



**THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

**BOROUGH OF THE BRONX**

**COMMUNITY BOARD #5**

**Honorable Vanessa Gibson., Bronx Borough President**

**Chairperson  
Osiris Guzman**

**District Manager  
Kenneth Brown**

**Bronx Community Board 5 – General Board Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** Wednesday, October 22, 2025

**Time:** 6:00 PM

**Location:** PS 279, 2100 Walton Avenue, Bronx, NY 10453

**Attendance:** Mario Acosta, Bobby Akumah, Eloise Bennett, Erachie Brown, Angel Caballero, Bakary Camara, James Coger, Catherine Cudjoe, Carrie Cuthbertson, Lucia Deng, Raidiris Dominguez, Roxana Gonzalez-Jimenez, Osiris Guzman, Tisha hatch, James Lin, Robert Nieves, Juan Parra, Sharline Parker, Norma Perez, Dilletta Pina, Benjamin Richardson, Shania Rudolph, Argenis Santiago-Payamps and Chef Geneva Wilson.

**Excused:** Michelle Heath, Phyllis Bowdwin, Nekeisha Afful, Charles Shorter, Theresa Mims, Chantal Allison-Konteh, Nanette Matthews, Beverly Smith and Marlene Jimenez.

**Absent:** Yazmin Benetiz, Gail Hill, and Mariama Touray.

**Public Hearing – Fiscal Year 2026 Capital and Expense Budget (5:00 PM – 6:00 PM)**

The meeting began with a public hearing on the New York City Fiscal Year 2026 Capital and Expense Budget.

Residents and community members shared comments about infrastructure, housing, youth programs, and park improvements.

The feedback from this hearing will be included in the board's final budget submission.

**Call to Order and Welcome**

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

Chairperson Osiris Guzman called the meeting to order confirmed that a quorum was present and welcomed everyone.

## **Approval of Minutes**

Copies of the September 2025 minutes were distributed for review.

One correction was noted to add **Dilletta Pina** to the Nominating Committee list.

**Motion:** Mario Acosta moved to approve the minutes with the correction. Dilletta Pina seconded.

**Vote:** 23 in favor, none opposed, and one abstention. **Result:** The motion passed.

## **Chairperson's Report**

Chairperson Guzman reported that Bronx Community Board 5 has continued to build partnerships and strengthen advocacy across the district.

He shared that the board was invited by **Congressman Adriano Espaillat** to participate in a tour of the **Harlem River Revitalization Plan**, which focuses on restoring the Harlem River waterfront, improving public access, and protecting the environment. The Chair emphasized that Community Board 5's participation ensures that the community has a voice in shaping the revitalization of this long-neglected corridor.

He also reported that the board joined a press event announcing grant support for six small businesses impacted by the March fire at Burnside and Jerome Avenues. These grants will help business owners rebuild and continue serving the community.

Chair Guzman addressed ongoing brown water complaints from residents of **River Park Towers**. In partnership with the **Mayor's Office**, the board conducted field visits and spoke with residents who reported that they cannot safely use their tap water. He stated that multiple 311 complaints have been closed without resolution and called on the **Department of Environmental Protection**, the **tenant association**, and **building management** to provide a full water inspection report and a timeline for repairs. He also said the Housing Committee will continue to monitor the issue.

He concluded by thanking everyone for attending and reminded them that Spanish interpretation was available.

## **District Manager's Report**

District Manager **Kenneth Brown** thanked the Chair and began his report.

He noted that the report was included in the meeting packets and highlighted several key items.

At the September District Service Cabinet meeting, the office received complaints of possible homeless encampments at 1805 Davidson Avenue. After inspections by the Homeless Outreach Team and the Parks Department, no evidence of encampments was found. Mr. Brown reminded everyone to call the board office at **718-364-2030** or email [kBrown@cb.nyc.gov](mailto:kBrown@cb.nyc.gov) if they see any issues, so they can be reported to the Bronx Homeless Outreach Team.

He also discussed the October 14 press conference led by **Council Member Pierina Sanchez** at Burnside and Jerome Avenues. The event announced \$16,000 grants for each of the six businesses impacted by the fire in March.

