



Ruben Diaz, Jr.
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BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD No. 10

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Joseph Russo
Chairperson

Matthew Cruz
District Manager

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD #10 VIRTUAL DISTRICT SERVICE CABINET MEETING MINUTES April 21, 2020

Attendance: CB10: M. Cruz; N. Kilkenny; DEP: E. Ardizzzone; FDNY: BC Reilly; DOT: D. Cruz; DOT Bridges: A. Zhou; A. Bayer; MTA: J. Carter; DDC: M. Caminero; D. Aviles; DOB: E. Jarratt; ConEd: R. Infante; Parks: C. Acosta; DCWP: A. Roldan; DSNY: D. Mason; DHS: N. Jordan; HRA: J. Williams; CCHR: B. Simmons; NYPL: L. Brown, L. Marin, T. McCree; Mayor's Office: K. Asanti; Sen. Biaggi's Office: M. Joyce; Sen. Bailey's Office: S. Morello; Assemblyman Benedetto's Office: M. McKay; Assemblyman Gjonaj's Office: F. Ruben; Comptroller Stringer's Office: M. De La Cruz; Borough Pres. Diaz's Office: I. Gonzalez; DA Clark's Office: M. Santana-Tavarez; DoHMH: E. Peralta-Downing; Verizon: A. Horton

Mr. Cruz opened the Webex virtual meeting at 9:45 AM by welcoming Cabinet members as they joined. The formal meeting commenced at 10:08 AM. Mr. Cruz announced that because of the COVID-19 Crisis, monthly video meetings will be held in May and June, and most likely throughout the summer months. Mr. Cruz instructed participants to email any questions they had for other agency representatives, as only one speaker will be activated at a time.

Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) – E. Ardizzzone

Ms. Ardizzzone reported that agency field operations are transpiring, as usual (catch basin cleanings, responses to leaks, etc.)

The agency has been experiencing issues with disinfecting wipes being flushed into the sewer system. This has been problematic for homeowners and landlords.

Drinking water has not been affected in any way by COVID-19 as it is not a waterborne illness.

Mr. Cruz commended DEP and DDC for the water main installation on the Throggs Neck Expressway Service Road. The project was handled professionally with minimal negative impact on residents.

Fire Department of New York (FDNY) – BC T. Reilly

BC Reilly reported that 629 FDNY personnel tested positive for COVID-19. 2,764 employees have returned to work after quarantine, therefore staffing issues are improving. Emergency response times are average despite the sharp increase in calls.

Department of Transportation (DOT) – D. Cruz

Ms. Cruz reported that due to the COVID-19 Crisis all Capital Projects have been suspended in New York City, except for those with emergency status. Pothole repair remains active.

Ms. Cruz had no information on the work schedule for NYCDOT lighting installation on Westchester Avenue from Middletown Road to Wilkinson Avenue.

Streetlights are functioning on I-95 between Wilkinson Avenue and Pelham Parkway exits, north and south bound, DOT-411210-X2C0

The Board's appeal of the denial of resurfacing Wissman Avenue between Reynolds and Prentiss Avenues, DOT-431058-Y1P9 will be a priority once the Covid-19 Crisis is under control. Mr. Cruz reiterated the poor condition of this roadway.

Ms. Cruz indicated that she would have an update at the May meeting concerning the work schedule for lighting installation on East Tremont Avenue from Bruckner Boulevard to Miles Avenue.

The request to remove the "No Standing Anytime" sign from in front of 1910 Pelham Parkway South was denied.

The request for installation of a highly visible crosswalk at St. Paul Avenue and Pelham Parkway South was approved and may have already been installed.

The request for repaving Ellsworth Avenue between Fairmount and Layton Avenues, Dot-400580-C1N5, and the request for repaving Barkley Avenue, between Wilcox and Clarence Avenues, are on the 2020 repaving schedule, however, the schedule is on pause due to the COVID-19 Crisis.

Pedestrian ramps at Keane Square Park, DOT-407680-P2P5 are on the schedule, however, the schedule is on pause due to the COVID-19 Crisis.

