

## **FULL BOARD MEETING**

December 17, 2015

### **MINUTES**

**Attendance:** George Rodriguez, Barbara Alvarez, Maria Garcia-Baltazar, Steven Benedith, Carol Boddie, Betty Bryant-Brown, Carolyn Chamorro, Linda Duke, Isabel Figueroa, Linda D. Gaines, Brenda Goodwin, Lucas Henriquez, Richard Iyasere, John Johnson, Nellie McKay, Walter C. Nash, Freddy Perez, Jr., Brenda Rodriguez, Alice Simmons, Tracy A. Woodall, Delores Waller-Worrell, Hakiem A. Yahmadi, Cesar Yoc.

**Absent:** Clarisa Alayeto, Ngande Ambroise, Carmen Aquino, Daniel Barber, Passyna Bula-Bula, Josephine Fernandez-Byrne, Maura Cosme, John Lemon, Angel Lopez, Aracelis Lucero, Jewels Marshall, Evelyn Munoz, Mohammed Mutawakil, Jason Ortiz, Arline Parks, Johnny Rivera, Justino Rodriguez, Carmen Santos, Sandra Stone, Betty Wessley.

### **Public Session**

#### **New York City Department of Consumer Affairs**

**Mr. Felipe Luciano** said that I'm with the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs and we have a new law coming up on January 1, 2016 called the Commuter Benefits Law. Now this is how it goes if you have twenty or more employees full-time within the five boroughs of New York City they are eligible for Transit Benefit Tax up to \$400 dollars a year which means money comes out of your gross not your net income so you can save a lot of money. Even if you're undocumented you're still eligible under these laws. You're not qualified for the Commuter Benefits Law if you're part of a union, part-time or seasonal employee.

So you can call us at 311 my number is 212-536-0157 or email me [fluciano@dca.nyc.gov](mailto:fluciano@dca.nyc.gov) and the website is [nyc.gov/commuterbenefits](http://nyc.gov/commuterbenefits) and we have an alphabetical list of providers that you can connect your payroll company to. Once you kick this program off it runs on its own.

### **Questions and Answers**

## **Big Brothers Big Sisters**

**Ms. Ariane Cohen** said that I'm on the Recruitment and Outreach Team of Big Brothers Big Sisters of NYC and you may remember that my co-worker came earlier in the year and talked about how we were expanding into the outer boroughs with a grant from the City Council. So what I'm here to tell you tonight is that we are planning a Meet and Greet with the Community Board in this area and we want to hold it the second to last week in January and all the Community Board Members are welcome to come. We want to work on a partnership with the Community Board and the organizations here in the area in order to better offer our resources to the kids in the area and we hope to work with you to make that happen. So at the Meet and Greet we will provide food and it will be a good chance to meet our team to work with us and help us better serve this community.

## **Questions and Answers**

## **Nos Quedamos/We Stay**

**Ms. Jessica Clemente** said that I came to share some information briefly. First off as you all know already our City Council Member Arroyo will be resigning as of the 31<sup>st</sup> of this month. As a result her position will be open for a Special Election. I felt and my team felt that this is a really important time for us to step up and put together what we feel would be necessary in a Candidate Forum. We're already in the process of setting up some preliminary details of which I'm going to share this evening. I'm saying this to open the floor that everyone knows that we're looking to hold a Candidate Forum in this district we want to include as many stake holders. To date to my knowledge there are six potential candidates so the candidate quota is large. I believe the election will take place on February 16<sup>th</sup> so that's only forty-five days from the day she announces is what make this so important. We're approaching the holidays and if families don't know that she's resigning the whole Special Election opportunity for them to engage and get out and vote will be missed and so that's super imperative. We all know that a large part of the proposals that come through here go through and are decided by the City Council so this position is very critical. So it's a real opportunity to get engaged and hear from those that want to assume the role of our representative and see exactly what they bring to the table. We're looking at various locations and January 20<sup>th</sup> is the date that we're targeting. It's a quick turn-around for us to try and pull off but it at least gives us four weeks between the Candidate Forum and the Election to continue with outreach and getting the word out. I'm going to need everyone's help here at the table with outreach and also with the turn out because again you want to make sure that it's focused on the issues of community development, open space, housing and social justice issues. So it's not going to be like an open conversation we want to hit all the highlights and all the issues that are really at unrest in our communities.

