



THE CITY OF NEW YORK

BOROUGH OF THE BRONX

COMMUNITY BOARD #5

Honorable Ruben Diaz, Jr., Bronx Borough President

**Chairperson
Dr. Bola Omotosho**

**District Manager
Kenneth Brown**

**Community Board Five
General Board Meeting Minutes
October 27, 2021
Virtual by Webex Video Conference**

**Public Hearing at 5:00 pm
Virtual by WebEx
Host: First Vice-Chair Angel Caballero**

Reports: We are in session now for the fiscal year 2023. For a New York City capital and expense budget. Is there anyone who would like to speak concerning the capital or expense or expenses for 2023? I'm happy to make a request, and my name is Lucia Deng, rehabilitation of the Washington Bridge, including installing a protected bike lane. My name is Patricia Rojas request an electronics pick-up near our community board five instead of traveling far to the area. In addition, build recreation centers for the people in the community. My name is Roxanne Gonzalez-Jimenez; I request trash cans to consider for the 2023 budget so people in the community can keep our streets cleaner. In addition to a porta-potty at the park in our Featherbed Lane Triangle. My name is Pooi Stewart request financial institutions on University Avenue and from East to West Tremont Avenue. My name is Roxanne Gonzalez-Jimenez; I ask for an additional floor for the Davidson Community Center for seniors in our community and to increase the food pantry for the people in our community. Pooi Stewart requested extra centers for tutoring centers on Burnside Avenue and University Avenue. Roxanna Gonzalez-Jimenez asked for an additional expansion of youth education concerning illicit substances. My name is Angel Caballero. And I want to thank everybody that did give testimony or issued your request. Thank you so much for board members.

- **Community Board Five Board Members**
- **Attendees:**
B.Akumah, S.Bah, A.Caballero, C.Camara, L.Deng, R.Gonzalez-Jimenez, B.Lawrence, G.Medina, B.Moore, Dr.B.Omotosho, J.Parra, R.Perez, F.Ramos, M.Rosado, S.Rudolph, C.Shorter, P.Stewart, C.Westbrook P.Rojas, S.Solano,
- **Absent/Excused**

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Serving these Neighborhoods:
Fordham, Morris Heights, Mount Hope, University Heights

- E.Acosta, P.Blanco, J.Curiel, A.Dejesus, P.Dominguez, M.Estrella, N.Graham, M.Heath, A.Hernandez, T.Mims, , E.Morris, R.Owusu, D.Perry, J.Pope, L.Reyes, U.Smith,

Welcome:

- **Opening Prayer** by Ramny Perez (Board Member)
- **Quorum: 7:11 pm**

- **Dr. B.Omosho - Chair Chairperson's**

- **District Managers by Ken Brown:**

Reports: Good Evening, all board members. Initiatives we're currently involved with the board members mentioned more resources. The district had meetings with the Department of Health Center to discuss growing and bringing the event, even if you call the Share program, where you get paid fresh produce. NYC has a relationship with a local farm. The walk is planning some activities on November 13. There was a gardening day that will be starting at West 183 street and aqueduct. On November 13 at noon, the friends of the aqueduct walk and university woods and devote Park received a donation of 1000 Flower bowls. Friends of the aqueduct walk also plan a Community Heroes exhibit at the Roscoe Captain Roscoe Brown Plaza on December 4, 2021. One of the commitments that came out of the Jerome Avenue rezoning was to develop a Housing Preservation task force. The Borough President's office, Council Member Vanessa Gibson and housing preservation and development met for approximately a year - they met through May of 2021. The contract with Chaska and Northwest Bronx Community clergy association to do tenant organizing in apartment buildings throughout the borough that throughout the west part of the borough that identified as being physically dilapidated, so they came up with their financial report. The Jerome Avenue Revitalization Task Force, it's been continuing to meet before Jerome Avenue. The coalition is the ad hoc banking working group. We have been conversing with Amalgamated Bank and Chase Bank to ensure that some financial services remain to the district.

- **46th Precinct Community Affairs Captain Piper, NCO Sergeant Garcia:**

Reports: The batteries from the scooters are costly, about \$1,600, and they're not secured very well. A lot of the crime is you can rip one out of the scooter. There is a rise in crime, most recently with grand larceny, involves students. We have gone out to all the auto shops and notified them that purchasing one of these batteries is illegal. And we're also working on the other end of trying to stop this thing while it's happening. We have a new special operations Lieutenant, DeSoto, and he has hit the ground running well. And he's been doing some operations trying to catch people in the act using scooter thefts batteries for revenue. There hasn't been any luck yet, but we're pretty sure something that's going

to happen. With that, I'm on the other end of our grand larceny increase. We're also looking at shoplifting on Fordham Road and at the Rite Aid on Burnside. He has had success with conducting operations and catching people shoplifting, and there have been several arrests. Thanks for our CO Seminara. The current CO has also been working with corporate security with a lot of these stores. On Fordham looking at better solutions for stopping people before they can even caught in the act. Other crime has been down for the year about 10.6% within 28 days what we're looking at mostly for is grand theft. The Police Department always has a policy for Halloween. We will have the maximum amount of people available and working. This is Sergeant Garcia please come join us, we will be giving out many candies to the children. Would you please bring your family to come to join us for a trick or treat?