Responses are due in May for the following:

Traffic Signal Request – Tratman and St. Peters Avenues – DOT-443718-F6T4

Traffic Signal Request – Frisby and St. Peters Avenues – DOT-443719-M7G6

All Way Stop Sign – Frisby Avenue and Rowland Street – Dot-443721-Q6L5

All Way Stop Sign – Seddon Street and Maclay Avenue – DOT-443725-G5C9

No Parking Anytime, 12 AM – 5 AM on Schley Avenue between Brush Avenue and Hutchinson River Parkway – DOT-453560-V8P0

Right turn signal on Brush Avenue – DOT-453565-79G8

Department of Transportation – Bridges – A. Zhou; A. Bayer

Westchester Avenue Overpass – Ms. Zhou reported that the project is in Stage 2 and is ongoing but at a slower pace. Crews are currently working on the west side of the roadway, which was demolished. No traffic closures are scheduled at this time.

Unionport Bridge Project - Ms. Bayer reported that the temporary bridge is open in both directions. Work is slowed due to the COVID-19 Crisis but remains on schedule.

Mr. Cruz commended DOT for their work on this project, which has been accomplished without issue and without impeding traffic.

Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) – J. Carter

Ms. Carter urged all to refer to the MTA website: <https://new.mta.info/> for up to the minute information on MTA matters. Face coverings are a requirement for those riding buses and subways. Ms. Carter reported that MTA staffing has been severely affected by COVID-19. No bus schedules are available other than that Monday through Friday a Saturday schedule will be observed and on the weekends a Sunday schedule will be observed.

Ms. Carter forwarded Mr. Cruz' concerns about homeless individuals at Pelham Bay Station to the appropriate department, however, only individuals who are prostrate across seats can be stirred. Individuals who are seated upright are compliant and cannot be disturbed.

Department of Design and Construction (DDC) – M. Caminero; D. Aviles

City Island Project HED564 – Ms. Caminero reported that work continues on the City Island side of the Bridge. Currently, exits are being built. During the summer, work will commence at the entrance on the Pelham Bay Park side of the Bridge.

Rehabilitation of Pedestrian Ramps Project HWPR18X – Mr. Aviles reported that the agency is currently returning to missed areas, or areas needing further repair. A new location list will be provided when available.

Department of Buildings (DOB) – E. Jarratt

Mr. Jarratt reported the following:

The “Stop Work Order” at 2115 Burr Avenue was lifted.

The inspection of 2943 Baisley Avenue was attempted and denied on March 10th and March 27th. The complaint is active and one or two additional attempts will be made.

The “Stop Work Order” at 3531 Bruckner Boulevard was lifted.

Mr. Cruz would like DOB to issue a Crisis Declaration for 2317, 2319 and 2321 Glebe Avenues because these buildings appear to be structurally unsound.

Mr. Cruz indicated that the work without a permit issue at 1443 Crosby Avenue was resolved. Mr. Cruz spoke with the owner about the dangers of performing unpermitted work and he complied.

Mr. Cruz thanked Mr. Jarratt for arranging a meeting between the new owners of 157 Pilot Street, US Crane, and residents of City Island. Parties are in communication and are working together.

Consolidated Edison – R. Infante

Mr. Infante reported that the agency is in storm/emergency mode until at least May 15, 2020. The Pennyfield Avenue mini bundle gas main replacement project is not deemed emergency work and has been plated over until the city's work pause is lifted. During storms last week, the agency worked to restore brief power outages.

Department of Parks and Recreation – C. Acosta

Mr. Cruz noted that both items on the agenda were previously resolved. He inquired about the exercise equipment at Pelham Bay Park where individuals were not practicing social distancing. It was reported that the equipment was wrapped with orange fencing material to prevent use during the COVID-19 Crisis.

Department of Consumer and Worker Protection (DCWP) – A. Roldan

Mr. Roldan reported that the agency has been investigating price gouging reports. 7,300 complaints were lodged and 3,300 violations were issued. Fines are as high as \$350 per incident.

Supermarkets are promoting social distancing and requiring face masks. Workers can use paid sick leave during the COVID-19 Crisis.

