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Bronx Community Board 12 June 25, 2020

The regularly scheduled meeting of Community Board 12, the Bronx, for June 25, 2020 was called to order via a WebEx virtual meeting, at 7:05 pm by the 1st Vice Chairman, Dr. Michael Burke, serving as Acting Chairman for the meeting.

II. Elected Officials/Representatives Report

The Chairman introduced those elected officials in attendance, or their representatives:

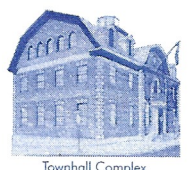
-Ms. Julia Danielowski, community liaison from Council Member Andy Cohen's office, introduced herself.

-Ms. Marilex Santana-Tavarez from the Bronx DA's office. She reported that youth programs have been suspended due to COVID-19, and their office is looking forward to reopening programs in October if conditions permit.

-Ms. Surey Miranda from Mayor De Blasio's office. She encouraged everyone to contact them for distribution of face masks. The mayor's office is optimistic about beginning the reopening of businesses but is mindful of avoiding further escalation of the virus. She noted the importance of using contact tracers to help mitigate the spread of the virus. 1st Vice Chairman Dr. Burke noted that agency recruiting Bronx contact tracers has not met expectations.

Acting Chairman Dr. Burke introduced State Senator Alessandra Biaggi. Senator Biaggi reported that her staff is working remotely but is still available to provide constituent services including provision of food. Her staff has distributed over 20,000 meals over the past few months. Maryann Joyce is her office's contact for constituent support.

Dr. Burke introduced Assemblyman Dinowitz who reported that the city and state are facing huge financial deficits, there will likely be large budget cutbacks this year due to the economic issues resulting from the virus. He noted that Assembly Member Andy Cohen is working hard on the City's budget.



-Ms. Alexis Ruiz from the Borough President's office reported that the Borough President has launched a virtual memorial site for all those Bronx residents lost to COVID-19. Board reappointment letters are going out soon.

I Public Gallery

Ms. Maria Matos/Census Bureau

Ms. Matos provided an update on the Census 2020 status. If a resident does not respond by August 11, 2020 census workers will begin knocking on doors. Every census worker will have official ID, and an iPad with the census bureau logo. All census workers will also wear gloves and masks. Alternatively, residents can complete the census online at 2020census.gov or by calling (844) 330-2020. Ms. Matos reminded everyone that the census is critical to ensure that our community receives appropriate funding and congressional representation. The census team will also provide flyers for residents to distribute in their neighborhoods to encourage participation. Participation in the 2020 census will impact funding for the community for the next 10 years.

From September 22 -24 census workers will be out counting the homeless.

Census workers are still being recruited to do follow-up home visits, the role pays \$28 per hour and the training time is paid. The extra income will not impact other benefits like food stamps and Medicaid.

The time to respond to the census has been extended to October 31st. Ms. Matos noted that the Wakefield community's census completion rate is significantly below the national average.

Ms. Opal McCalla/Mind-Builders

Ms. McCalla reported that all classes at Mind-Builders have become virtual. They will continue to offer classes throughout the summer. Tuition assistance is provided, and in some cases, scholarships will be provided. Programs are provided for children from the age of 3 to adults.

Mr. Amr Kotb /New York Public Library (NYPL) Community Affairs Team

Mr. Kotb announced that the NYPL will be reopening on July 13th. 8 branches will be providing "grab and go" service for clients to pick up and return materials. Patrons can order materials for pickup online. All fines will be waived for late return of materials. The goal is to be back to full service to the community as soon as possible.

Bronx branches that will open are Belmont, Francis Martin and Parkchester. Mr. Kotb can be reached by email at amrkotb@nypl.org.

Ms. Joan Clodd, Chairwoman of the Library and Cultural Services, noted that the NYPL is offering extensive resources for children, including tutoring, and for jobseekers.

Mr. Rich Shrestha/Fordham University Social Innovation Collaboration

Mr. Shrestha reported that the Collaboration focuses on finances. He introduced Ms. Olivia Johnson, a colleague on the project. Ms. Johnson provided an overview of the project. She reported that the Bronx is the most “unbanked” and “underbanked” borough, meaning a lack of checking and savings accounts. Primary objective of their research is to understand the patterns with the goal of providing greater financial stability. All data collected is randomized to protect the anonymity of the participants.

Mr. Tim Bollea is the economic research analyst with the team, and is conducting research through interviews, mail, and email surveys to determine how Bronx residents view financial planning and financial institutions. The survey results will not be shared with any external parties.