Mr. Brown updated the board on the **Jerome Avenue Revitalization Collaborative (JARC)**, which was created after the 2018 rezoning. The collaborative supports workforce development and brings financial resources into the West Bronx. He noted that during the recent federal government shutdown, funds were redirected to ensure AmeriCorps VISTA workers continued to receive pay.

He said JARC is also working to bring financial institutions back to the district after the closure of Amalgamated Bank's branch during the pandemic and that the group is now partnering with **People's Federal Credit Union** to expand access to banking services.

He ended his report by thanking the board and noted that more details were in the written report.

## **Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Priorities**

Chairperson Guzman introduced the discussion on the Fiscal Year 2026 Capital and Expense Budget priorities.

He stated that this is one of the board's most important responsibilities and guides how city resources are directed into the community.

He encouraged members to think about projects that would improve infrastructure, programs, and business support.

No changes were proposed to the budget priorities as submitted.

**Motion:** Juan Parra moved to approve the Fiscal Year 2026 Capital and Expense Budget priorities as presented. Angel Caballero seconded.

**Vote:** 24 in favor, none opposed, none abstained.

**Result:** Motion passed unanimously.

### **Letter of Support – Bronx Community College Hall of Fame Restoration**

**James Lin**, Chair of the Municipal Services Committee, presented the item. He explained that during the committee's October meeting, representatives from Bronx Community College and the firm **Superstructures** presented their plan to restore the **Hall of Fame of Great Americans**.

The contractors proposed using **Glass Fiber Reinforced Concrete (GFRC)** to replace damaged stone due to the extent of the deterioration caused by previous repairs. Mr. Lin provided background on the hall's history and stated that both the committee and the executive board voted to move the item to the general board for approval.

The letter of support includes the condition that the **public must have reasonable access to the Hall of Fame** once the project is complete.

**Motion:** James Lin moved to approve the letter of support for Bronx Community College and Superstructures. Mario Acosta seconded.

**Vote:** 23 in favor, none opposed, one abstention.

**Result:** Motion passed.

### **Board Membership Agreement – Committee Membership Plan**

Chairperson Guzman presented a proposal to strengthen committee participation. The policy allows each board member to choose **two committees of their choice**, with final appointments made by the Chair.

He said attendance will not be mandatory but is strongly encouraged to increase collaboration and support for committee chairs. The goal is to create more involvement, better coordination, and stronger communication throughout the board.

He clarified that committee chairs are already members of their own committees and may select one additional committee.

**Motion:** Osiris Guzman moved to adopt the Committee Membership Plan as an official board policy. Dilletta Pina seconded.

**Vote:** 24 in favor, none opposed, none abstained.

**Result:** Motion passed unanimously.

## **Public Session**

The floor was opened for public comments.

- **Dilletta Pina** spoke on behalf of the **Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition** and shared flyers for their upcoming event promoting economic democracy in the Bronx. She also urged residents to participate in early voting and to encourage others to vote.
- **Linda Pedroza** spoke about her experience voting at PS 33, where the ballot marking device for visually impaired voters was not working during the primaries and general election. She requested stronger ADA compliance at voting sites.
- **Rahim and Lisette Ramos** raised concerns about sanitation along 180th Street and Burnside Avenue, stating the area has not been swept for months. Ms. Ramos also described receiving a \$1,000 fine for dog waste despite maintaining her property and posting cleanup signs.
- **Arcady Yadavrov**, representing River Park Towers management, thanked the board and reported that after flushing the building systems, water quality had improved and appeared clear.
- **River Park Towers resident** said that brown water conditions continue during cooking and bathing and asked for a permanent fix.
- **Effie Ardizzzone**, Bronx Commissioner for the **Department of Environmental Protection**, explained that the issue may be related to seasonal water flow changes from the Croton system

and ongoing hydrant flushing. She encouraged residents to report all issues through 311 and provided annual water quality reports.