Mr. Roldan reported that financial counseling is available remotely through the DCWP Website: <https://nyc.gov/dcwp>

Mr. Cruz inquired if the agency could assist in establishing a citywide policy of preferential store hours for first responders, similar to what is in place for senior citizens. This would facilitate food shopping for those already enduring long and difficult work shifts.

Department of Sanitation (DSNY) – D. Mason

Superintendent Mason reported that the agency is functioning as normal with little impact on his staffing due to COVID-19.

The Bartow Avenue underpass was cleaned. High volume littered areas are being cleaned. Cars on Ferris Place were ticketed.

Department of Social Services

Department of Homeless Services (DHS) – N. Jordan

Ms. Jordan reported that Commissioner Banks holds a weekly Webex video conference on Tuesdays, at 4 PM, with up to date information on the Department of Social Services' response to the COVID-19 Crisis. She encourages all to join.

The Department of Homeless Services continues to conduct intake hours. The Agency is working with the Department of Education to ensure that school aged clients are equipped with tablets so that schoolwork can continue remotely.

The agency also continues to work to provide face coverings and hand sanitizer to clients.

Human Resources Administration (HRA) – J. Williams

Mr. Williams reiterated information concerning the weekly Webex video conference held on Tuesdays at 4 PM.

Individuals can visit <https://accesshra/login> for online registration for cash assistance, SNAP and Medicaid.

Recertifications have been suspended until June.

Individuals who have missed benefits can contact Mr. Williams at WilliamsJe@dss.nyc.gov

Citizens Commission on Human Rights (CCHR) – B. Simmons

Ms. Simmons reported that the agency is active and has received many reports of discrimination based on COVID-19. Anti-Asian attacks have increased in recent months. Ms. Simmons encouraged all incidents to be reported to 311 or the agency directly.

New York Public Library (NYPL) – L. Brown, L. Marin, T. McCree

Ms. Brown, Co-op City Branch, reported that during the New York City work pause, many NYPL resources are available online at www.NYPL.org including Storytime and other fun activities. She reminded all to wash their hands and keep safe.

Ms. Marin, Westchester Square Branch, reminded all that digital library cards are available online and provide access to a host of resources. She also invited all to stay connected through their Instagram and Facebook pages.

Ms. McCree, City Island Branch, also wished everyone well and promoted the NYPL website.

Office of Mayor Bill de Blasio - Community Affairs Unit – K. Asanti

Mr. Cruz thanked Ms. Asanti for her recent assistance in getting Optimum service restored to a constituent. Ms. Asanti indicated that she was happy to assist and requested customer and carrier information of any residents having similar issues.

Mr. Cruz inquired of any indication on when the public gathering rule would be lifted. Ms. Asante indicated that the health of New Yorkers was the first concern and that we must be patient. The Mayor's briefings are delivered at 9:30 AM. Ms. Asante agreed to forward updates including information on the extension of testing sites.

Mr. Cruz thanked Ms. Asante for her diligence and noted that by the hour of her emails, he knows that she is engaged in work until late every evening.

Office of New York State Senator Alessandra Biaggi – M. Joyce

Ms. Joyce reported that the Senator's Office is functioning remotely via phone, 718 822-2049, and email, Mjoyce@nysenate.gov.

Senator Biaggi will be hosting a Virtual Town Hall Event with New York State Comptroller Scott Stringer on April 23, 2020 at 7 PM. All are encouraged to join.

The State Budget included tweaks to the Bail Reform Law and cuts to Medicaid.

Senator Biaggi issues nightly emails concerning the COVID-19 Crisis.

Office of New York State Senator Jamaal Bailey – S. Morello

Mr. Morello reported that the Senator's Office is operating remotely at 718 547-8554, smorello@nySenate.gov.

Senator Bailey will be co-hosting a Virtual North Bronx Town Hall event on Bronxnet on April 21, 2020 at 7 PM, with Congressman Elliot Engel, Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz, and Council Member Andy Cohen.

The Senator has been focusing on providing personal protective equipment and food for healthcare workers at the Montefiore Northwood location.