Mr. Corey Williams/Community Resident

Mr. Williams stated that he was speaking on behalf of the Radio-Controlled (RC) track at Gun Hill Park also called Fort Knox RC Park. He noted that the track is used by RC enthusiasts from 5 states, and their events are regularly covered by local media. He stated that the RC community is willing to invest in the effort needed to maintain the park.

1st Vice Chairman Dr. Burke referred the matter to Mr. Ivan Borrás, Chairman of the Parks and Recreation Committee. Mr. Borrás responded that he has been advocating for the RC park for the past 2 years. As of now he understands the park is scheduled to be dismantled but he will reach out to the Parks Department for an update.

Sharon Pope-Marshall/Bike NY

Ms. Pope-Marshall reported on the Street Action Now initiative, which asks residents to step out of their homes and report street conditions. The organization will mentor participants regarding the appropriate way to report street conditions to Department of Transportation and to the community boards' Transportation Committees. In 2019 they taught 25,000 people how to ride bikes safely; however, for 2020 they have transitioned their training to virtual. Their website is www.Bike.nyc and Ms. Pope-Marshall's email is spope@bike.nyc.

Ms. Pamela Hamilton-Johnson/President 47th Precinct Community Council

Ms. Hamilton-Johnson reported that the homeless are congregating at 222nd Street and Bronx Boulevard, a situation requiring further investigation and possibly removal of some benches that are facilitating the situation. 1st Vice Chairman Dr. Burke referred the issue to the Parks and Recreation Committee.

IV. 1st Vice Chairman's Report

The 1st Vice Chairman reported that the previous 47th Precinct Community Council raised the issue of increased police presence at the homeless shelter at 4747 Bronx Boulevard. He stated that Board member Ms. Egeria Bennett will assume leadership of the committee investigating the Board's 501(C)3 application.

Dr. Burke reminded all present to submit questions for City agency budget consultations, to hold City agencies accountable. He reported that the response from Board members has been lower than expected. The deadline for responses was extended by one week.

The 1st Vice Chairman's full report is attached.

IX. Old Business

The roll was called to determine if a quorum is present. 23 members were confirmed as present, constituting a quorum.

Dr. Burke recognized the Library & Cultural Services Committee and other Board colleagues for their work in creating a video congratulating students on their graduation from our 17 community high schools. Ms. Joan Clodd, Chairwoman of the Library and Cultural Affairs Committee, thanked all Board members involved in the effort.

He noted that 22% of board members are not assigned to a committee.

X. New Business

Dr. Burke reported that Ms. Carla Borsotti was appointed as vice chair of the By-laws Committee. He stated that Article IX of CB12's 2000 By-laws state that any Board member can propose an amendment.

He noted that appointing vice chairs for every committee has been a priority this year.

Ms. Lisa Hayes, Board secretary, asked if there would be a role of assistant secretary or recording secretary.

Ms. Carla Borsotti responded that the By-laws Committee would propose the role of recording secretary.

District Manager Mr. George Torres reported that assuming NYC opening metrics are met the Board may be able to meet in person by mid-August.

Dr. Burke reported that the Ad hoc Budget Committee and Ad hoc Legislative Affairs Committee have expired.

Motion made by Ms. Afoos Maiga-Laast seconded by Mr. Ivan Borrás to extend both committees through the end of June 2021. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Egeria Bennet provided an overview of the Board retreat she proposed. She encouraged more collaboration among Board members.

Dr. Burke noted that a resolution is needed to confirm that all current Board officers remain in place until the September 24, 2020 election.

Motion made by Ms. Denise Bond seconded by Ms. Nicole Weir to extend the current executive board through the September 24, 2020 Board meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Burke stated that the Nominating Committee is chaired by Mr. Clinton Myke; the other members are Ms. Denise Bond, Mr. Franklin Allakpo, Ms. Marlene Allen, and Mr. Theodore James.

Any Board member interested in running for office should contact a member of the Nominating Committee.

Dr. Burke commented on the need to do more effective community outreach. One suggestion was to move committee meetings to different locations around the community.

Ms. Carla Borsotti made two suggestions: (1) place easels with placards outside CB12 announcing meetings, and (2) also place meeting announcements in the local newspapers' free community events calendars.

Dr. Burke noted that he's seen other community boards use electronic signs announcing upcoming meetings.

Adjournment

There being no further issues to discuss the meeting was duly adjourned at 9:45 pm. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, September 24th, 2020, at 7:00 pm, via WebEx.

Respectfully submitted,



Carla Borsotti
September 17, 2020