



**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**

**General Board Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday December 08, 2021**

**Virtual Meeting**

**Community Board Five**

- **Community Board Five Board Members**
- **Attendees** S.Bah, A.Caballero, R.Gonzalez, M.Heath, N.Graham.Jr., B.Lawrence, G.Medina, M.Rosado, Dr.B.Omotosho, J.Parra, F.Ramos, L.Deng, B.Moore, S.Solano, C.Shorter, P.Stewart, and C.Westbrook, P.Rojas,.
- **Absent/Excused**
- E.Acosta, B.Akumah, P.Blanco, P.Dominguez, J.Curiel, C.Camera, L.Reyes, A.DeJesus, A.Hernandez, T.Mims, E.Morris, R.Owusu, J.Pope, S.Rudolph, and R.Perez
- **Welcome:**
  - Opening Prayer by N.Graham.Jr. (Board Member)
- **Quorum: 6:39 pm**
- **Approval of Minutes:**
  - October General Board Meeting 2021, approved.
  - First in Motioned by B.Lawrence, Seconded in motion by Nero Graham Jr.
  - Roll Called: 17 Yea / 0 Nay / 0 Abstain
- **Chairperson's Report Dr. Bola Omotosho:**
- **Reports:** Good Evening; Elected Officials, representatives, liaisons, board members, and residents. Today, I would like all the participants or the community as a whole to know, including my colleagues on the board, that the first development on Jerome Avenue is coming online, location at 1769 Jerome Avenue Bronx NY 10453. The application deadline is January 18, 2022. Please encourage your neighbors and yourself. I believe we have some set aside for this  
BCC Campus \* Gould Hall, Room 200 \* 2155 University Avenue \* Bronx, New York 10453  
Telephone (718) 364-2030 \* Facsimile (718) 220-8426 \* bx05@cb.nyc.gov

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

community to maximize it. And this is the first one that is coming online. I had the privilege of a walkthrough with BronxPro earlier last month with the District Manager and the Jerome Oversight Committee Chair, Cheryl Westbrook. They are magnificent buildings suitable for apartments with many appliances. We've been talking about business improvement districts along Burnside, Jerome, and Tremont. Through the coordination of level 360, BJT, everything is complete from the center and the board five, which hire the new consultant. And the process is now being restarted. We all must get engaged; there is a series of visualization to have the business improvement district on in our community. And it's a very tedious process; we got to in the past; we got up to level 11 out of 12 actionable, which will have led us to the finishing line. But unfortunately, we will not get past the 11th, which has to do with the property owners transitioning. Today, things are a bit different. And hopefully, this time around, we will get it right. Trackback to the agenda, there is a subsection here, which says; Farewell to Alva, she'll be transitioning with the incoming and outgoing movements.

- **District Managers by Ken Brown Report:**

Reports: Continue to work with the Jerome Avenue rezoning collaborative. The among the committees is the Ad hoc Banking Committee. We continue to be engaged with our Amalgamated Bank, even though they are not, you know, as you're aware, they pulled the branch out. However, they still have publicly committed to investing **\$25 million** in the Bronx, and that they are currently in negotiations with what are called community development, financial institutions. Those are nonprofit banks that have a social mission. They're talking with them about how they can package loan products for our community. WEPA had a Parent Town Hall virtually: focusing on suicide prevention, substance abuse prevention/reduction, and mental health resources. Con Edison had a webinar about community engagement programs. They will continue to have low-income assistance for utilities. Those with low-income assistance have a winter weatherization, which looks very lovely. Includes LED light bulbs and weatherization. I'll put together a package and send it out tomorrow of how to apply and get assistance for the kids and services through them. No Contact.

- **New York Police Department 46<sup>th</sup> Precinct by Inspector Potkay and Community Affairs Officer Watson:**

Reports: Good Evening, everyone, this is Deputy Inspector Potkay from 46th Precinct. Good to see everyone, and I hope you had a Happy Thanksgiving. Everything's been going well. Getting much help from the community, much help from our officers—outstanding job: Shooting is down from 40 versus 41. The shooter has been identified and is in our custody. We have motivated officers, and the community has been fantastic. I can't say that enough—just the communication going back and forth. We address your concerns as our priority. We have Fordham Road

