



The City of New York
BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD #1

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Serving and Representing: Port Morris, Mott Haven and Melrose



VANESSA L. GIBSON
BOROUGH PRESIDENT

ANTHONY R. JORDAN
DISTRICT MANAGER

LARISA M. ALAYETO
CHAIRPERSON

Policy & Legislation Committee Minutes

January 16th, 2025

Dalourny Nemorin, Committee Chairperson

DRAFT

Laken Riley Act Discussion

- Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin introduces the meeting and calls for introductions.
- Member Whitney Williams agrees with the purpose of the Laken Riley Act but suggests edits to the language.
- Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin explains the Laken Riley Act, which mandates mandatory detention for undocumented migrants accused of certain crimes.
- Member Whitney Williams emphasizes the overly punitive nature of the law and the lack of due process rights.
- Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin plans to introduce the issue to immigration and discusses the possibility of sending a letter to Richie Torres.

Board of Elections Presentation

- Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin introduces the Board of Elections representatives and discusses concerns about early voting sites.
- Lisa Gaddis explains the criteria for selecting early voting sites, which include voter numbers, site size, and accessibility.
- Discussion on the impact of redistricting and the challenges of moving polling sites due to construction or safety issues.
- Lisa Gaddis details the process of recruiting and training poll workers, including the challenges of language interpretation and the use of standby workers.
- Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin and Member Whitney Williams discuss the importance of public education and the role of community boards in advocating for better voting experiences.

Challenges with Voting Locations and Language Interpretation

- Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin and Lisa Gaddis discuss the challenges of early voting sites being far from communities and the impact on voter turnout.
- Lisa Gaddis explains the criteria for selecting interpreters and the limitations set by the Department of Justice and the Census.
- Member Whitney Williams and Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin discuss the need for more language services and the challenges of recruiting poll workers who speak less common languages.
- Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin shares a personal experience of a voter being frustrated by long lines and lack of translation services.
- Lisa Gaddis explains the process of requesting exception reports to increase the number of interpreters in high-need areas.

Public Education and Advocacy

- Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin emphasizes the importance of educating the public about the voting process and the challenges faced by poll workers.
- Member Whitney Williams and Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin discuss the need for public education on ranked-choice voting and the importance of community boards in advocating for better voting experiences.
- Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin suggests having town halls to educate the public on various topics, including bail reform and ranked-choice voting.
- Member Whitney Williams and Member Emmanuel Pardilla discuss the importance of grassroots organizations in leading advocacy efforts and the role of community boards in supporting these efforts.
- Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin and Member Whitney Williams agree on the need for objective education and the importance of community boards in advocating for informed positions.

Future Plans and Next Steps

- Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin and Member Whitney Williams discuss the potential for town halls on various topics, including bail reform and ranked-choice voting.
- Member Emmanuel Pardilla emphasizes the importance of grassroots organizations in leading advocacy efforts and the role of community boards in supporting these efforts.
- Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin suggests inviting advocacy groups and experts to town halls to provide objective information and support community education.

- Member Whitney Williams and Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin agree on the need for public education and the importance of community boards in advocating for informed positions.
- Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin and Member Whitney Williams discuss the potential for future town halls and the importance of community engagement in advocacy efforts.

Ranked Choice Voting and Drug Policy Panel Proposals

- Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin emphasizes the importance of a ranked choice voting system and suggests a panel dedicated to understanding addiction and drug policy.
- Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin suggests including Drug Policy Alliance and a former drug user on the panel to provide diverse perspectives.
- The panel is proposed to be named "Drug User and Drug Solution" and to include police officers, defenders, retired judges, and prosecutors.
- Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin recalls a successful meeting with the public advocate office and suggests replicating it for public education.

Town Hall Meetings and Legislative Engagement

- Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin proposes three town hall meetings focused on ranked choice voting, BOE issues, and other community concerns.
- The group discusses the importance of engaging with legislative staffers from various offices to understand their positions on bills.
- Member Whitney Williams and Member Emmanuel Pardilla discuss the logistics of inviting legislative staffers and the potential challenges of coordinating city, state, and federal representatives.
- Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin suggests starting with state representatives due to the current transition in city council membership.

Addressing Fire Issues in the Bronx

- Member Emmanuel Pardilla raises concerns about the increase in fires across the Bronx and suggests involving FDNY and the Department of Buildings.
- Member Whitney Williams suggests using FOIA requests to gather information about the causes of the fires.
- Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin and others discuss the potential reasons for the fires, including landlords' failure to provide heat, leading to the use of space heaters.
- The group considers involving HPD and DHCR to address the underlying issues and improve building safety.

HPD Complaints and Know Your Rights Training

- Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin emphasizes the need to understand how HPD processes complaints and suggests a "know your rights" training for HPD.
- The group discusses the challenges of investigating HPD complaints and the potential understaffing of the agency.
- Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin proposes coordinating with an organizing group to call HPD and gather information about their processes.
- The group agrees to start with HPD and explore other agencies if necessary to address the fire issue effectively.

Bylaws and Committee Quorum

- Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin addresses the question of whether community board members can count towards committee quorum.
- The answer is no, and Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin emphasizes the importance of following the same rules as city council.
- Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin suggests an exception for Ramona, who is often absent due to illness, to ensure quorum.
- The group discusses the completion of the bylaws and the need for a final review by Member Whitney Williams.

Letter Writing and Community Engagement

- Committee Chair Nemorin outlines the progress on letter writing, including the treatment letters and the TOPA letters.
- The group discusses the importance of renewing the board's position on TOPA if the law changes.
- Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin mentions the completion of the street vendor project letter and the upcoming Lincoln rally letter.
- The group considers adding syringe pickup to the letters and emphasizes the need for extended hours and funding for the Department of Sanitation.

Meeting Adjournment

- Committee Chair Dalourny Nemorin expresses satisfaction with the meeting's progress and the accomplishments of the group.
- Member Whitney Williams moves to adjourn the meeting, and the motion is seconded.
- The meeting is adjourned at 7:40 PM.

Action Items

Introduce the Laken Riley Act to the Immigration Policy Committee and draft a letter expressing opposition to the legislation.

Modify the letter to the Laken Riley Act to potentially include a statement about the current administration's more punitive approach.

Reach out to Richie Torres' office to send a letter expressing disagreement with his vote on the Laken Riley Act.

Explore opportunities to partner with other organizations to host a town hall event educating the community on the criminal justice system and bail reform.

Coordinate with legislative staffers from state and city elected officials to understand the bills they are championing.

Investigate the recent increase in fires in the Bronx, potentially by reaching out to the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) to understand their role and response.