

Pending Committee Approval
BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

MINUTES OF THE LIBRARIES & CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON NOVEMBER 10, 2016
AT THE JEROME PARK LIBRARY, 118 EAMES PLACE

Present

Marvin Goodman
Martin Wolpoff
Sylvia Alexander
Lenora Croft
Nicole McDonald
Rebecca Brown-Barbier
Tiffany Moustakas
Elizabeth Thompson

Affiliation

CB8 Committee Chair
CB8 Committee Vice Chair
CB8 Committee Member
CB8 Board Member
Branch Manager, Jerome Park Branch Library
Branch Manager, Riverdale Branch Library
Riverdale Press
CB8 Resident

Absent:

Philip Friedman	CB8 Committee Member
Amy Joy Robateau	CB8 Committee Member

The meeting began at 6:15 P.M. The minutes of the October meeting were approved.

The chair introduced the guest speaker, Nicola McDonald, Branch Manager of the Jerome Park Library Branch. Nicola McDonald indicated that the library hosted a variety of programs for attendees of different ages. Among the programs offered, are English classes for Spanish speakers because of the large Spanish speaking clientele. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, there are two classes in English for Speakers of another language. The library works with "New York Cares" to offer help in resume preparations and job application assistance to community members, on a one-to-one basis. The program meets once each month. It has been on-going for some time and is well attended. The branch participates in the English conversations program in conjunction with the "We are New York" program. The group meets every Saturday. Attendees are able to carry on group conversations in English. This program has been so successful that there are attendees coming from as far away as Queens on a regular basis to participate. The library offers a book-making workshop for teens, ages 12 to 18, using cameras to make personalized books. There are bilingual computer classes every Thursday, individualized to help each one at their level of skills. Most attendees are older adults. The program is in both English and Spanish. A new information assistant will offer the programs to young people. A library staff member runs a program to teach youngsters how to use software and how to code, using the software. There is a story time program weekly for preschoolers. They are beginning a weekly story time program for toddlers. There is a monthly pajama party for children and their families, where children come dressed in pajamas. The librarian reads children's stories to them and they participate in related craft activities. The library offers programs to parents on the importance of reading to their young children and bonding with them. This increases the English language skills of those youngsters and fosters a love for reading. Many youngsters help their parents with English. A question was raised about teaching Spanish to the English speaking people in the community to make this a true bi-lingual community. No such program is currently available.

The branch was renovated about nine years ago with new furniture and computers. There are five schools in the neighborhood using this library, with PS 307 just next door. There are auto

traffic problems at dismissal time, and the street is blocked off for safety reasons. For bilingual learners from Spanish to English, there many books in both languages. There are also many CD's to aid students with correct pronunciation of words and intonation. There is a section of the library to accommodate speakers of other languages, with books in Vietnamese, Polish and Italian, among others. The after-school program offers daily homework help and after school snacks. The program is very popular, and helps students in grades one to eight, with students at different tables being assisted by adults in appropriate grade level English, math and technology. The committee received a tour of the various sections of the library. One is devoted to young children, one to teens and one to English language learners.

The chair then had the committee review the New York Public requests for funding of capital projects in Community Board 8. NYPL requests were for two of our branches:

- a. Riverdale Library – an upgrade of the bathrooms for ADA compliance, and a replacement of the HVAC system to upgrade the center as an emergency management cooling center for the community as well as an upgrade of the library's computer system. Additional funding requests are to replace the exterior side façade of the retaining wall to prevent further water infiltration into the library. (Emergency funding had resulted in emergency repairs, but replacements are needed.)
- b. Spuyten Duyvil Library needs an upgrade of the HVAC system for the same reason mentioned. These are the fiscal year 2018 budget proprieties that affect our community board area.

The chair reviewed our committee's requests for library funding to our community board. We had requested bathroom upgrades for ADA compliance for all branches. We had also requested installation of laptop bars and its wiring at each library branch. These items did not receive approval at this time by our community board for fiscal considerations for the forthcoming budget.

The chair noted that although approval had been voted on to move the Van Cortlandt Library to the new site on Corlear Avenue, nothing has been done so far. Martin Wolpoff also brought up the committee's request for funding of the expansion of the Spuyten Duyvil Library. This project did not get a capital budget from the NYPL for the next fiscal year.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marvin Goodman
Chair of the Libraries and Cultural Affairs Committee