Team -six officers post at Fordham Road and two at East Burnside Ave. We have officers from Webster Avenue to East Fordham Rd, and then we have another one on Grand Concourse, typically working from around the clock. The NCOs supplement it to protect the community and hold things under control. Every Wednesday, we're doing joint with Fordham team and not only that but to help correct this condition. This morning we had a successful operation. Overall, as I said, I am delighted to be here and extremely happy to be back here. And please, I really can't thank you enough for all the assistance I have received since I've been here. I need everyone to keep track of their bank accounts activity. Be aware of any like fraudulent activity on your accounts. The next is that people were walking around with the phones exposed; if we had a couple of phone snatches, we had a couple of chain snatches. An individual on a bike, going around the community; three victims we had; he drove by and then ripped their necklaces off from the neck. Currently, we're working with the squad officers. Be mindful of your surroundings, and we have many officers out there. We had a couple of commercial robberies on Featherbed Lane and 175 Street at gunpoint. We believe it's the same individual, and we have wanted photos that we put out on Twitter and Facebook. If you identify any of these people, please let us know. We need your help, and you see something, say something-all the information is confidential. We absolutely cannot do this without you. **I hope you're all logging into our Twitter. We have a couple of school crossing guards in the meantime, and we've YCO's fellows help keep the streets safe during the school dismissal. The YCO's are helping the crossing guards to protect the safety of the children - more will come from the police academy within a week or so. We've been working hard with you to increase your quality of life and reduce violence. These police officers are doing marvelous work, just getting guns off the street. We ended up doing a car stop. One person was transporting 46 guns across state borders from Pennsylvania. We conducted this car stop safely, effectively and apprehended two individuals that owned 46 handguns. If anyone has any information on guns, please contact us immediately as quickly as possible. You'll never be ever involved in it. Many firearms are in New York City in the Bronx, and these officers are doing a great job getting guns off the street. That's the essence of it. I read all the complaint reports every day. One thing that I'm noticing is people are leaving their keys in their car, they're running into the store, and we're having an awful lot of vehicles stolen as a result. Please turn off your car, put the hazards on if you're running into the store. We had many "Revel" scooters, and people stole the batteries. Please be mindful, do not leave the batteries out. I was told that these batteries are good to sell. People steal them to sell at different locations or transport them to other countries for a fortune. So, if you have any idea or any information, please let us know because it's been driving our grand larceny numbers high.**

**Question/Comment to the CO**

Angel Caballero, concerned, is working with BJT, Bronx merchant Association, the Burnside Jerome, and the Tremont Avenue area; the Christmas holidays are at the corner. We have several things rolling in our community: coupons for December. Shoppers will be out on the strip on Burnside Avenue every day. Some stores open until late at night; let's say about six to seven o'clock, which is not safe for some small businesses, especially two people in the store. We would like your help to keep the business safe during these holidays. Would you mind sharing some ideas on how to maintain the safety of our community for this holiday season?

**Response:** Be aware of if we have chronic people going out there. We have two officers explicitly assigned in Burnside in one of our key locations, and they're paying most of their attention to East Burnside Avenue. We've had people going into Rite Aid just walking in, coming in, and stealing property going back out again. We've been arresting the same individuals from time to time. We have crime prevention going out there. They've been helping. But we also have crime prevention going to each location and introducing themselves and then just going over particular situations, particularly recidivists, affecting the area. We ended up apprehending them, these individuals. We spoke to the individual; they said they grabbed paper towels and toothpaste to sell back to other locations. People are on probation or parole. We have two officers right now assigned to East Burnside Avenue. I'm going to put two more probably next week or so. Everyone's in the know, making sure that also watching our Twitter accounts, we're putting them out there as well. Everyone's aware, and they're able to call 911 when they see them entering the location. From my executives, it will be the same, and we're still going to have neighborhood policing.

**Question/Comment to the CO**

How are you doing, Inspector Potkay? This is Nero from the Municipal Services Committee, Community Board Five, one of the major problems and significant concerns that the people brought to my attention happened to be double parked vehicles in our community. Morris and Walton Avenues blocked with cars double parked; like Louella Hatch would say this from the river to river, and Cross Bronx to Fordham. We have a significant problem of double parked vehicles where people get out of them and leave them like they're in a parking lot. It blocks emergency vehicles from coming to our local streets all the time. We have a significant problem of double-parking vehicles where people get out of them and leave them like they're in a parking lot. I just asked if