Voting Items:

- **Letter of Support:**
- Department of City Planning Open Restaurant Text Amendment
First in Motioned by G. Medina
Seconded in motion by A. Caballero
Roll Called: 16 Yeah / 4 Abstention
Motion is carried

September 22 General Board Meeting Minutes 2021.

First in Motioned by B. Lawrence
Seconded in motion by N. Graham Jr.

- Roll Called: 17 Yah / 0 Abstention, 2 Nay, motion is carried

April 28 General Board Meeting Minutes 2021

First in Motioned by G. Medina.
Seconded in motion by P. Rojas

- Roll Called: 16 Yah / 1 Abstention/ 3 Nay, Motion is carried

Public Session

- Sallie Smith- Resident
Reports: I heard things that are my concern I was listening to this morning. The Department of Parks time that they got so many millions of dollars and you know that we have Echo Park project over there that was never finished and that they removed the comfort station and never put it back. They claimed the Parks does not have enough money. Could we get some extra funds to complete our project and compensation back in Echo Park and some staff members?
- **Lutheran Social Service of New York by Georgia Katsalis:**

Reports: Good evening. Board Members and participants thank you so much for the opportunity? My name is Georgia Katsalis. I'm a foster parent, trainer, and recruiter for the safe-haven program at Lutheran Social Services of New York. I work with a program that helps children who cross the border provide transitional foster parenting to set them up in the home by foster parents until they're able to reunite with their families. We currently need people who are bilingual in Spanish and English or English and Dari or Pashto or Farsi. The children are between the ages of zero, so from infants to the age of 14, and it's a voluntary program where you know we are accepting volunteers from the community. But we provide a stipend to help and close the children who stay with them for a short-term basis. It could range from a few weeks to a few months. We don't know the exact amount of time and if anyone has any information they would like to request, you can reach me at 917-684-8861.

- **Department of Aging by Jeanette Reed**

- Reports: Good evening; my name is Jeanette Reid. The Department for the Aging senior employment unit. I'm here to share the good news. We are actively recruiting older unemployed Bronx residents to apply to our senior employment program. This is a short-term paid workforce program. We offer job placement assistance and skills training to help people transition back into employment. Candidates must be unemployed, aged 55 or older, have limited income, and desire to work. The highlight of the program is they get paid to search for work. They get paid a stipend of minimum wage of \$15 an hour for 15 to 20 hours per week. At the same time, they are prepared to go to work while we are working to find an employer while helping them with their interviewing skills in their resumes. After applying to our program, the participants go through a panel interview session to assess their income and whether they qualify for the program. Once they're entitled, they start our training and the job coaching. We work with employers to match their skills to whatever job opportunities there are, so we need your help in spreading the word to the community and even people you know, relatives, or friends' neighbors who are over 55 looking to work. Many people were finding that retired and the pension or whatever they're living on is just not on their budget. And there's a lot of people that are displaced and unemployed. Our office is not open to the public, but people can call the office and ask for an application, and I will forward a brochure to the organizer. New York City Department for the Aging is a direct service. You can reach me at 212 602-6958.

- **St. Barnabas Hospital by Isabel Pastor.**

- Reports: Evening everyone. Thank you for inviting me at the last minute today. I wanted to mention that I am the Director of Patient and community engagement. This weekend at St. Barnabas hospital we have our second annual trunk or treat and in conjunction with Senator Gustavo's office and Council Member Feliz on Saturday, October 30. Between 12 and three, it is for the children to come with an adult and preferably a costume. We will be on the side of the emergency room entrance of St. Barnabas. I will have someone directing them. Everyone is welcome to join us. You can reach out to me at ipastor@sbhny.org.