So to recap we're looking at Hostos and a few other locations its non partisan and the date is January 20<sup>th</sup> most likely from 6:00 to 8:00. We will open at 6:00 and the program will start at 6:30 and will be open to any of the respective candidates and of course any available stake holders are welcome to join us either in the logistic planning in the front side or the back side we need help all around. The outreach effort has to be a big one letting community members know. I also want to make a concerted effort to have translators at the Candidate Forum so that our members who only speak one language can also be able to participate. I'll have a flyer Save the Date once the location is confirmed but I wanted to make sure that you were the first to know. These are decisions we made as of last week. In January we have our Three Kings celebration which is also a coat drive and we welcome everyone to come.

## **Questions and Answers**

### **End of Public Session**

#### **The Chairman called for the roll.**

The roll was called and there were twenty-three members present constituting a quorum.

#### **The Chairman called for a motion on the Agenda.**

Motion made to approve the Agenda as presented. Motion duly seconded. Motion called and passed unanimously.

#### **The Chairman called for a motion on the Prior Meeting Minutes.**

Motion made to approve the Prior Meeting Minutes. Motion duly seconded. Motion called and passed unanimously with nine abstentions.

### **Chairman and District Managers Report**

**The District Manager Mr. Cedric L. Loftin** introduced the New York City Parks Department Bronx Borough Commissioner Ms. Iris Rodriguez-Rosa whom would be speaking about Parks Without Borders.

**Ms. Iris Rodriguez-Rosa** said that I think this is very important and we're trying to get to all the Community Boards and you're the first. So I just wanted to tell you that for me it's an honor a privilege and I've sat on many boards with your Chairperson. It's wonderful for me to be back here in the borough as the Borough Commissioner. I was also a former District Manager for a Community Board in Brooklyn for six years so I know how important a Community Board is and the time you dedicate to public service it's to be respected. So I personally wanted to come here just to say hello to all of you. So I'm here to serve you in any capacity that I can in your parks. So without further ado the purpose of coming here was to have Mr. Hernandez talk about Parks Without Borders that Commissioner Silver wanted to share with you.

**Mr. Eduardo Hernandez** said that I'm the Park District Manager for Districts 1, 4 and 5. Parks Without Borders is a new approach to park design that focuses on three main goals. It starts with that neighborhoods should be more unified and with fewer boundaries around public spaces. To achieve this is to make more welcoming and accessible parks by the opening up of entrances and edges; expanding the beauty of parks into the neighborhood; and transforming underutilized spaces into centers of community activity. We are looking to widen entrances and move them to corners to align with where people approach the park by adding amenities such as entry plazas and seating. Looking to lower fences and improve visibility into and out of the park and to add seating, street trees and other amenities along the park edges for to activate them and bring the beauty of the park out into the neighborhood. To open park adjacent spaces where they are fenced off and to add amenities targeting spaces with good connections to institutions such as libraries and museum.

The new design approach will be applied wherever we can to the approximately 450 projects we are already committed to doing. Wherever we are reconstructing a playground or basketball court we will be looking for opportunities to open those parks making them more connected to the neighborhood. There are now 43 projects that we have incorporated the PWB design concept within the five boroughs and will continue to do so wherever we can on all new capital construction. Wherever it is appropriate there will be additional resources added from the Parks Without Borders program to expand the scope of certain projects to advance PWB goals.

We are now looking for eight sites for new Parks Without Borders projects. If you know of a group that has a particular interest in a park send them to Parks Without Borders. The three main criteria for the eight new parks to be selected are Community support, advocacy through the website for individuals or groups and the park's current layout, condition and relation to its surroundings. We have a website [nyc.gov/parks/pwb](http://nyc.gov/parks/pwb) that will allow people to suggest parks for consideration and for to make any suggestions for improvement to our parks.

### **Questions and Answers**

**Police Officer Espada** said good evening ladies and gentlemen sorry I'm late I was just giving out about 500 toys in the community and yesterday we gave out another 500 hundred at Lincoln Hospital we had a wonderful turnout. I want to tell you guys thank you for making 2015 a good one and I think in my opinion a better one for the 40 precinct hopefully next year we will make it even that much better for us and the community for as I said before I consider myself part of the community. Please be safe during the holidays and not lose our common sense if you know what I mean when it comes to not being as careful and vigilant as we should be especially with the cell phones. Just use very simple strategies to prevent you from being a victim. Like I said we're working on an initiative with Mr. Loftin within the next couple of weeks on these pedestrian accidents to try and come up with strategies to make it safer for people and keep more accidents from happening on 138<sup>th</sup> Street and Bruckner. I want to wish you guys a happy holiday.

### **Questions and Answers**

#### **The Chairman called for a motion on his and the District Managers Report.**

Motion made to approve the Chairman and District Managers Report as presented. Motion duly seconded. Motion called and passed unanimously.