**you could look into that with someone. And let's clear that up. So, somebody loses their lives. Somebody gets into a big fight. After all, they can't get out because somebody blocked them at two o'clock in the morning, and they must get out and go to work. Thank you. We've been having our officers go out there moving the cars, and it's unfortunate, we have to issue summonses from time to time to get these cars moving as a deterrent to getting these cars going. I see our number one accident that we have is Sideswipe cars. I believe it is a result of these double-parked vehicles; two vehicles can't squeeze through, right hitting one another as they're driving by, so it's a significant safety concern. It says that we have increased our parking summonses. And we'll make sure that the officers are taken care of appropriately but call me. I know you have my number. Let me get it any issues; in particular, you can let me know offline, and we'll take care of everything.**

### **Alva's Farewell**

Reports. Ken stated, "Especially Alva, our special guests. Alva came onto the staff in I think it was June 2019. She's always very professional, delightful. She has been a delight to work with all the torrent emails and notices that came up. I depended on her. It's been a tremendous pleasure. She's not only professional but very, very pleasant, and it's our loss but our city's game that she's moving on." LaShawnda stated, "Alva is a brilliant, sweet person, a good listener and hilarious. What you do not know about her is that she graduated from high school at 15 and college at 19. She always takes the initiative, and she will be well missed." Maria Rosado stated, "I would like to say she is a brilliant girl. I'm missing my email for the community; what happens to me a lot going through all my emails is very frustrating, but Alva is making sure I received it. I appreciate the work she has done for this community board five. Congratulations. Thank you." Pooi Stewart stated, "Alva, I'm going to miss you so much. I remember the first time I became a board member. I came to the office. The first person I saw was Alva Rodriguez. The only first person I saw was a beautiful Alva right there, Community Board Five; here you go. I said to myself, is this CB five office? We are honored to have you on our community board five. It should be Lashawnda sitting over there. I started telling my story to her, spending a

couple of hours at the office. You will be missed by community board five, and once again, congratulations to you that you are moving forward to 2022. And I'm so glad that you are moving on. I did not know that you were a brilliant girl until today. And you graduated so early. That is what we would like to hear about it in our community board five. I know you're moving on one day, and you will become the president." Raheem, the CB5 resident, stated, "I wanted to say congratulations, the CB5 will be losing a great person and take care of yourself and enjoy your joyful holidays. Approaching the god always shines on you wherever you are going or doing. I wish you all the best. Thank you." Sally Smith, the CB5 member, stated, "I wish the best for you. Thank you for the time that you helped me climb up the steps to your office. I cannot deal with my efforts; with your help, I climbed those steps, and we made it through the steps to University Avenue. Thank you very much." Dr. Bola stated, "I thank you to God for your life, and being part of this community, you are an inspiration to the young folks in our community, and an inspiration to me as well. Because I remember the first time you came on board, we were having a late meeting. You said something intriguing, but you don't have to answer it in public. I said, "Oh, we still have some food left." You said, "No, you don't eat after eight o'clock." And I said to myself, "This must be much disciplinary." I hope for the best for you, Alva. Alva Rodriguez stated, "Thank you all so much, everyone. I'm sadly leaving; as I told Lashawnda, it is grateful for having the opportunity to be a part of the Bronx Community Board five. I was at this office for the community for two and a half years. Lashawnda is fantastic to be partnering. It's been a pleasure to get to know the community. It's been such a great learning experience that I will always hold very close to my heart. I will never forget these two years of my life. It's just been so great. It was a pleasure to meet all of you. Happy holidays and thank you."

### **Committee Function by Dr. B. Omotosho**

These are the titles of committees as follows: Housing, Jerome Avenue Oversight, Land Use, Parks & Recreation, Economic Development, Health and Human Services, Education, Youth, Cultural Affairs, Immigration, Veteran's Affairs, Municipal Services, Governing, Executive, and Ad Hoc Community Outreach. We need some new and old board members to fill the Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs. We're still in the process of identifying Chairs and Co-Chairs for some of these committees—specifically, the co-chairs of Jerome Avenue Oversight, Education, and Youth. The co-chairs are vital, and the Chairs are the Immigration and Cultural Affairs. We are still looking for all

the board members to volunteer. Currently, we have 36 board members in our community board five. I believe that applications were out. We all must get together at the committee level. We are booting the committee to discuss what's going on in our due perseverance, be well informed, and understand the dynamics presented to us. And we could ask questions or bring to the attention to the Executive Meeting. Please, let's take these as an essential step. Community Board Five is one of the unique boards in the city. You can step up to the plate and even nominate as a Chair committee; we made it easy. We recognize that people join the board because they are concerned. It's now a community of relevant, huge relevant, we have produced at least, we can take credit. Our village Community Board Five with over 50000 citizens, so please, let's get involved. Approach by nominating board members that we want them to serve as chair or co-chair of some of these probabilities and not publicly embarrass anybody. But we must get these done together, especially in the light of new administration's probably, and we should be well prepared. We don't want to be left behind. Thank you so much.

