



**The City of New York**  
**Bronx Community Board Three**

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DIAL	Government Services
311	& Information for NYC

Comm. Bd. Info go to: nyc.gov/bronxcb3

**HON. VANESSA L. GIBSON**  
**BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT**

**GLORIA S. ALSTON**  
**CHAIRPERSON EMERITUS**

**JOETTA BROWN**  
**CHAIRPERSON**

**ETTA F. RITTER**  
**DISTRICT MANAGER**

<b>Board Members</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Present</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Excused</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Absent</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Signed Late</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Left Early</b>	<b>0</b>

**BOARD MINUTES**

Date: 3/10/26  
 Place: 1332 Fulton Avenue  
 Time: 6:00 P.M.

**Members Present**

- Kolaco Acqui
- Ibrahim Ahmed
- Xiomara Arriola
- Joetta Brown
- Robert Brown
- Gilberto Constantinez
- Iraida DeJesus
- Wanda Ellis
- Michele Gantt
- Maurice Grant
- Shakira Hart
- Michelle Holmes
- Linda Johnson
- Abraham Jones
- April Jones
- Diane Jones
- Victor Latimer
- Tracie Lucas-Lord
- Kathy Morris
- Anddy Perdomo
- Laredo Regular
- Keziah Sullivan-Norman
- Jasmine Uribe
- D'Andra Van-Heusen Thomas

**Staff Present**

- Etta F. Ritter
- Courtland W. Hankins, III

**Members Excused**

- Atta Acheampong
- Edgardo Cedeno
- Randy Dillard
- Francis D'Souza
- Una Lawrence
- Amanda Reed
- Chantel Wells

**Members Absent**

- Eleanor Cano
- Dawn Carter
- Joyce Diggs
- Beverly Emers
- Margo Grant
- Aubrey Mike
- Paul Navarro
- Kim Roland
- Jeannie Ruiz
- Beautiful Winston

**79<sup>th</sup> Assembly District Leader**

- Gene Edwards

**Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson's Office**

- Kenny Agosto

**Councilmember Althea Stevens' Office**

- Lisne Bautista

**Councilmember Justion Sanchez's Office**

- River Alexander

**Congressman Ritchie Torres' Office**

- Ron Jordan

**CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Joetta Brown, Chairperson of Bronx Community Board Three, called the meeting to order at 6:09 p.m.

**INVOCATION**

Mr. Robert Brown, board member of Bronx Community Board Three, led the meeting in prayer.

**EXECUTIVE OFFICERS**

- |                                  |                                  |                        |                           |                              |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| Kolaco Acqui                     | Kathy Morris                     | Keziah Sullivan-Norman | D'Andra Van Heusen-Thomas | Robert Brown                 |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Vice-Chairperson | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice-Chairperson | Secretary              | Treasurer                 | Sgt.-at-Arms/Parliamentarian |

## PUBLIC INFORMATION

Ryan Arecco, Community Affairs Associate, NYC Dept. of Consumer & Worker Protection (DCWP)

**Topic: Discuss the DCWP Free Tax Preparation Program**

Ms. Joetta Brown, Chairperson of Bronx Community Board Three, introduced Mr. Ryan Arecco to those in attendance.

Mr. Arecco spoke on the Free Tax Prep Program & NYC Safe Start Program as follows:

### NYC Free Tax Prep

#### **Key Details for 2026 NYC Free Tax Prep:**

- **Eligibility:** Generally, for households earning \$97,000 or less (or single filers earning \$68,000 or less).
- **Service Options:**

- **In-person:**

Appointments and drop-off services at various locations, including community centers and libraries.

- **Virtual:** Remote filing options with tax experts.

- **Assisted Self-Prep:** Free access to software with expert assistance.

- **Specialized Services:** Dedicated support for self-employed individuals, freelancers, and small business owners.
- **Where to Find Sites:** Use the interactive map at [DCWP's website](#) or call 311 for the nearest location.
- **Documentation:** Required documents include proof of income (W-2s, 1099s), Social Security numbers for all family members, and bank account information for direct deposit.

### NYC Safe Start Program

The [NYC SafeStart Account](#) is a safe, affordable checking account designed to help New Yorkers build financial stability. It features no overdraft fees, no monthly fees (with a low \$25 minimum balance), and an ATM card, but no debit card. Residents can open accounts at participating banks using IDNYC.

#### **Key Features & Benefits**

- **No Overdraft Fees:** Designed to prevent high and unpredictable fees.
- **Low Requirements:** Minimum balance of \$25 or less.
- **No Monthly Fees:** Assumes the low balance requirement is met.
- **Accessibility:** Allows users to keep money secure, receive direct deposits, and avoid costly check-cashing services.
- **ATM Access:** Includes an ATM card for cash withdrawals and deposits only. It is not a debit card.

#### **How to Open an Account**

- **Eligibility:** Must be at least 18 years old and live or work in NYC.
- **Documentation:** Requires proof of address (e.g., utility bill, lease) and Social Security Number or ITIN.
- **Participating Banks:** Institutions include Carver Federal Savings Bank, Flushing Bank, Municipal Credit Union (MCU), Neighborhood Trust Federal Credit Union, Spring Bank, and others.
- **Assistance:** Visit a [Financial Empowerment Center](#) for free, one-on-one help opening an account.
- **Information:** Visit [nyc.gov/SafeStart](#) or call 311.

Mr. Arecco concluded his presentation and answered questions satisfactorily.

## PUBLIC SESSION

### Announcements

Mr. Emmanuel Rodriguez, representing We Stay/Nos Quedamos, announced details about the Resiliency Hub Program.