### **Elected Officials Reports**

**Mr. Andy Toledo** the representative for the Bronx Borough President said that I think most of you guys should have gotten the reappointment letters. If you haven't gotten it you should be getting it very soon please fill it out and submit it and if you're not reapplying please contact Tom Lucania to let him know. If you know of anyone interested in serving on the Community Board applications are now available on the Borough President's website where you can download them and then you will be called in January for a brief interview. Just to kind of piggyback on the squatter issue we've been experiencing it in the office and I know that a lot of people are strapped for cash and you might think of renting out an extra room. But if you do be very careful because if you rent out space and that person is there for 30 days they would

end up getting squatter rights so be very careful. Lastly on behalf of the Bronx Borough President I just want to thank the Board Members for an incredible 2015 and your positive work. I think that for the foreseeable future I will be the liaison here so any questions or concerns you can forward to my attention. I want to wish everybody happy holidays.

**Mr. Jose Ramon-Perez-Lopez** the representative for State Senator Jose M. Serrano said I just want to say from our staff and the Senator happy holidays. I distributed his Community Report and remind you that every Tuesday in a Community Center or Public Library we have Constituent Hours. Last month we partnered with the Legal Aid Society to help tenants with their rights and in dealing with Landlords. This coming January we are partnering with the Department of Health to speak about health and well being to our community. So we will be providing information about health and wellness during our Constituent Hours.

**Ms. Mariel de la Cruz** the representative for the Comptroller Scott Stringer said that I just wanted to report on a few things. First of all happy holidays. One of the things that the Comptroller has been working on is an investigation of discrimination of housing for a lot of folks especially when they have vouchers. We saw on a few websites if you're homeless or have this voucher you need not apply. So that's an issue because you're supposed to be able to get housing and we're looking into that a little further. Another thing is that a lot of folks read our analysis on the East New York Rezoning, the Comptroller gave a few points on what it will look like in that area and that there should be a lot more community involvement. Another thing is that it should be neighborhood by neighborhood and not one play that says one size fits all and the income for affordable housing should be what the community looks like everyone deserves housing. Then the last thing is that there was a Press Conference in which there was a presentation on NYCHA and the issue was there not being ready for emergencies that might occur.

**Ms. Jessica Reynoso** the representative for the Public Advocate Letitia James said that she has launched the worst Landlord list on the website which is [www.landlordwatchlist.com](http://www.landlordwatchlist.com). The number one on the list has a building over here at 750 Grand Concourse. The Public Advocate also sued NYCHA for violating health administrative codes. Happy holidays everyone.

### **The Chairman called for a motion on the Elected Officials Reports.**

Motion made to approve the Elected Officials Reports as presented. Motion duly seconded. Motion called and passed unanimously.

### **Committee Reports**

The District Manager said that the **Education & Youth Committee** written report was in the Board Member folders.

**The Municipal Services Committee** submitted a written report and provided a brief overview on the following presentation.

- The New York City Parks Department update to the Committee on the renovations proposed for Ranaqua Park and Saw Mill Playground.

**The Chairman called for a motion on the Committee Reports.**

Motion made to approve the Committee Reports as presented. Motion duly seconded. Motion called and passed unanimously.

**Old Business**

**The District Manager Cedric L. Loftin** said that last month they had briefly spoken about the 40<sup>th</sup> Precinct Commander coming to the Board meeting and that he had sent the Commander a letter but has received no response back. However the Commander did attend my District Service Cabinet meeting since his training is over. He has been training to become a Chief. He sat down to talk about some things and is aware about all the issues that Officer Espada has been dealing with. One of the things we talked about was the squatters of which the Building Department and Fire Department are also looking into.

**Police Officer Espada** said just be advised that you might not see him because he has been going through a lot of training but he's very aware and definitely addressing every condition and issue going on at the 40<sup>th</sup>. I don't know if anybody's read but we had a big take down recently about a week ago. We took out a lot of people that were not doing the right thing in the community.

**The District Manager Cedric L. Loftin** said that six months ago when Deputy Inspector Johnson was here I told you that there were things happening that I could not talk about but it's now gone through the process. This was not state but federal.

**Police Office Espada** said absolutely and that this had been a two year investigation.

**New Business**

**Board Member Tracy Woodall** updated the Board on upcoming C-Ball events and distributed flyers.

**The Chairman and District Manager wished everyone a happy and safe holiday.**

**The Chairman called for a motion to adjourn.**

Motion made to adjourn. Motion duly seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**Meeting adjourned.**