## **Public Session**

- **Sallie Smith** – Resident  
Reports: Good Evening to all elected officials, board members that attended. Thank you for the opportunity. And I think our board members have volunteered their time to make our community better. And I'm very disappointed about our Elected officials that don't show up to have our board meetings. I hope that we will have more representatives from our elected officials in the future to understand that we do have concerns. Thank you to our board members who have an opportunity and have given up their time to help make my community a better place for all of us to live. Thank you very much.
- **Jennifer Verna reports:** Good Evening to the community board and all participants today. And thank you so much for allowing me to speak. My name is Jennifer Verna. In addition to the food security, empowerment, and

employment Benefit Program, also known as Senate bill SB 5732, the Seed Program and how it may help address food insecurity in the Bronx. The Bronx has always been the five boroughs' most resilient and innovative. The pain damage has significantly impacted access to quality nutritional foods for many families abroad. However, these resources are limited and are not sustainable. The weather changes, the knee becomes less visible as everybody's inside. And it also decreases the ability of many residents to access these resources. By expanding the speed program, it allows for community self-efficiency. It will enable the implementation of community security projects that increase the affordability and accessibility of quality nutritional food, connect communities to local farmers, and provide job opportunities, partnerships, and limited opportunities for for-profit food enterprises. Many communities, a significant source of food to farmers, can connect and increase the availability and accessibility of healthy food to residents. It's vital to expand this and get on board with this because it will address food insecurity and serve as an opportunity to reinvest in our communities. Thank you for letting me speak.

- American Red Cross Greater NY: Elizabeth Nguyen
- Email: [Elizabeth.nguyen3@redcross.org](mailto:Elizabeth.nguyen3@redcross.org)
- 877-733-2767
- [www.redcross.org/gnyprepare](http://www.redcross.org/gnyprepare)
- [www.soundthealarm.org/nyc](http://www.soundthealarm.org/nyc) (for free smoke alarm installment)
- Reports: My name is Elizabeth Nguyen, and I am a community relations intern for the American Red Cross in the greater New York region. The American Red Cross in the greater New York Region supports about 12 million people. We respond to six to nine local emergencies in the greater New York region, including the Bronx, like home fires, vacate, and building collapses. We trained Red Cross staff and volunteers to meet with people who have been impacted or displaced by the emergency and may need emergency assistance providing temporary housing, usually in hotels for several days in New York City. We can also provide financial assistance or additional services and health and mental health support. Red Cross can also assist clients with referrals or replacements for medical equipment, eyeglasses, and medications. And every assistance we provide is free of charge to anyone impacted by disaster regardless of your immigration status. Red Cross processes are short term and immediate. But our caseworkers can work with you guys to refer you guys to government agencies for long-term solutions. We are together with the FDNY. We also



install free smoke alarms and provide fire safety information. If you need a smoke alarm, please visit our website. We also offer free virtual preparedness training for both adults and children. These pieces of training are available for schools, school-aged children, and adults and provide the tools and resources to bear for the most common disaster.

- Community Food Box: Ida Yu
- Email: [iyu@grownyc.org](mailto:iyu@grownyc.org)
- Morris Heights Health Center Fresh Food Box
- <http://www.grownyc.org/foodbox/morris-heights>

Reports: My name is Ida Yu. I'm the program coordinator for the fresh food box program. And we are so excited to announce the opening of our brand-new fresh food box site at the Morris heights health center on the first day. We've been working towards this for a couple of months now. We're excited to be on that opening day. Our first day will be December 15. So that'll be next Wednesday. And to give a little bit of detail about the program, the way it works is it functions like a group buying program. Customers pay at least to begin in advance. The following week, they come back, and they pick up a box full of six to nine items of fresh fruits and vegetables, mainly sourced from local farmers. And our packages range from \$14 \$17 to \$20, depending on your financial circumstances. And if you're paying with snap, you get the box for half off. We accept snap and EBT. And so if you're paying with these, you get the box for \$7 instead of 14. It's a fantastic deal for a nice big box full of fresh, healthy fruits and vegetables. Our first day, as I mentioned, is December 15, will be at the more sights off-center, from 3 pm to 6 pm. And our first day, so that's next Wednesday, will be a signup week. That'll be a week to come sign up for a box for the following week. The first food distribution will be **on December 22**. We also will have some fruit for that first week. On December 15, we'll have some mostly apples to give away. So come by, check us out. And, by the program. I'll also drop the website into the chat. Thank you so much. You do have to visit us in person to sign up and pay. We do have an I want to be clear about this process. We do have a registration form and the registration form you can fill out ahead of the 15th, and that'll be to send your name and your email onto our list, and that'll add you to our newsletter so that you can get future updates about the program, but that's not signing up for a box. You will still have to come in person and pay in person. We accept credit cards, debit cards, cash snap; we do accept cash, but the snap incentive so that half price is only for SNAP and EBT, so it's not for up

