



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

April 2020 Bronx Community Board 5 General Board meeting minutes

Wednesday, April 22, 2020 at 6:00 PM.

➤ **Board Members:**

❖ **Present:**

E.Acosta, M.Heath J.Curiel A.DeJesus, C.Shorter, A.Caballero P.Blanco,
T.Bushby,R.Gonzalez,K.Jabouin, B.Lawrence, B.Akumah, Dr.B.Omotosho, J.Parra, D.Perry,M.
Rodgers,S.Rudolph, P.Stewart, R.Owusu, C.Westbrook, R.Whetstone, L.Reyes.

❖ **Absent:**

Dr.M.Brown, D.Perez,J.Perez C.Rosario,and F.Amato, N.Graham,Jr., K.Lewis, G.Medina, ,
T.Mims, B.Moore, F.Ramos-Guareno, H.Esteban,

❖ **Excused:**

S.Markland-Suwareh and M.Rosado

○ **Welcome**

❖ **Opening Prayer**

The opening prayer was done by ***Victor M. Pichardo the Assembly Member.***

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

❖ **Quorum Present:** 6:18 pm

❖ **Approval of Minutes:** None

➤ **With our Sincere Condolences to Frank Amato and Leon Johnson our Former Community Board 5 Members.**

- ✚ Our deepest condolences are sent to Frank Amato and Leon's family members. May his memories bring you comfort at this sad time.
- ✚ The Communities and Community Board 5 Members extend our heartfelt condolences at this sad time.
- ✚ We're all saddened to know that you have lost. Your family members have our deepest sympathies.
- ✚ Frank Amato and Leon Johnson worked very hard to improve this community. They fought for Elderly Centers and the Morris Health Center on Burnside Avenue.
- ✚ Our fellows' Members are
E.Acosta,,M.Heath J.Curiel A.DeJesus,, C.Shorter,,A.Caballero P.Blanco,
T.Bushby,R.Gonzalez,K.Jabouin, B.Lawrence, B.Akumah, Dr.B.Omotosho, J.Parra,
D.Perry,M. Rodgers,S.Rudolph, P.Stewart,,R.Owusu, C.Westbrook, R.Whetstone,
L.Reyes

○ **Chairperson Dr. Bola Omotosho Report:**

❖ **Proceedings:**

- ✚ Good Evening to all Board Members and the community.
- ✚ I have known Leon Johnson for several years. He was born in 1920. He was a veteran. He was a very passionate person and loved history.
- ✚ Frank Amato was a New Jersey and New York Firefighter.
- ✚ I would like to say a humongous thank you to all the essential workers that keep our city safe.
- ✚ Our next General Board Meeting will be on May 27th 2020 at 6pm. This General Board Meeting will be opening to the public.

○ **District Manager's Report:**

- ✚ Good Evening to all Board Members and the community.

- ✚ I need to extend my appreciation and thank you to Alva for all the emails you have been getting pumped out on a daily basis. In addition, Lashawnda has been very busy working behind the scenes and keeping our budget up to date.
- ✚ The Department of Health has an initiative in the South Bronx, which are charities organized around a disaster. If people who are interested in participating in that, please email me at KennBrown@cb.nyc.gov or call me at 718 364 2030.
- ✚ I will be sending out to the Board Members in the next couple of days a General Survey.
- ✚ At the beginning of the crisis, I worked with city limit's magazine to get a template for people to report their stories and experiences during this historic tragedy.
- ✚ I was in touch with Morris Heights Health Center that they have virtual medical health for all patients in our community. They can provide screening and emergency dental work as well. Please call for more details at 718 716 4400.
- ✚ They also have Mental Health Counseling as one of the resource. Please call this number to ask for more details at 718 839-8900 Ext. 3333
- ✚ If you are interested in public benefits like welfare, food stamps or unemployment, you can reach out to HRA (Human Resources Administration) or you can visit their online website.
- ✚ I would like to say thank you so much for persevering with this new technology called WebEx. I really appreciate everyone's patience's and perseverance.

➤ Voting Items:

✓ Affordable Housing at 2051 Ryer Avenue are requesting a Letter of Support to extend working hours:

- ✚ Available 33 newly constructed units.
- ✚ Nearby transit trains of B and D as well as buses of Bx40, Bx41, Bx42, Bx36, Bx1 and Bx2.
- ✚ On site social services for low income or homeless households with special needs.
- ✚ Housing Loan Program of NYC Department of Housing Preservation supports it.
- ✚ Mobile-disabled applicant (5%), Vision/Hearing-disabled applicants (2%), Municipal Employees (5%), and Residents of Bronx Community Board 5 (50%).
- ✚ You can apply online at nyc.gov/housingconnect or by mail to 2051 Ryer Avenue, Apartments c/o Wavecrest Consulting LLC, 87-14 116th Street Richmond Hill, NY 11418.
- ✚ If you have any questions or need more details, please reach out to Community Board 5 office at 718 364 2030.

