getting what they need. As well as the Coney Island Tabernacle - a beautiful community - I go there for amazing seafood soup in the lunch - I highly recommend anyone doing that. They are completely community-led, community-supported and engage directly with the network. 2828 Neptune is a large church, which was supporting many different efforts that were using that particular site as a space to serve the immense need in the community -- that space is phasing out soon as Sister Connie and Sister Margaret and the church leaders try to regain some sense of normalcy in their community there.

There's potentially another site, which is a church that was decimated by the storm; assessors from our cleanout crew were there today to make an assessment around that - we'll hear about that in the coming days, about the viability of what that church community wants to do and how to they want to engage with us.

People's Relief started the following weekend, and is a group of members of OWS and Decolonize NYC, who are helping run an amazing medical effort that is getting up to those 5 sites that Dan mentioned - represent blocks of 5 buildings, some of them. So there's at least 18-25 large towers where there's still no heat; some of them have power come on, but there are still people up in those buildings that have been stuck there. And I think that's it for Coney Island."

Brett: Anything else absolutely essential to add about Coney Island? OK, Red Hook.

RED HOOK

Vincent: For time being, our distribution center is located at 110 Wolcott; the distribution needs in the community have started to slow down, and as I said before, different organizing groups are forming and we need to understand how we're going to begin to participate with them. For time being, we have a group being formed called the Red Hook Coalition -- that is being formed - I'm not fully understanding how it's going to operate, but it's being administered by Christine Quinn's assistant, local non-profits... they are taking charge of the canvassing and coordinating of volunteers. It's up to Occupy Sandy-affiliated organizers to determine if that's where we're going to be where we continue to send Occupy Sandy resources and volunteers.. I can be a liaison for that discussion and I could use some help having that conversation after this meeting. There's still a general need for food in Red Hook, given that one of the largest markets, the Fairway market, was destroyed and hasn't opened yet - nor will it. As we move forward, a series of community meetings began last week by some Occupy-affiliated organizers who were not choosing not to participate in these organizing structures that have political affiliations with city, with the National Guard, with the police - in coalition with some of those volunteers as well, and some of those organizers as well.

We started a community meeting mostly to respond to the needs that we heard from people throughout the community, and give them a forum to speak, and just to facilitate that conversation. Once folks got in the room, we found the most urgent needs were those of the residents of the NYCHA buildings -- when the meetings began, the services had not been on for two weeks. Although those

services have been restored to varying degrees, many homes have mold damage, they have wet ceilings and walls, and the utilities aren't quite working. Also, folks are very concerned about quality of the water. Background: we have 10,000 residents in Red Hook in the NYCHA buildings; that's 75% of the Red Hook community. We also heard throughout these conversations that NYCHA was absent during the storm, that folks felt there was no accountability, and they were ready to act.

Out of these meetings demands have been proposed and an action is being coordinated, and on behalf of the RH community, we're prepared to announce that next Tuesday, the 27th, the RH community is calling for NYCHA residents and their allies to convene at the NYCHA offices at 250 Broadway - this is at 9 am - to hold a press conference and rally, where demands will be issued on NYCHA. The demands have not been formalized, but I can introduce some of the concepts to you -- as some of you may have heard, a rent credit is being offered for January; many folks can't wait that long. They have the holidays coming, they need to provide for their families. One of the demands may pertain to absolving rent for November and October. Further demands are being discussed to replace the NYCHA board with a community board, to employ the residents in the fixing of the buildings, to implement long-term power and weather-prepared solutions for these buildings, and to allocate federal funds to NYCHA to facilitate these demands. Furthermore, there's going to be a NYCHA board meeting December 5 at same location, 250 Broadway -- that's going to be a second action. There's being a call issued- as we've heard in this meeting, we know there are NYCHA buildings in Coney and in the Rockaways; RH community is inviting these other communities to participate in this event, to join us in conversation to coordinate these demands and to stand in solidarity. That's all.