to cash. We accept Health Box, Greenmarket box, health first OTC cards for specific to offer insurance company we accept the OTC cards.

- Emergency Food Distribution by Lily Kolb
- Reports: Hello, everyone. I am excited to be here today at my first community board meeting as a fellow resident of the Bronx. I wanted to speak with you all to bring the New York City Council's local law to 057 2020. I am establishing an emergency student food plan. Its current does your attention into currently laid over in the New York City Council Committee on fire and emergency management. This ongoing pandemic has highlighted an already existing data showing a 36% increase post-pandemic in the total health Number of New York City residents living with food insecurity. But notably for my point a 46% increase in the number of children living with many of these children. Many of these children, especially in the Bronx, rely on school-based meals to maintain their food security. But the research shows that the New York City daily has delivered 44% fewer meals to students and families this year than in the year before the pandemic. For students, this food insecurity can potentially lead to chronic health conditions, behavioral and psychological problems, and even disengaged distance learning, which is critical when we're utilizing remote knowledge a lot. So, with the potential of future pandemics and ongoing emergencies, I hope you will support bill number 2057 20 Because it aims to establish a comprehensive plan to provide students with breakfast, lunch, and dinner throughout any remote learning periods necessitated by any emergency events. This will ensure that students can keep their food related to their school-related security during short learning periods. Thank you so much again, and I will be happy to provide any links to research in the chat
- The African Union Day Foundation  
Reports: Good evening, Dr. Bola and Mr. Brown, and the rest of the board members. My name is Seth Musa; I am the African Union Day Foundation profile for Africa Day and African Union Day celebrations. I'm here today to inform you and seek your support for two initiatives that we're working with our local elected officials in bringing to fruition. The first one is a designation of a little Africa in the branch, which may be close to your district, or even include part of your district, Dr. Fernando Cabrera, and Councilman Vanessa Gibson. And the second initiative also is since Africa is the global DNA. Councilman Cabrera initiated a study called the African immigrant demographic study, which will be very comprehensive. It will be a living document that can be very beneficial. To the stakeholders, just like when Ebola African Advisory Council plays a significant role in mitigating. We can play a greater role by having a living document that accurately

portrays the growing African immigrant community in New York, which is very diverse. I'm here to inform you and invite you to support these initiatives, which are very beneficial to the Bronx and all Bronxites. Thank you so much, and God bless you.

## **Elected Official's Reports**

- **Honorable Ruben Diaz, Jr., Bronx Borough President**
- **Bronx Borough President's reports:** Good Evening to all the Elected Officers, Board members, and thank you to Dr. Bola and Ken Brown. It is my honor to be here at this virtual meeting. The Bronx borough president, I've had the opportunity and the honor of a lifetime, and I have been the president of my hometown. I see my good friend Joe McManus is on, and Nero Graham Jr., Lashawnda is on. Shout out to everybody. I would like to thank you, Inspector Potkay and XO Piper, for all the services you and the men and women in blue who are out there sacrificing and doing all that you can to make not only a precinct safe but the Bronx safe. I'm a brother of a retired Sergeant. I just wanted to come on. As all of you know, my time is coming to an end. And I just wanted to stop by and thank you all for your service. And it's been a blessing, and we've been able to do great things together over the last 12 and a half years around economic development—a lot of significant projects in your community board. Thank you all for your friendship; Thank you all for your advice; and your criticism. Thank you when you agree with me, when you disagree with me, thank you for a shout at me, or just supporting anything that I'm doing. As the Bronx borough president, I've had the opportunity and the honor to be the President of my hometown. A community I couldn't do without elected officials, and I certainly couldn't do it without community boards. And those of you who are members, you don't get paid. Some of you have known me my entire political career. Some of you are new friends. Unfortunately, I didn't have the opportunity to learn from some of you. I didn't get a chance to know to stop and say it's been a marvelous, wonderful thing. I wanted to put you above American Christmas Kwanzaa. Happy Hanukkah and a Prosperous new year. This Covid-19 has taken a lot from us. For instance, we've had tremendous losses. With District 16, Vanessa Gibson, you all must continue to support. The new class of Elected Leaders is coming into our borough working with the police department, different city agencies, and the new mayor Eric Adams. I think that there's a solid foundation, and we've always shown Bronx resiliency. We've always indicated that the Bronx knows how to be resilient and bounces back during challenging times, so I'm optimistic. I just

