

Minutes from the Dutchess County Complete Count Committee Meeting on September 15, 2020

The Dutchess County Complete Count Committee held a virtual meeting on September 15th, 2020. Attending were committee members John Penney, Maffy Malaver, Gabriela Vega Matthews and L'Quette Taylor. Also in attendance were Eoin Wrafter, Commissioner of Dutchess County Planning and Development; Isis Benitez, Community Health Promoter at Planned Parenthood of Greater New York; and Linda Eddy of the Community Action Partnership for Dutchess County.

Penney said that over the weekend, Dutchess County exceeded its 2010 self-response rate and still had a few weeks to go to increase those numbers. He expressed disappointment that not all communities are achieving their 2010 rates, and the Complete Count Committee has been focusing on these areas and checking with the Census Bureau to ensure field workers are getting out in ample force to make up the difference. Penney said he has sent another wave of information — including an update, video links and fliers — to the Dutchess County Mayors and Supervisors Association, the Dutchess County School Superintendents and the Dutchess County School Boards Association.

Penney said he will continue to follow up personally with town leaders in places that are underperforming to see what more can be done to increase the count.

Eddy continues to attend events, including the recent Pine Plains clean-up day, and said while she has had some success getting people to sign up, COVID-era events are not drawing large numbers. She also said many people tell her they have already filled out their census or are reluctant to do so. She plans to be at other events in the next weeks and is working closely with Vega Matthews on this outreach. Eddy planned to be at the Family Partnership Center on Sept. 16 to do outreach and get people to fill out the census.

Eddy also is coordinating a project to create “census testimonial” signs. Vega Matthews, Benitez, Vega Matthews, Taylor and Committee member Mario Johnson all have agreed to participate. They are sending photos that will be put on the signs saying, “I completed the census, did you?” The signs will be planted throughout the City of Poughkeepsie

Barnes said some Complete Count Committees and census workers have had to work with owners and managers of gated communities to ensure access to these sites to get people to fill out the form in person. Penney conveyed that there is a concern there might not be enough Spanish-speaking census workers in the Poughkeepsie area, and Barnes said she would check on this with her Bureau colleagues.

Benitez said the Poughkeepsie Complete Count Committee is doing outreach at various events and that aided by Planned Parenthood's initiative, phone banking for the census has been completed in both Newburgh and Poughkeepsie.

Gabriela Vega Matthews said outreach efforts are continuing along Main Street in the City of Poughkeepsie, in Northern Dutchess and through a number of churches throughout the area.

Malaver said e-blasts, social media posts, radio and TV advertising in Spanish are very active on ABC Latino channels and people can find the form in Spanish on our website <http://servicios.abclatino.com/>

She also said she will make herself available to help people fill out the form from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays at ABC Latino's offices at 346 Main St.

Wrafter said he has worked through most of the issues regarding the reimbursement of money from the state that will go to local nonprofits working on census outreach efforts. The state has made about \$165,000 available for these efforts, and those receiving funds include the Community Action Partnership, ABC Latino, the United Way of the Dutchess-Orange Region, the Art Effect and the Child Care Council of Dutchess and Putnam, Inc.