OTHER SITES

Dalit: So there are a number of additional sites that we haven't been as involved in, but that are on the rise, and we've had some work in. So Canarsie, Sheepshead Bay, Gerritsen Beach, and Long Island - is anyone able to speak about any of those areas?

CANARSIE

Casper: I could just speak about Canarsie, briefly. This guy named Brandon, he's been out there in Canarsie and Flatlands, and they're doing an amazing job. They're self-sustaining themselves, we're just bringing slowly products and materials to them. A bunch of councilmen showed up just the other day, I believe yesterday. Like Al Sharpton and various other people, who were just scouting the sites, they actually went to 2828 Neptune as well. And there's locations in Canarsie that have been hit and it's devastating - the buildings and the basements, particularly on the first floor and basement -- it's overwhelming -- but the community over there at Holy Church on Flatlands, on 98th Street has been doing an amazing job; they're very happy that OS is bringing them material and whatnot. They're in stages of cleanup, and some areas still have power loss and need heaters. We are trying to assemble things -- we just finally connected with this girl named Karen, who has been doing an amazing job on her own canvassing by herself in these locations. She took me the other day, for the first time -- I grew up near there -- so she showed me the location, and certain areas are just devastated. And certain churches are connecting, we got them together to work intimately together as a unit to distribute materials. And right now in Canarsie they're self-sustaining but need materials from us. And by the way, the Holy Church has FEMA, the Red Cross, and all the housing organizations and others in this auditorium by the gym, and they've been working together side-by-side with that community. That's it for Canarsie.

SHEEPSHEAD BAY

Brett: Sheepshead Bay?

Stayc: Hi, I'm Stayc; I'm representing the Sheepshead Bay location on behalf of Gelsey, the site coordinator. We started setting up there about 2 weeks ago, and when we set up our pop-up location, which is basically just a table on the corner, the people came out -- they hadn't seen FEMA, the RC, they hadn't seen anybody. This is a community of folks that live in bungalows that are below street level, so you can imagine they flood when it rains, so when the water came it was really, really bad; their houses are destroyed, and they're all these little, tiny houses. We

set up a table; the need is there; the past two weekends we've been doing a cleaning blitz and need more volunteers on the ground. There was a decision made to kind of stop the table last weekend because the cleaning was done for that area - we've had a very small couple blocks of people that we've been helping very directly, but we definitely need more people out there. I did a couple of streets of canvassing yesterday and today with Casper - there's places we haven't even scratched the surface in that area - in that area, in Sheepshead Bay, in Brighton Beach, and the area in between Sheepshead Bay and Brighton Beach up to Neptune Avenue and Emmons Avenue. We need more volunteers on the ground. And it's become clear that obviously since it's getting colder we can't really have a pop-up table and volunteers working at that table forever, so we've been trying to find a remote location we can work out of, we went to Kingsboro Community College today, and we hopefully have a site that we can put our stuff in and hopefully work as a remote location out of there. If anybody's interested in coming out to Sheepshead Bay and Brighton Beach area, please get in contact with me or Gelsey, lots of us have been working on it, and we have some wonderful volunteers here who are from out of town who have set up renegade sites, and they're amazing and we love you. And yeah, that's all I have to say.

GERRITSEN BEACH

Premo: Gerritsen Beach -- we were there a week and a half ago; it's a community in Brooklyn across from Sheepshead Bay-- working-class, bungalow, a sort of "veteran community", single-family homes. A week and a half ago, most of the community had flooded and by the time we were there, the relief efforts were being coordinated out of the volunteer fire department - kind of crazy to think there's a volunteer fire department in New York City, but there are several. The relief was being coordinated out of the volunteer FD and there were two tanker trucks giving away free gas, every ConEd truck I've ever seen in my life... as well as National Guard people there helping little old ladies bring groceries inside their house. So after conversation we determined that it might not be a place that necessarily needed or wanted some of the resources we have to offer, but we've been keeping open lines of communication in case there are people that are in need there. But when we were there they were pretty well-covered.

LONG ISLAND

Brett: Can anyone report back on Long Island?