Mr. Cruz thanked the Senator for providing a testing site in Co-op City. Mr. Cruz indicated that he is very proud of the Co-op City community who have kept COVID-19 infections to a low rate. The community has successfully implemented social distancing and other safeguards to accomplish this.

Office of New York State Assemblyman Michael Benedetto – M. McKay

Mr. McKay indicated that Assemblyman Benedetto's Office is operating remotely and encouraged anyone needing help to call 718 892-2235 or 718 320-2220, or email mckaym@NYassembly.gov.

Mr. McKay requested that his email address be added to the meeting notification list.

Office of New York State Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj – F. Ruben

Ms. Ruben reported that Assemblyman Gjonaj's Office and the Department for the Aging will co-host a Town Hall meeting on April 23rd at 1 PM, on Senior Resources. The Assembly Office has received many calls concerning meals that were not delivered, particularly to patrons of Middletown Plaza. Assemblyman Gjonaj has delivered meals personally and is very concerned about this population receiving the nutrition they need.

The Assemblyman is offering free COVID-19 cleaning at common areas of nursing homes and buildings with community spaces. Twelve responses were received, so far, including Providence Rest, which was cleaned. The office is operating remotely and can be reached at 718 931-1721.

Office of New York City Comptroller Scott Stringer – M. De La Cruz

Ms. De La Cruz reported that Comptroller Stringer will co-host a Virtual Town Hall Event with State Senator Biaggi on April 23, 2020 at 7 PM concerning COVID-19.

Food issues have been ongoing and are being resolved.

Ms. De La Cruz thanked all who are working to keep New York City running during the COVID-19 crisis. Their efforts are appreciated.

Comptroller Stringer holds webinars for small businesses twice a week, every Tuesday and Thursday, to help small business owners and Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises navigate COVID-19 resources. Questions and/or suggestions can be submitted in advance.

Mr. Cruz thanked Comptroller Stringer for providing the Webex platform being used for this and other Community Board meetings.

Office of Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr. – I. Gonzalez

Mr. Gonzalez reported that the Borough President's Office is functioning remotely. Constituents can contact the office at 718 590 3500 for assistance.

Mr. Gonzalez thanked all City workers for their efforts during the COVID-19 Crises and urged all to be safe.

Mr. Gonzales thanked District Manager Cruz for hosting the virtual meeting.

Office of Bronx District Attorney Darcel Clark – M. Santana-Tavarez

Ms. Santana-Tavarez reported that the District Attorney's Office is functioning remotely. Cases and trials are being conducted remotely. Flyers concerning domestic violence and anxiety/stress we emailed.

Hundreds of older, low risk inmates and those suffering with health conditions have been released from Rikers Island due to the COVID-19 crisis.

High risk inmates have been placed in a secure facility that allows for social distancing.

Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DoHMH) – E. Peralta-Downing

Ms. Peralta-Downing discussed the Health guidelines for preventing the spread of the Coronavirus: face coverings, social distancing, staying home when possible.

Health inspectors are working from home. Complaints are being documented, but site visits are not taking place at this time.

Mr. Cruz inquired about the normal course of the virus. Ms. Peralta-Downing indicated that it varies from patient to patient but often by the third or fourth day a patient may become compromised and seek medical assistance. Some are suffering from the flu and seasonal allergies rather than Coronavirus.

Mr. Cruz indicated that in China spraying was conducted throughout streets. Ms. Peralta-Downing indicated that, to her knowledge, the City was not planning to undertake spraying.

Verizon – A. Horton

Ms. Horton indicated that Verizon is keeping America connected during the COVID-19 Crisis by providing free internet and data.

Verizon will waive late fees accrued by those impacted by COVID-19. Two months of free lifeline service is also being provided to qualifying customers.

During the COVID-19 Crisis virtual repairs are being made. No in-home installations are taking place.

Wireless customers can receive service by appointment only.

Ms. Horton warned that there has been an increase in phishing attacks.

Verizon is funding small business grants of up to \$10,000.

Mr. Cruz thanked all for their participation in the first Virtual District Service Cabinet meeting of Bronx Community Board #10 and concluded the event at 11:30 AM.