wanted to stop by and say thank you for this opportunity of a lifetime. Thank you for working with me, and I'm not going to say goodbye. I will say, see you all later. God bless you all and thank you for this opportunity.

- **Tom Lucania's reports:** I did send it out to all of you. I believe I sent it on Monday. If you did not receive it, please let Ken know, and I will be sure I have your correct email. In that report, there is a notice about our street lighting event, which is tomorrow at Lou Gehrig Plaza, adjacent to 851 Grand Concourse, beginning at 530. Everyone is invited to attend a new board member who received their documents and has not received the form acknowledging it. I ask you to do so as soon as possible. All board members will receive a letter from my office sometime this month with details about the next round of sexual harassment training required of all community board members. You should be receiving that towards the middle to the latter part of the month. So please be on the lookout for that. And with that, I want to wish all of you a thrilling holiday season—good health and a happy new year. Thank you so much.

- **Honorable Council Member Vanessa L. Gibson's Office  
District #16**

- **Reports:** I'm excited to be your number 14 incoming president, and I'm thankful for all of you. And while I'm not saying goodbye, thank you for the past eight years. Thank you for allowing me to be your council member representing 16, and so we've done great where we've made excellent investments, and I'm proud of the work we've done. So, I just wanted to stop by to say thank you for the partnership. Incredibly grateful for the general neighborhood plan. We worked with Councilmember Fernando, achieving almost 200 million dollars of capital investments for community boards 4 and 5. I want to make sure that all the commitments that we got from the administration continues. So, when you talk about Aqueduct walk 10 million dollars. Finally, the design is done, and we're now in procurement, 5.2 Million dollars. Already done, Davidson and step streets are in format, community school, district ten, the brand-new school we're getting at 2355 Morris Avenue, the design is done as well. We've done the work with Davidson community center with 1.9 Million dollars to transform it. There will be new housing with 175 units, affordable and supportive housing that will be completed in conjunction. The elevator money is designated, and we must see these projects through. I'm incredibly proud that we created the Jerome Avenue revitalization collaborative, and I want to thank you, Dr. Bola and Ken Brown. Thank you, Angel, and everyone at the merchant's association. Financial empowerment, affordable housing, economic development, and good-paying jobs for the residents and families in our district. As you all know, I live in Community Board 5, and it's been deeply personal to me. For the past 8 years, and I've spent nothing but great things as we continue to move forward and go to borough hall as your incoming borough president. We're excited about working with Senator Gustavo

Rivera, Senator Jose Serrano, Assembly Member Yudelka Tapia, Assembly Member Latoya Joyner, and I would like to introduce our newest Council Member; Sanchez. We're going to do great work together, working with all of you working with the BID and making sure that we make many investments. I also want to join all of you and welcome our new commanding officer to the 46, no stranger to the 46. Many of you remember years ago under inspector John Potkay. He used to, and I want too personally.

Welcome my good friend inspector John Potkay to the 46th PCT. We did great work these last three years; I'm excited about your leadership and know that you have a partner with us in the 46 to the community affairs and all the officers at the 46. Thank you. It has not been an easy time, but you have served with honor, and we are grateful for that, and so with that said, thank you. Everyone, our office is still available for the next few weeks as we pack up and set the stage for Althea Stevens. Our incoming council member, but please know that whatever we can do to help holiday season toy giveaways, please reach out to our office we can do to be supportive. God bless you all. And I look forward to our continued work. Thank you so much. Please be safe, and God bless you and your family.

**Nereida's Report:** Good evening, everyone. I'm Nereida Gomez, of council member Vanessa Gibson's team. As we look towards the end of the year, thank you all for your partnership. I put our office information in the chat earlier this evening, and I'll go ahead and do so again. But thank you for always making space and giving me the time to share information, and I wish you all a happy and healthy holiday season and look forward to 2022. Thank you so much.