Becky: I have not been out there, but I got a call from somebody out there out in Oceanside while I was doing medical dispatch a couple of days ago, so if nobody else has a more direct reportback, I can talk about that. She said that in one neighborhood, a raw sewage pipe was burst, and the houses for about a 4-block radius were flooded with 2-3 feet of water containing a large amount of raw sewage, and all but one family is still staying there because they don't have another place to go. And as of 2 days ago, the pipe had not been fixed and was still spewing raw sewage into the bay.

LI: We had one call at Rockaway for Inwood, which is in Nassau County, and we were able to send a work crew out there. This guy had been living there since the storm. His brother was calling, the basement was still a mess, water, sludge, et cetera.

SERVICES

Brett: So, we're going to move on; we really need to power through the next ones. Legal, construction, housing, tech, and kitchen. If folks who are doing those things could each give us the essentials in a minute, that would be awesome, so that we can continue. So folks who can speak to medic?

MEDICAL DISPATCH

Medical: I've done medic dispatch in Common Ground -- medic dispatch exists for volunteers to contact us essentially for us to get doctors out to establish needs of clinics and hopefully provide the clinics with what they need. However, there has been an issue with sites not coordinating with one another; I don't know what's at 520 Clinton, just Jacobi; I can't get out what's on the Twitter, instead I can only request things from other groups, because I don't understand the wedding registry, neither do I have access to it, which has been a problem. We have fielded calls from people who said they were referred to us by the RC, which was interesting if not a little funny. We've dealt with more than 100 medics, doctors, paramedics EMTs, street medics, who are trying to help, as well as basic volunteers who have

simple things like CPR and First Aid knowledge. We've canvassed high-rises for dead bodies and have found, so far, none, which is nice.

Becky: Basically one of our big concerns now is we need to know what your needs are -- at all of the sites. We have doctors, we have a list of medical supply needs, we have a ton of First Aid stuff, we're not in that intense triage situation anymore; now we're dealing with long-term things -- we need things like nebulizers, facemasks for nebulizers, insulin test strips, oxygen tanks. We can give you a list, if you want it, come find us. We need to know what your needs are so we can get them met; we're not psychic and can't just send you things, and don't expect us to just show up.

You can contact us at osmedicdispatch@gmail.com. Number: 646 470-7256.

And also, out in the Rockaways, the reason they may have seemed a little bit less visible in the last couple of days is because they're currently restructuring to try to set up a new centralized medical space in two donated trailers and they're using the opportunity to reassess the needs of community, and how best to address them, and sort of looking at it for the long run. And also, I'm going to report back on another part that's not on here, which is Wellness -- especially volunteer wellness. You all are doing a lot, you all are amazing, you all are taking care of other people in really intense situations; you're not necessarily doing a great job taking care of yourself. I've seen lots having meltdowns, getting burned out, working really long hours, and I want to try to make sure that there are resources available to you. I've set up a couple of what I've been calling "Calm Hubs" at Jacobi and Clinton, which are quiet spaces that we have a pretty steady stream of body workers going through. I would love to get those set up out at other sites. I just don't know who to talk to. So if you're a coordinator from one of the other sites, talk to me. I also want to get mental health people out into the field, working with volunteers who have seen a lot traumatic stuff as well as the people who live in those neighborhoods. Y'all are great; drink some water and get enough food and sleep.

OK, next: Legal.

LEGAL

Legal: Hi, I'm Jen from Legal; so... OS legal formed basically to try to help coordinate all the lawyers and law students that are doing stuff around this. And so, we've been trying to help set up clinics where they don't already exist and recruit more volunteers for them where they do. Similar to medical, we need to know where legal clinics are needed; we know everywhere, but especially high-traffic areas where lawyers can meet lots of people in one day. FEMA applications, lawyers can help; insurance issues, landlord-tenant issues, other housing stuff. We have a flyer that lists a lot of the legal issues, which we're trying to get out to the hubs, so if you haven't gotten that please email us at occupysandylegal@gmail.com and email us if you have a place where you want us to send lawyers for legal clinics. And also, we need legal organizers, which - if you don't know what that means, I can tell you more in-depth later. But lawyers aren't organizers; there are a few of them that are also organizers, but most are just lawyers. So it really helps in communities like this for organizers to wrangle between and interface between them and affected communities. So if you're interested in doing that, we can show you how to plug in. So please do email.

