

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

MINUTES OF THE LIBRARIES & CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON OCTOBER 6, 2016 AT THE BOARD OFFICE, 5676 RIVERDALE AVENUE, SUITE 100

Present

Marvin Goodman
Martin Wolpoff
Sylvia Alexander
Phillip Friedman
Amy Joy Robateau
Nicole McDonald
David Nussenbaum

Affiliation

CB8 Committee Chair
CB8 Committee Vice Chair
CB8 Committee Member
CB8 Committee Member
CB8 Committee Member
Branch Manager, Jerome Park Branch Library
Executive Director, Bronx Arts Ensemble

The meeting began at 5 P.M. The minutes of the September meeting were approved. The chair noted that, of the items on the capital budget for 2018, CB8 had voted to place the request of the Spuyten Duyvil Branch Library for expansion and for needed interior work within the upper categories. No work has yet begun on the relocation of the Van Cortlandt Branch Library.

The chair introduced David Nussenbaum, executive director of the Bronx Arts Ensemble. He began his talk with a reference to Bill Scribner, the founder of the BAE (who had begun the BAE in the 1970's). He was a bassoon player, had served as executive director, and had passed away only a few weeks ago. A memorial service for him is to be held on November 4th. Under Bill Scribner, a lot of innovative musical work was performed, including Latino music and jazz works at locations throughout The Bronx. Recordings of these performances were made, and many are available. In the 1980's, when the NYC Department of Education began concentrating all work on science, technology, language, and mathematics and began excluding all arts, all such teachings disappeared from the schools. This exclusion took away much cultural enlightenments from children and their possible careers and culture outlooks. Bill created a program to provide contract arts education in schools in various musical modes. This legacy continues presently, teaching arts in 45 schools in The Bronx. These include music, dance, and visual arts. This encompasses all school levels from elementary schools to high schools (K-12). A significant amount of their budget comes from city and state funding for these educational programs. Many of these programs are held after regular school hours.

David Nussenbaum indicated how he had grown up in Riverdale and had become interested in music through the BAE. He had studied music in college, but later went into business and administration and education. After 30 years consulting in the financial sector, he decided to apply for this position to succeed Bill Scribner, and received the position.

The BAE does a variety of performances and education. At schools, BAE teach instruments and voice, as well as dance, theater and visual arts. For performances, there is a core group of nine instrumentalists, trained primarily in classical music. There is a Woodwind quartet and a string quartet. They may perform separately or together. The BAE orchestra also accompanies the choir of Fordham University during the holidays. They also collaborate with Lehman College and Bronx Community College. There is a partnership with Lehman College for a children's theater where BAE provides musical accompaniment. Performances have been done at the Whitehall and there is talk of doing performances at one of our local libraries also. These could

include children's concerts or concerts for teens or adults. There is an orchestral concert in Van Cortlandt Park each year, as well as summer performances by small musical groups near the horse stables. Several classical concerts are held in private homes. The voyage concerts are broader and include jazz, latino music and others and are held in public venues, such as Fieldston School and Riverdale Y, among others. There is an admissions charge for these. The spiritual concerts held at churches and Bartow-Pell Mansion are free.

Cards were distributed and made available at the office for performances. Martin Wolpoff spoke about inviting elected officials to speak at libraries on those topics in which they are involved, and ensuring there are no politics involved.

The next meeting will be on Thursday, November 10 at 6:00PM at the Jerome Park Library.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marvin Goodman
Chair of the Libraries and Cultural Affairs Committee