- **Taisha Johnson**, Program Director at **New Destiny Housing**, spoke about the challenges facing domestic violence survivors transitioning from shelters into permanent housing and asked that their needs be included in future funding and program discussions.
- **Michelle Coronell**, a parent at PS 279, described severe rat infestations and safety concerns in the park across from the school. She requested immediate action from the Parks Department and recommended separating the basketball court from the children's play area.
- **Roxana González Jiménez** reminded attendees to review and vote on six ballot proposals on the upcoming ballot. She also reported flooding from open hydrants at her building, 150 Featherbed Lane, that caused elevator damage.
- **Sally Smith** asked for the restoration of a bus stop on Burnside Avenue to better serve seniors and urged board members to attend committee meetings to hear resident concerns directly

## Elected Official Report

Tyreke Israel ( Althea Stevens, District 16)

- Addressed ongoing **River Park Towers** water concerns and confirmed continued follow-up with the tenant association.
- Announced **free immigration legal services** every Monday at the Council Member's office, with flyers available for residents.

## **Jacquelin, Office of Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson**

- Announced several upcoming events:
  - **Community Appreciation Celebration** at the Bronx Museum of the Arts on **October 29**.
  - **Veterans Appreciation Month Kickoff** at the Samuel Young American Legion Post.
  - **Pink Breast Cancer Awareness Dialogue** at **Albert Einstein College of Medicine**, also on **October 29**.
  - **Resource and Funding Information Session** for those interested in learning about available support programs.

## **Esperanza Díaz, Chief of Staff for Council Member Oswald Feliz (District 15)**

- Announced a **Turkey Distribution Event** on **November 25** from **2:00 PM to 5:00 PM** in front of the Council Member's office at **573 East Fordham Road**. The event will

include free poultry, fresh produce, and health boxes for residents. Additional distributions will take place at various buildings throughout the district.

- Shared that the office offers **free legal assistance** for **immigration** and **housing** issues. Residents can schedule appointments by calling **718-842-8100**. Services are available in English and Spanish.
- Reported that **Council Member Oswald Feliz** recently introduced **Intro 1415**, a pilot program to provide designated **street vending licenses** along the Fordham corridor, from the Grand Concourse to Webster Avenue.
- Encouraged residents to contact her directly at [esdiaz@council.nyc.gov](mailto:esdiaz@council.nyc.gov) or visit the district office for further assistance.

#### **Stephanie Kusi, Community Liaison for Council Member Pierina Sanchez (District 14)**

- Reported that the office hosted a successful **Fall Festival** earlier in the month and continues to assist residents with **immigration and housing resources**.
- Announced upcoming community events including **“Trick or Street”** on **October 25** at **Fort Four Playground**, and a **Bean-a-Ween Halloween event** at **Bean Morris Garden** on **October 31**.
- Provided legislative updates:
  - **Intro 2429** was passed to strengthen **gas piping inspections** and expand emergency work to address unsafe plumbing.
  - **Intro 1049** was introduced to promote **mental wellness training**.
- Shared that **\$3 million in funding** was secured for the **West Bronx Community Safety Partnership** to help reduce violence and improve neighborhood safety.
- Noted ongoing collaboration with partners to support the **Burnside Avenue businesses** affected by the March fire.
- Residents may contact the office at **347-590-2874** for assistance.

#### **Jack Chavis, Chief of Staff for Assembly Member Yudelka Tapia**

- Announced that the Assembly Member joined the **Governor and Speaker** for a press conference earlier in the week to highlight a new **\$55 million affordable housing project** along the South Bronx waterfront. Construction is expected to begin in **March 2026** and take about **three years** to complete.
- Shared that another housing project with approximately **4,000 units** is being coordinated near **Community Board 7**, close to the district boundary.
- Reported ongoing **community resource clinics**, including:

- A **legal clinic with NMIC** for housing assistance.
- A **Housing Connect clinic** with CHCF.
- A new **HRA support clinic** to assist residents with cash assistance applications.
- Announced a **Turkey Distribution Event** on **November 25** at **PS 363**, with tickets available through the Assembly Member's office.
- Mentioned plans for an upcoming **forum in April** focused on **special education and students with disabilities**.
- Residents can contact the office at **718-933-6909** or reach him directly at **917-414-5323** for assistance.