Also, we need point people for legal on the ground, so even if you can't be a lawyer-wrangler, you can be the person thinking about legal in certain neighborhoods. Also, we're starting to do more hands-on legal help, more than just clinics, so there are a lot of people who can't leave their houses - -we're trying to get lawyers to people's homes, which is a whole other can of worms, but it's really necessary. So that's kind of the external legal picture.

Tom: I've been working with Jen; I just want to emphasize before I go into a few things that we really do need people to do legal organizing work. It's really easy; mostly it's emails and phone calls, talking to lawyers. It's really important. People are having a lot of issues with FEMA right now because they're not being responsive, and there are plenty of lawyers who would love to sue the Federal Government, because they can make money from that, but we have to be intermediaries. We have to get people what they want by using the law sometimes. So anyway, that's a serious thing. Please email us if you're interested in doing that work - occupysandylegal@gmail.com We also have waivers that we've been working

with lawyers to produce -- both for volunteers and for residents, homeowners, tenants, people whose places we're working on, as part of our internal legal stuff. It's really important that these waivers get out there and get signed, so I'm trying to get them out there everywhere they're needed -- if you're part of a construction crew, please sign a waiver before you do work somewhere. If you are working with homeowners, tenants, please make that they've signed a waiver before you're working on their place. And the last thing I'm going to talk about is really fun, it's this thing called anti-repression, which not many people know what that means. So, Common Ground was a people-powered relief and recovery thing that started in New Orleans post-Katrina, and they were infiltrated by the FBI. The state doesn't like what we're doing; as soon as they can get us out of the way and crush us, they're going to. So a group of us has formed to start doing anti-repression work to combat this. We've already heard plenty of reports of FBI visits to certain locations in the field; this stuff is real. If you have heard of those reports, please let us know, we can put you in touch with a lawyer - it's important to relay to lawyers. So if you're interested in doing any of that work, please let us know.

Brett notes that he's getting comments that camera work is getting aggressive, getting up in folks' faces a bit too much!

CONSTRUCTION

Brett: Next, if someone could speak to construction efforts.

Andy: So, I work with a crew of people who affectionately call themselves Respond and Rebuild; experience with disaster flood relief -- Indonesia tsunami, NOLA, Haiti. Some folks have been working since the first days, and we'd like to just talk about that. So, just in general, it works like this -- we pump out houses with a pump, like basements; we muck out houses, getting out mud and dirt; we gut houses, take out drywall and other destroyed items, and put it out in the street. We sanitize houses - that means we put different chemicals, natural and not, on affected surfaces to kill mold. And we finally build houses. So, this operation, in large scale -- and by the way, it's going on in other zones, but as far as maybe the doing -- very deeply involved in Occupy that's organizing large volunteer groups, it's only in the Rockaways. There are other volunteer groups, called All-Hands

Volunteers, Rubicon, which is soon to pull out of the Rockaways, which will switch to New York Cares...other groups who are doing the large-scale volunteer coordination cleanout we're doing. We have a large-scale tool area; it's on 74th and Beach Channel Drive; we do about 150 volunteers a day on the weekends and about 50-60 a day on the weekdays. We've done about 90 homes in the Rockaways. We're doing deconstruction -- I see rebuild on the board there; I might venture to say that when it comes to structure stuff, there has been very little rebuild; if there is, people might have put new drywall over moldy, bad wood. So rebuild is something one goes slow on.

Safety: wear a mask, please please please, when you go into a moldy house. Second, maybe you're not supposed to go into a moldy house. Maybe you shouldn't go into the house. Please don't go into a house where the owner is not present at. Please, please do not tear down people's walls. Please don't do that. I know people have, just think about it before you do. And the idea of going into a cleanout with no particular plan into an affected area is not a job; please don't do that; you'll be standing on the street sweeping the sidewalk and that's not an effective use of your time.