- **Honorable State Senator Gustavo Rivera District #33**  
*Representative of Oriana Shulevitz Rosado*

Reports: Good evening; the senator wanted to send his happy holidays, hoping that you all enjoyed the cozy season. He spent Thanksgiving week giving out hundreds of turkeys to community members. We appreciate all the support from our community partners to make that happen. Senator Rivera celebrated his birthday a few weeks ago in November, and he shared a legislative wish which I'll readout. His big one is the New York Health Act, and he also likes to see past the overdose prevention centers, medical debt protection, essential plant expansion, and a right to a commercial lease. We are he's actively preparing with the team to start the legislative session in

January 2022. There will be a lot to accomplish, and we look forward to working together. Remember that while we are reopened, we are not accepting walk-ins just for safety. Our office will be closed **from December 17**. And we'll be reopening Monday, January 3, 2022. I also wanted to introduce you to our new member of our team, Julio Herrera, a Community Affairs representative. I believe, his first Community Board Meeting. Even though CB five and the office will always have a place in my heart, I will be moving on. Please feel free to reach out. I'll drop a personal email in the chat. And if there's anything you need from Queens for some reason, feel free to reach out. It's been great serving with you all. And I hope you have a lovely holiday

- **Honorable Jose Marco Serrano, New York State Senator District #29**

- Representative is Terrell Brock

Reports: Good evening, everyone. My name is Terrell Brock. I'm from Senator Jose Serrano. I want to mention a couple of updates. The application window for the emergency Rental Assistance Program for New York City closed on December 15. On November 18, the legislature or relief requested an additional 996 million from the Federal Reserve for the emergency Rental Assistance Program. These funds would help New York meet the demands of constituents still in need of Aid due to COVID 19 hardships. As a reminder, Governor Hochul launched a 125 million fund to give landlords financial relief. They need to pay their essential bills and mortgage if their tenants decline to participate in the tenant Rental Assistance Program or vacate with careers. As many of you know, Sarah Shawano is the chair of the Cultural Affairs Committee in the Senate and advocated for a historic 100 million for nonprofit arts support through our state budget this year. The New York State Council on the Arts has released the funding in rounds over the last few months. The capital funding application from the New York State Council on the Arts is open, and a NY SCA will assist on essential health and safety issues in their spaces and venues, considering current COVID guidelines, among other needs. New York State nonprofit arts and culture organization is encouraged to apply. Applicants must be pre-qualified by the application deadline **on January 14**. And you can reach out to our office for more information as we approach the holidays.

- **Congress Member Ritchie Torres**
- **The representative is Joseph McManus**
- **Contact: 718-842-8100, Tuesday -Friday (10am-3pm) by appointments**  
 Reports: Joseph McManus, good evening, Dr. Bola. Helpful and good evening to all the members of community board five, just to start with: holiday hours, we'll you know, limit some access. If you've got to come to the office, please call beforehand so that we can accommodate you. I did send Ken the details and the infrastructure bill. Congressman Torres did vote for it. But I want to highlight two small items; New York will get about \$182 billion from that bill. And one thing that will affect the Bronx. One thing that the congressman is pushing for in this bill is to cap the Cross Bronx Expressway. Now **\$2 million a month** is allocated for a study of capping the Cross Bronx, and it will be like putting a roof over it. And on top of the roof will be the opportunity to have parkland and greater access for the community. We'll be able to connect the neighborhoods that have cut the cost. Cut the Bronx in half and underneath. They need this room for big machinery to capture the fumes from cars, trucks, and buses. They will not enter the if you ever been, years ago when people used to smoke those smoke eaters. I like to wish everybody a happy holiday. And God bless everybody.

- **Honorable Darcel D. Clark, Bronx District Attorney**
- *Representative is Eric Sawyers.*
- *Contact: 718-561-9253, [sawyerse@bronxda.nyc.gov](mailto:sawyerse@bronxda.nyc.gov)*  
 Reports: Hello, how's everybody doing? This is Eric Sawyer from the Bronx DA's office. I just wanted to let you guys know about the upcoming gun buyback next Saturday on **December 18**. From 10 am to 4 pm. Instead of iPads, this time, there will be a \$500 prepaid card for any operable gun or assault rifle. And this also includes BB guns and things, imitation pistols; they will get about \$50. There's a five-gun limit for each payout. They average around \$2500 if they bring operable handguns and rifles and things of that nature. I've sent out the flyer a few times. I can send it again after the meeting. I hope everybody had a great holiday, and I hope they continue to have a great holiday season. Have a good evening.