#### **AB, Office of Assembly Member Landon Dias**

- Encouraged residents to contact the office for **constituent services**, including assistance with housing, water, and other local issues. The office phone number is **718-538-2000**.
- Announced a **Coat Drive** taking place on **Thursday at 5:30 PM** at the **Bronx Dream House** and invited attendees to donate coats.
- Shared that a **Job Fair** will be held next week with **on-site interviews**. Flyers were available at the meeting, and attendees were advised to **dress professionally** and come prepared.

#### **Lia Guzmán, Office of State Senator Gustavo Rivera**

- Announced that the office continues to host **monthly immigration and housing clinics**. The next **housing clinic** will take place this **Friday**, with appointments still available for tenants seeking assistance with repairs or housing court issues.
- Shared that the Senator's office will hold **two turkey distribution events** this season, including one at **City Island**, and is also taking **individual turkey requests** by phone.
- Reminded attendees about the importance of the **motorized consulate ID cards**, noting that recent federal actions have made it even more critical for community members to stay informed.
- Residents can contact the office at **718-933-2024** for support or to sign up for upcoming events.

#### **Edgar, Office of State Senator Robert Jackson**



- Announced upcoming **changes to SNAP utility allowance rules** under federal law **HR 1**, effective **November 1**. SNAP recipients who also receive **Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)** benefits are encouraged to contact **HRA** about these changes.
- Noted that due to the **federal government shutdown**, new SNAP applications are temporarily paused until federal operations resume.
- Reported that Senator Jackson continues to advocate for the **“One Fair Wage” Bill (S4158)**, which seeks to ensure restaurant and service industry workers receive fair wages.
- Shared that the Senator’s office hosts monthly **immigration webinars via Zoom**, with the next session scheduled for **tomorrow at 6 PM**.
- Announced that the **FY 2026 Capital Projects Fund** application period is now open, and the office can assist organizations seeking funding.
- Confirmed that the Senator’s office represents the **River Park Towers** area and is in contact with residents working to strengthen their tenant association.
- Residents can contact the office at **212-544-0173** for assistance.

#### **Christian Cardeños, Office of State Senator Luis Sepúlveda**

- Introduced two upcoming state bills:
  - **S523**, which would **restrict federal immigration authorities** from entering **state-level buildings** such as courthouses and government offices, ensuring immigrants can attend appointments without fear of detention.
  - The **BEACON Act**, which would add **immigration status** and **family immigration status** as protected categories in **New York schools** to prevent bullying and discrimination.
- Emphasized the Senator’s commitment to protecting immigrant families and promoting safety in schools.
- Shared that as **Community Affairs Liaison**, he helps residents connect with and hold government agencies accountable.
- Residents can contact the office at **975 Kelly Street, Suite 203**, or call **718-991-3161** for assistance.

#### **Rochelle, Office of Congressman Ritchie Torres**

- Reported that the **federal government shutdown**, which began on **October 1**, remains ongoing and is now the **second longest in U.S. history**. There are currently no updates on when funding will be restored.
- Shared that **Congressman Torres** and other Democrats are working to pass a **short-term funding bill** that includes an **extension of the enhanced Affordable Care Act tax credits**, set to expire at the end of the year. Without renewal, premiums could increase by an average of **114 percent**, potentially leaving **14 million Americans** without health coverage.
- Noted that continued shutdown impacts could also threaten **SNAP food assistance** funding and have already caused **delays across federal agencies** such as **Immigration, Social Security, and HRA**.
- Assured residents that the **Congressman's office remains open** and continues to provide constituent services.
- Residents experiencing shutdown-related issues can contact the office at **718-503-9610**.

#### **Trevon Blondet, Office of the Bronx District Attorney, Darcel Clark**

- Reported that the **8th Annual CB5 5K** was held with approximately **1,400 registrants** and **800 runners** participating. Sixteen organizations attended to share community resources and information.
- Announced an upcoming **Gun Buyback Event** on **November 22** at **St. James Episcopal Church**, 2500 Jerome Avenue.
- Shared that another **Gun Buyback** will take place on **December 13** in the 40th Precinct area, with details and flyers to follow.
- Encouraged community participation and noted that all firearms can be surrendered **no questions asked**.
- Contact: **917-946-3438**.

## Committee Report

## Old Business

No Old Business was presented

### New Business

No New Business was presented

### Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 7:51 PM