We at Respond and Rebuild think that these skills are going to be really important as the need transfers from direct and immediate need to rebuilding, so I would say that all of us should really start to learn some of these skills: assessment trainings, which means you know how to go to a house, write down what the damage was like, and learn how to create a workplan for a group of volunteers to come and fix that space. Also, team leader trainings (learning how to lead teams of unskilled volunteers out into homes), construction, plumbing, electrical skills. All these kinds of skills.

Lastly, reconstruction -- us folks have done a lot of development work and disaster work; we want to do it differently, we want to do it in a way that's participatory and sustainable. Thanks.

HOUSING

Housing, Nick: I'll try to be quick. About two weeks ago, some people got together, including myself- we created a Google form on the Internet for people that want to host a hurricane Sandy evacuee-- they fill out a forms, and we've been matching families across the Rockaways with these homes. We've had a lot of success, but as the week has progressed, we ran into some legal issues, and realized that it's beyond our capabilities to house people this way. Especially due to the fact that, as far as the housing aspect, FEMA has slowly started to step up and put people into hotels. So now our group is redirecting people and making sure they have access to these other resources from FEMA that are available. The Red Cross is trying setting up some more shelters for people, but there are some laws in NYC that are stopping them from doing that- I think that shelters can only be set up in New York City public schools, but since public schools are back in session, it's hard to create more shelters right now. They're trying to reach out to church organizations to find spaces not for us to set up shelters, but for people looking from these places.

TECH

Darrell: I do know that right now we need everybody to register on Sahana- - there's about 56 names on the list right now, and there are 300 people here. Sahana is the system that should make it easier to manage volunteers between sites, manage sites, and manage requests back and forth between sites-- it was specifically designed for disaster recovery. It's up and running now, the CEO who designed it is working with us on this; we should have a lot of support. When you request to get in, you also have access to that same system. helpny.sahanafoundation.org.

KITCHEN

Kitchen: I took a reportback from Norman today; the kitchen is up and running at St. John's Episcopal in Bay Ridge - 9818 Fort Hamilton Parkway; of course their very near-term focus is to start prepping for Thanksgiving. They need at least 40 volunteers for a day shift -- they have two shifts: the day shift is from 8am to 6pm. Again, they need 40 volunteers to cover the day shift. The evening shift is 7pm to 2am, they need about 15 volunteers for that, more would be great. If you have your own kit -- knives, etc -- bring it. They need help with communications; they want to get their own Google Voice set up so they can start directing intake, or just

communicating from the kitchen, and I imagine they would set up an email and Twitter account as well. Norman has a contact number but it's not public-facing, so I won't give it out here. Locations need to report back to the kitchen how many meals they need to be serving for Thanksgiving. So we need to get that up and running ASAP so we know how much food to make. Drivers need to be on hand to get that food out... and a van would be great to have on hand.

Ethan: Yes, volunteers are definitely needed; I set up that kitchen this morning, and volunteers with kitchen experience especially -- you don't send a nurse to do a lawyer's job, right? So just throwing bodies in the space doesn't help us; we need people who are focused.

OTHER

Next: We have a volunteer mailing list of more than 7k people who have registered with us as volunteers, so hearing requests for volunteers, it's important that people who need them fill out the volunteer request form on the Interocc website so that we can get them to you.

NEW JERSEY

Badger, speaking on Jersey: They've been organizing and they're using... they have conference calls every night at 9pm, if anyone wants to get on those calls to hear a lot more details about what's happening in Jersey, you can find those on the website. What they've mostly been doing as far as I know right now is canvassing, doing a lot of needs assessment; they're basically planning on having big volunteer days, mostly on weekends, Saturdays, where they're sending volunteers to communities in need. They've gotten a few unions on board to help out with their effort already and things are kind of really ramping up in Jersey now. That's pretty much all I have on Jersey. While I've got the floor, all of these email addresses and hotlines will be on the Sandy Coord Interocc site - so interoccupy.net/sandycoord - I'll try to get those up sometime tomorrow, so if you're missing some of them, you can check there. And if you don't see yours on their, you should contact us also. sandyweb@interoccupy.net to let us know to include it.