Elected Official's Reports

Honorable Ruben Diaz, Jr., Bronx Borough President

- *The Representative is Tom Lucania*
- Reports: Good evening, everyone. Thank you work and your commitment to board five and to the staff for the excellent work that you always do—just a couple of quick items. And I'm going to piggyback on a couple of things that Ken said. He and Dr. Bola were an essential and influential part of those budget consultations he referred to. It was three long days of meetings, and I know Dr. Bola stepped in at some points. A dozen city agencies and the questions asked by Ken and Dr. Bola were necessary, and I see the information that's come from them will help you as you move forward with your statement of needs and your budget priorities. Secondly, I want to thank all the new board members who came to orientation and participated. I had shared most of the presentations. I think I have one more to share of the presentations from the orientation. We have sent it directly to the new board members. Ken has shared them with all of you, which I thought I heard, that's great, and it is always an opportunity to review what you have been doing over the time you've been on the board. There have been some changes. There have been some opportunities for more resources to get important information that your committees can use for their deliberations. I want to thank again, all of you for attending. Dr. Bola did mention the importance of the conflict-of-interest board. Please carefully read the little cheat sheet prepared by Alex Kip, which was a perfect addition to our documents because it was transparent and clear and concise information on the dos and the don'ts of being a board member regarding potential conflicts of interest. Another thing that just slipped my mind is that I think I shared the latest borough president report with all of you earlier this week, or Ken shared it with all of you earlier this week. It does contain all the information on COVID vaccination options and locations, COVID testing sites, and anybody affected by Ida. There was a question in the chat about in-person meetings. But the answer to the question is mid-January. The same legislation passed by the Senate's Assembly and expired, which allows for remote sessions. I think that it expires before your meeting in January. The January meeting unless something occurs before that, we'll be back in person. I believe that is it. If there's anything else, I'll share it with Ken. Again, thank you all for your service. And thank you again, Dr. Bola and Ken.

- **Honorable Council Member Vanessa L. Gibson's Office District #16**
- **Representative is Nereida Gomez**
- or District16bronx@council.nyc.gov with any questions or concerns.
- Report: Thank you, Dr. Bola. Good evening everyone, Nereida Gomez, with Council Member, Vanessa Gibson office. I want to share an upcoming event. We are hosting a silent disco at Joyce Kilmer Park over on Grand Concourse and 161st street. We are exploring ways to move forward, rain or shine. We will keep you all posted. And if you're interested, please give us a call, and we'll make sure you have the most up-to-date information. The office can continue to reach us at 718-588-7500, which I will also put in the chat. Our office still has PPE masks and hand sanitizers if you need or have families who need or know of organizations that need masks or hand sanitizers. Please give us a call. And as we move into November. We're going to start our turkey donation list. So

please get those requests in early again; I will put my email in the chat, send me an email, and I'll make sure you're on our sponsorship list. Anything specific that you hear about city agencies gives us a call; please let us know. Please keep us posted and in the loop. Thank you so much.

- **Honorable State Senator Gustavo Rivera District #33**
- *Representative of Oriana Shulevitz Rosado*
- Report: Good Evening, everyone. For folks who maybe had not been eligible due to immigration status for things like unemployment. The application has closed, but it's still being processed. Suppose you have applied and haven't heard back or had any issues feel free to contact our office. We are still doing the Emergency Rental Assistance Program, often known as ERAP, which helps folks with rental arrears or utility arrears that happened during the pandemic. If you would like assistance with that, again, please come to our office. Our office is open for a bit of time at this point. We are not accepting walk-ins, but please call us to make an appointment. We are open physically from Monday through Thursday. The senator has been welcoming seniors back to their senior centers. For those who weren't aware, the senior centers were closed for several months due to COVID. He is happy to welcome them back. I've had the privilege to accompany the senator to a couple of senior centers with him, one of them being the guest's neighborhood Senior Center and bringing some goodie bags. That has been a lot of fun—this past weekend. The Senator attended a Breast Cancer Awareness Walk hosted by Linda Kemp. The Senator was happy to coordinate a mammogram screening bus at St. Barnabas hospital. And the Senator has also been door-knocking to talk to constituents about the emergency rental assistance program. Um, lastly but not least, we will have a representative from the comptroller's office coming to our office on November 15, from 11 am to 4 pm. They're going to be helping folks with funds, which is money that has been left unclaimed with a corporation that holds those funds, and they're going to be there to help folks. You know, get that money back. To get unclaimed funds from the city or the state, please come to our office on November 15; we have two representatives who will help you recover those funds.

- **Honorable Jose Marco Serrano, New York State Senator District #29**
- *Representative is Terrell Brooke*
- Report: My name is Terrell Brock, and I'm a community liaison from a state senator positions office. Senator Serrano joined his colleagues in the legislature and a letter to Senator Schumer and the New York congressional delegation requesting an extension to all federal unemployment insurance. And we're still encouraging tenants to apply to New York State's COVID rental assistance program. You can use the link on our website, and feel free to reach out to our office to help with your application. On September 21, Senator Serrano received a perfect score on the New York League of Conservation Voters 2021 state legislative scorecard for his voting record on environmental issues. During the last legislative session, the New York State Senate passed several environmental justice bills, including one to create an ecological Bill of Rights to protect communities that have been overburdened by pollution. The proposed amendment to Article One of the New York Constitution would establish the right of each person to