Mr. Jeffrey Jimenez and Ms. Shirlene Altidor, both of Commonpoint, Bronx, spoke on the Neighborhood Safety Council, a program focused on working with the 42nd NYPD Precinct to develop safety measures within the district. Commonpoint Bron is currently recruiting participants and pays a stipend of \$250.

Ms. Iraida de Jesus, board member of Bronx Community Board Three, shared information on events at Gardenia de la Familia, located at 1507 Washington Avenue it sits near the corner of East 171<sup>st</sup> Street and Washington Avenue.

### Community Concerns

Ms. April Jones, a member of Bronx Community Board Three, raised concerns regarding the excessive presence of dog waste throughout the district, noting its impact on sanitation and quality of life.

District Manager Etta Ritter advised stakeholders to report such conditions by contacting 311 and to include specific dates and times when individuals are observed failing to properly curb their dogs. This documentation supports targeted enforcement and follow-up.

Mr. Maurice Gray, also a member of Bronx Community Board Three, highlighted a particularly severe issue along Louis Nine Boulevard and Jennings Street, where dog waste has accumulated, contributing to unsanitary street conditions.

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### **EXECUTIVE OFFICERS**

Kolaco Acqui  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice-Chairperson

Kathy Morris  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-Chairperson

Keziah Sullivan-Norman  
Secretary

D'Andra Van Heusen-Thomas  
Treasurer

Robert Brown  
Sgt.-at-Arms/Parliamentarian

**Roll Call**

Ms. Keziah Sullivan-Norman, Secretary of Bronx Community Board Three, called the roll, and a quorum was established.

**Approval of Members Requesting to be Excused**

The following members requested to be excused:

- Atta Acheampong
- Edgardo Cedeno
- Randy Dillard
- Francis D'Souza
- Una Lawrence
- Amanda Reed
- Chantel Wells

**MOTION**

It was motioned by Tracie Lucas-Lord and seconded by Kathy Morris to excuse the following members:

- Atta Acheampong
- Edgardo Cedeno
- Randy Dillard
- Francis D'Souza
- Una Lawrence
- Amanda Reed
- Chantel Wells

**ALL IN FAVOR**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Approval Of Minutes**

It was moved by Tracie Lucas Lord and seconded by Kathy Morris to approve the January 13, 2026, and February 10, 2026, minutes, with any necessary corrections, if any.

**ALL IN FAVOR**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Amendments to the Agenda**

There were no amendments to the agenda.

**Elected Official's Reports**

**Councilmember Althea Stevens' Report**

Ms. Lisne Bautista did not provide a written report and shared time-sensitive information.

**Councilmember Justin Sanchez's Report**

River Alexander, Legislative Director, did not provide a written report and shared time-sensitive information.

**Congressman Ritche Torres' Office**

Ron Jordan, Liaison, did not provide a written report and shared time-sensitive information.

**District Leader Gene Edwards – 79<sup>th</sup> Assembly District**

The Hon. Gene A. Edwards, Jr. spoke on the petition for poll worker applications and also explained how poll hiring works.

**Bronx Borough President's Office Report**

The Bronx Borough President's Report was emailed to those on Bronx Community Board Three's listserv. Mr. Kenny Agosto shared time-sensitive information.

**Chairperson's Report**

Chairperson Joetta Brown thanked Board member April Jones for coming out to support the effort to remove trees in Crotona Park. Ms. Brown also urged board members to attend their elected committee meetings and to attend the Financial Literacy Workshops.

**District Manager's Report**

Etta Ritter, District Manager of Bronx Community Board Three, spoke on items of importance from the period of February 11<sup>th</sup> to the present. The District Manger's report was emailed to those on Bronx Community Board Three's listserv.

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**EXECUTIVE OFFICERS**

Kolaco Acqui	Kathy Morris	Keziah Sullivan-Norman	D'Andra Van Heusen-Thomas	Robert Brown
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice-Chairperson	2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice-Chairperson	Secretary	Treasurer	Sgt.-at-Arms/Parliamentarian

**OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

**Approval of Members Requesting to be Excused for January 13, 2026 General Board Meeting**

The following members requested to be excused:

Atta Acheampong  
Joyce Diggs  
Beverly Emers  
Maurice Gray  
Una Lawrence  
Aubrey Mike  
Paul Navarro  
Anddy Perdomo  
Jeannie Ruiz  
Keziah Sullivan-Norman  
Jasmine Uribe  
D'Andra Van-Heusen Thomas  
Chantel Wells

**MOTION**

It was motioned by Abraham Jones and seconded by Tracie Lucas-Lord to excuse the following members:

Atta Acheampong  
Joyce Diggs  
Beverly Emers  
Maurice Gray  
Una Lawrence  
Aubrey Mike  
Paul Navarro  
Anddy Perdomo  
Jeannie Ruiz  
Keziah Sullivan-Norman  
Jasmine Uribe  
D'Andra Van-Heusen Thomas  
Chantel Wells

**ALL IN FAVOR**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**BIRTHDAY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Bronx Community Three recognized attendees born in February, as well as board member and 2nd Vice Chairwoman Kathy Morris.

**SPECIAL RECOGNITION**

District Manager Etta Ritter will attend and participate in Butler Community Center's (DFOY) Women's History Month on Friday, March 27<sup>th</sup>, at 4:00 pm.

**BENEDICTION**

Mr. Abraham Jones led us in prayer.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

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1<sup>st</sup> Vice-Chairperson

Kathy Morris  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-Chairperson

Keziah Sullivan-Norman  
Secretary

D'Andra Van Heusen-Thomas  
Treasurer

Robert Brown  
Sgt.-at-Arms/Parliamentarian