Brett: OK! That section only took a little over twice as long as we ambitiously thought it would, which both speaks to the amount of great work happening and amount of work that needs still to be done... We should not by any means feel guilty that it took this long, there was a lot to get out there, and this is really the first time we're holding all of these different groups and this whole network in one space, and it was going to take as long as it needed to take. Initially, we wanted to start holding the conversation of where are we going -- what's next for this project? But it's a quarter to 10; if we did smaller groups of... you know, people starting to talk about areas they've been working in, especially focusing on any feedback or conversations that you all have been having with the community itself and not just folks coming from outside doing organizational work. So if we start talking about where we see the needs of the communities we each have been engaging in, and what role we see ourselves playing, and how we move forward as the needs are changing. Does that sound like a good use of this time?

OCCUPY SANDY IN HAITI

Dalit: And before we transition, quickly, we're going to get a very quick report back on Occupy Sandy in Haiti.

Lopi: I just want to let people know that myself and two Occupy LA folks started an Occupy Sandy Haitian relief fund, and we have a fiscal sponsor with Give Love, who has done amazing work in Haiti. Just wanted to let people know that's happening; we're basically taking donations to start with water filters and will go from there, working with people on the ground in Haiti. Everyone in the group has worked extensively on Haiti, and have networks within there. I just wanted to let people know that that's happening. We're going to have a hub on Interocc soon - we have a Facebook page and a WePay and a Twitter so far. We'll be doing some events in the community to raise awareness that this is happening; some benefits, and we'd love people to get involved. So if you wanna get involved, go to the Facebook page and contact us. Thank you.

NEXT STEPS & BREAKOUTS

Zack: The report-backs about relief efforts have been incredible to hear, but I just have a question about- it seems like certain issues coming out of the storm are beyond our scope, just as volunteers doing relief -- such as the fact that there are 4 hospitals that are still partially or totally closed in the city -- that seem to be more political issues, and others mentioned NYCHA, the rent issue, and I'm asking if there will be forums to start to figure out a response to these types of question. And also, I'm a carpenter; I'm all for volunteer reconstruction, but I also know a lot of unemployed carpenters, and there's an unemployment crisis in the city and in the country and there are billions of dollars flowing into the city for reconstruction. So I guess I just wonder, where will we start formalizing responses to those types of questions?

Brett: So one way that we could utilize the next chunk of time, the next half hour or so, we could do it in an open-space style, where folks can say topics that they want to "host" a conversation on. So we've had all these different areas - so you know, this person was interested in having that more political side of it, he could host that conversation over here. People who are interested in starting to form longer-term construction plans, they can go over here. Folks who are working on community-building in Red Hook or the Rockaways can go over there. We can start creating more focused conversations for the next half hour that will maybe lead to action steps and things that we can start working on before we have our next big meeting. Does that sound interesting?

POP: I'm wondering how likely it is that we'll get back together after these breakouts, since it's 10, even though this seems vital.

Brett: Unfortunately, I don't think we'll necessarily have time to bring it back to the full group, but if we have these focused conversations they can maybe lead to work, and then at the next meeting we can fill in the gap. I don't think we'll have time to do both, but it would be great to have an opportunity for lots of people to talk to each other, instead of just one person talking.

Announcement: If you're an artist and are interested in plugging in, or if you know an artist, there's going to be a conference call on relief and recovery and talking about different artistic projects that have already been plugging in, and how artists can plug in in the future-

Brett: So if you want to hold a conversation about art, you can do that, but we can't start doing announcements now. So unless there are major concerns, I saw a lot of uptwinkles for doing an open space, I think it'd be great if we just got into these conversations.

Dana: Can we announce a time for the next meeting before we break into groups?