- **Committee Reports.**



- **Immigration Committee:** Chairperson Pooi Stewart reports:
- Good Evening everyone, please come to join our immigration meeting tomorrow at 6 pm. The Bronx Community College, Yvonne Erazo, will join us and give us a presentation on her program. I hope Ken Brown emailed the link to all board members. Thank you and see you tomorrow, and all are welcome to join us.
- **Veterans Committee:** Chairperson Roxanne Gonzalez
- Reports: Good evening to all very productive meetings. We are scheduled to hold our next meeting, December 14, at 6 pm. We will be having a guest speaker Damien Guzman from our local Bronx veteran's office, where he will be speaking on the different services provided in his location and any updates that we need to do. We need to be able to be seen. Thank you so much—Merry Christmas to all, and Happy New Year.
- **Municipal Services:** Chairman is Nero Graham Jr.  
Reports: A quick update on the High-Class car service, next Tuesday, will be falling right after the Veterans Committee. Directly after them, we will be taken up. For those that want to participate, please come on. Municipal Services is good, good active Committee, and we will get the job done. Thank you. Have a Happy Holiday, every one of you.
- **Governing Committee:** Chairperson Belinda Lawrence reports:
- With the new emergence of the Omicron variant, how would that affect our in-person meeting in January 2022? **Tom Lucania stated,** " At this point, there is no change; the legislature would have to pass a law to allow it. The governor does not have the authority to issue an executive order since he removed that emergency power the last couple of months ago. At this point, we must take it day by day and wait for the legislature to take a position if they choose to. It is out of the governor's hand right now. And it's out of anybody else's role right now other than the legislature, the state legislature. First, the governor signed two bills that affect community boards, not only community boards but also any public body. The minutes of every committee meeting must be posted on your website within two weeks of the meeting. Even if that committee or the entire board has not formally approved them, you will put on those minutes a draft. But they do have to be posted on the website two weeks after the meeting. The second piece of legislation that was signed involves posting any items that will meet 24 hours before your appointment on your website. An article on the agenda from a committee that was going to vote on, say it was Ube, you would have to supply the link to that on your website for 24 hours before you vote—added to the questions from Dr. Bola, the community what applications are not available yet. They are going to be made available after the first of the year. We were waiting for the new borough president to come in to see if she wanted to edit any of the applications, the timeframe. As of now, board



members who are up for reappointment will get a letter from the borough president in January with a reappointment application and will most likely post the new application early in January. So, your next meeting being after the 15th would have to be in person. We get a little closer to that, and we'll look at what that would entail in terms of mattering on the space you're moving to have your meetings at what would be required in terms of vaccinations, social distancing, masks. Especially was this expiring, let's say can decide to be in can home. Technically, he could call in because it's not a voting member. Board members must be present because they are the public officials; they are the people that must vote. And so, if Ken wants to call in from Cancun, he can, but the board members would have to be present to vote in person. Because then you must deal with how you would deal with the public coming to your meeting. If the space is large enough, and you can hold public, a people, the public can enter, with social distancing, then that would be fine. Precinct Councils have had a meeting. Before the release of these open meeting law stated that if you are out, and as a board member, you must let your location be known. And at the same time, let your site be open to the public. Committee on Open Government talked about having alternate locations for meetings. That board member can participate from an alternate area. That means that you can stay home. And this is regarding when you must be at a meeting, stay home, and participate. But your house would have to be open to any public member that would want to come to your house; you would have to say in your meeting agenda that Dr. boll His house is at this location. And he's going to be participating from this location. And if any member of the community wants to participate, they can go to Dr. Bola's house; Dr. Bola and his house must be handicap accessible. And Dr. Bola would then have to provide any accommodations that that person would need. If that person were hearing impaired, Dr. Bola would have to give an ability for that person to listen to through a device. If they were blind, they would have to provide that device. That addresses when the city and state agencies have multiple locations with officers. So as an example, the New York State Department of financing has a public hearing. But they have offices in Albany in New York and Rochester and all over the state. The public obviously can go into those buildings. You could say in your meeting, notice that public participation is available at these Department of Finance offices, which are open to the public. And they would then provide all the things that I said Dr. Bola would have to provide if you were going to his house. That's the sense of what that portion of the Open Meeting Law talks about."

- ***Adjourned at 8:15 pm.***

**The next General Board Meeting will be held on January 26, 2022.**

***Prepared and submitted by Ms. P. Stewart  
Secretary of Bronx Community Board Five***