clean air and water and a healthful environment, and it will be on your ballot in November. On September 27, Senator Serrano joined Senator Chuck Schumer, Congressman Jameel Bellman, Councilmember Vanessa Gibson, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr., and Bronx District Attorney Darcel Clark at the birthplace of hip hop 1520 Sedgwick in the Bronx. We're happy to proclaim August 11 as hip-hop celebration day. In August as hip-hop recognition month and November as hip-hop history month, a presentation was made to commemorate the occasion. The Hip Hop legends Charisse, KRS one, DMC Coburg, Cindy Campbell, Leroy McCarthy, and many others are still distributing this year. If you need any help, please give us a call at 212-828-5829 and like to share my deepest condolences to Dr. Bola. I know how these things can be. And I appreciate all the great work that you do for the community.

- **Committee**

- **Housing**: Chairman Dr. Bola
- **Report**: The Housing Committee, there was a presentation made by the Bronx Pro group, which talked to us about the project on Grand Concourse 2017 Grand Concourse, a nine-story building. It was just an introduction because they will be going through certification by November 15. There does not require any rezoning as it is of right, but they're looking forward to moving the project along. On that project by the Bronx Pro, it's a technically small, 34 units, but 24 apartments broken down into various categories, including seven two bedrooms, 17. One bedroom and nine studios. So that's one presentation we had. We also had this second presentation, which I'm trying to build through my notes. We found that they will be coming back to give us complete, detailed updates in November, meaning it's in two phases. They've already secured funding for this one, but they will be coming back to the housing committee to give us more details about that. We requested an update on the pros of their project on Jerome Avenue, which is the one project they have obliged. They will give the district manager and Jerome's zoning chair a walkthrough this coming Friday.
- **Parks and Recreation**: Chair Griset, Medina
Report: We are trying to get Devaney Triangle ready for the planting of our new Christmas tree, which will hopefully be planted within the next week or so. Echo Triangle, we mentioned to Mr. Michael Ortiz. He will be working with the community and the Parks Committee to upgrade that park and look a little better. And the problem in that park is that we had too many homeless people in there and occupying the benches, and we were trying to clean it up and get it a little more presentable so we could have the community enjoy it as well. It's a work in progress with that, in the parks department.
- **Economic Development**: Chairman Angel Caballero
Report: We had sanitation on our call. We are trying to clean up Burnside, Jerome and Tremont in our area. Towards the Deegan, Sedgwick Avenue is within our district our with pilot projects with HRA with Jewish Community Council. We have approximately six to 10 employees coming out to help in the community. I'm very excited that the Christmas Tree will be here soon.

- **Immigration Committee:** Chairperson Pooi Stewart
Report: Yes, our next meeting will be available next month on November 11, 2021. Immigration involves the diversity that we have in our community, including Haiti. So recently, on Sunday, October 17, there is breaking news in our community the Haitians kept the United States religions group; 17 missionaries kidnapped in Haiti. I would like to bring this topic the following month, November 11. And the meeting we had before we had an attorney. We're interested in doing more research on Haitian immigration. Any board member or any other residents in our community that needs help, or needs an attorney or need any assistance or advocate or anything, please get in touch with Ken. You can give Ken more information. His name is GianCarlos and is an attorney assisting on immigration. Thank you
- **Veterans Committee:** Chairwoman Roxana Gonzalez
Report: The veterans are still, you know, moving forward. Our committee was a little short this month. But next month, we plan to move forward with our old 30 minutes schedule that we usually have. And, I look forward to anyone interested in joining us, which will happen on the second Tuesday of November. Even one second gives you the date. That will be the ninth November 9 at 6 pm. Please join us so you can share some of the resources we have for our veterans, your neighbors, and those you love. Thank you again and have a great one.
- **Ad Hoc Community Outreach Committee:** Chairman Charles Shorter
Report: Good evening, everyone. The Community Outreach and Engagement Ad Hoc Committee met on October 6. We had Elder Lindsey from the King of Glory Tabernacle church, working with community partners and the National Institute of Health. The organization got a grant from the church to provide COVID testing in the Community. We continue to explore ways to enhance and get the message out to Community board five and our services and services in the Community. The Bronx swab is a guest through Community Board five, and that Dr. Bola would like me to sit on it in the Bronx , Bronx solid waste, and advisory board meetings. And I attend those meetings once a month. On Capitol community board five, every committee board has a member on it. But the Bronx Community swap has been reinstated by others. Thank you.
- *Adjourned at 8:27 pm.*

The next General Board Meeting will be held on November 10, 2021.

Prepared and submitted by Ms. P. Stewart.

Secretary of Bronx Community Board Five