Brett: We don't have one necessarily. We can do the same time -- one thing that didn't come out yet is we're losing Jacobi on the 30th, so we're trying to plan what future looks like -- so if there is a space that would like to host it, we can plan for same time on Tuesday, and maybe location TBD... Folks connected with space say we can do it here next Tuesday. So that's our next meeting: 7:30pm next Tuesday.

BREAKOUT GROUP TOPICS

Conversations that will be held in "open space"-type breakouts:

- * Justin: "How we can create structures within spaces we're using that might meet long-term mutual aid."
- * Ethan: "Sending out food that isn't healthful to people already suffering isn't really mutual aid; it's adding insult to injury, so let's keep that conversation going about how to actually sustain people in the future."
- * Darraugh: "Want to have a conversation about ongoing community meetings, conversations about climate change, doing longer-term analysis of what we've been doing. I know some people have been working on setting up a schedule for the next couple weeks, but I'd love to hear from other hubs so we can maybe coordinate with that."
- * Rebecca: "Accountability breakout -- financial accountability, transparency, etc."
- * Darrell: "We need a map of worst needs, find how they're being addressed. We also have to coordinate with FEMA and figure out what we can get from there. And I

also wanna talk about talking with a voice, we have the exposure to actually get back and say something about NYCHA, the political bit that I'm sure other people wanna talk about."

- * Andy: "Sustainable, participatory deconstruction and reconstruction."
- * Becky: "Two things -- how to have better communication between hubs and sites. And volunteer wellness, which needs to know about all the different hubs anyway."
- * Shawn: "I'd like to talk about some immediate ways people can plug in to volunteer in RH -- exciting things, rent strike, inputting lots of data, unloading trucks, organizing comms."
- * "An urgent question with larger implications -- we had two reps from RC come to 520 this evening; asking if we could send them volunteers - and their stipulations for that: they couldn't wear any Occupy stuff, so yeah - I see lots of downtwinkles? OK, thanks."
- * Luke wants to talk about long-term volunteer outreach, social media, media, etc.
- * Bre: "Breakout groups for participatory budgeting, long-term process of setting up" money process in zones.
- * Austin: "Have been working with canvassing operation, figuring out how to track, want to talk to others doing that, maybe part of this mapping convo but specifically canvass data."
- * Someone says they "want to talk about what we're doing," political implications.
- * Easton: "Distribution between Amazon, hubs, affected communities." Will cluster with Becky.
- * Tammy: "Let's talk about how we can keep meeting and have effective conversation" and process. Will group with Becky and Easton.
- * Luke wants to talk about long-term volunteer outreach, social media, media, etc.
- * Bre: "Breakout groups for participatory budgeting, long-term process of setting up" money process in zones.

Someone: I'm finding myself wanting to clone myself, and be in all these breakout groups. I'm just wondering if there's a way for people to report back, so we can actually read what was going on in these groups. Maybe using some perfected form of communication that will be discovered in the breakout groups.

Badger: We can post all the notes on the Interocc site in the SandyCoord part in the minutes section.

Brett: Every breakout, please take notes and we'll get them to Badger to get on the site.

Rob: We're going to plan some workshop days, so if you don't get everything done tonight, stay in touch with people working with and then we'll get together and get more work done.

Jackrabbit lets folks know about Interocc conference calls, Monday and Thursday at 9pm - the information on how to call in is downstairs by the bathroom on the wall. But you can also go to interoccupy.net/sandycoord.

Ms. Doe, who has been working out in the projects in the Rockaways, has an announcement and wants to introduce herself.

Ms. Doe: Thanks very much; I'm Aria Doe with the Action Center. We're running the city right now; working with 45k NYCHA families, 65% of them live 200% below poverty levels; interesting to hear that everyone in NYCHA centers is running into same issues we're running into. So I want to make the links and talk to some of those agencies to see how they're correcting these problems, but also how we've done it as well. We serve 1k a day; appreciate that folks here have helped to do that and the question is long-term, and how do we sustain 1000 people a day with what we have now. We want to make sure we make links and get them coming directly to us so we can continue to work.

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