- ✚ Motioned by Charles Shorter
- ✚ Seconded by Annette Dejesus
- ✚ 18 Yea / 0 No / 0 Abstained
- ✚ The letter of support is granted.

✓ The lot at 1806 Anthony Avenue Unique People Services 1806 Anthony Avenue Bronx NY is requesting a Letter of Support:

- + I am the Executive Director and my name is Yvette Andre.
- + I presented this project to this community because I found that this community is in need of affordable housing development. We will be opening our headquarters in this community.
- + My name is Bruce Putana would like to add more details in this presentation.
- + It is a nine-story building with 112 residential Units.
- + Proposed units of 93 Studios, 18 One-Bedrooms.
- + Earning Between 40-60% AMI
- + Set-aside for seniors under the City's AIRS Program
- + Funded from Borough President and or Councilman
- + 9% Low-Income Housing Tax Credits from HPD
- + Supportive Housing Loan Program subsidy from HPD, NYC 15/15 program
- + For more details, please call the Bronx Community 5 Office at 718 364 2030

- + Motioned by Angel Caballero
- + Seconded by Annette Dejesus
- + 15 Yea / 0 No / 3 Abstained
- + The letter of support is granted.

○ **46th Precinct**

❖ **Chief Commander of Richard Brea reports:**

- + Welcome to all Board Members and local residents.
- + We are still struggling with robberies and burglaries.
- + Mostly affecting food delivery persons.
- + Burglaries or commercial burglaries have usually occurred after 9pm.
- + We have quite a few uniform members out sick during this pandemic.

➤ **Presentations:**

❖ 1600 Sedgwick Avenue Block 2880, Lot 29, Bronx NY

- ✚ This is a high rise tall building that facing right at 87 Deegan Expressway. It is 102,000 square foot.
- ✚ Total of 417 Units. 3 Bed rooms will be 10% of units, 2 Bed rooms will be 24% of units, 1 Bed rooms will be 50% units, Studios will be 16% units and 200 parking spaces.
- ✚ 15% set-aside for formerly homeless and elderly citizens.
- ✚ Currently, it includes a 25 story tall and it is a rental building, and parking garage. There is a 178 exists parking spaces which is a separate structure.
- ✚ My name is Aaron Stickney that I would like to add on about this proposal. We are going to make a pedestrian connection from under Undercliff Avenue down to Sedgwick Avenue to split in two different directions. One direction is that we're creating an open space for growing plants and the next direction is for to create for the pedestrian to gain access to walk underneath the building to an overlook the river.
- ✚ There will be an elevator that will provide access so people can go from Undercliff Avenue. For more details, please call the Community Board 5 office at 718 364 2030

A vote for a letter of support was tabled for the next month's General Board meeting,

➤ Public Session

❖ Resident on Sedgwick Avenue:

- ✚ We live around 1600 Sedgwick Avenue next to the playground. The daycare has been closed for one year but there is a No Standing/ No Parking sign still currently displayed. Our residents have complaint about how much struggled to find parking on this block.
- ✚ My name is Heidi Salazar, I am working for Victor M. Pichardo, Assembly Member District #86, and I can take your complaint about this issue.

❖ Partnership Specialist with the US Census by David Bella.

- ✚ Good evening everyone and stay safe in the community.
- ✚ I would like to share some brief updates on the response rates for New York City and the local community to talk about some other operational changes.
- ✚ Please visit the website to find more resources on actual response rates at the Federal, State, even your local census track.
- ✚ Currently, New York State is at a 45.8% response rate, the national average is 51.6% and the state is below the national average.
- ✚ New York City as a whole is at 41%.
- ✚ The Bronx, which is a hard to count community and has the most challenges, is actually above the New York City average right now. The Bronx is 4%. After that the Bronx is Staten Island, Manhattan, Brooklyn and Queens have the lower rates.
- ✚ The community District of Greenport the five districts that are doing surprisingly well.
- ✚ The operational phase of going door-to-door and knocking on people's houses has been pushed back. We are hoping that we can knock on people's houses starting around August 8, 2020. This is a 90 days extension from the normal time.
- ✚ As a result, the President has pushed the preliminary census results back from the last day of the year until April 30 2021.

- ✚ All states and local governments will be pushed back 120 days to approximately July 31, 2020. Therefore, we have the time to release the results to the President.
- ✚ For more details, please contact the Community Board 5 at 718 364 2030

➤ ***Elected Official's Report***

❖ ***Honorable Bill de Blasio, Mayor Representative is absent***

❖ ***Honorable Jumaine Williams, Acting Public Advocate Representative is Brian Polanco***

- ✚ Good Evening to all Board Members and the community.
- ✚ The Public Advocate has called for the release of demographic data related to arrest and enforcement actions taken by NYPD for violations of social distancing.
- ✚ Social distancing is a massive mandate.
- ✚ The number of summons and arrests conducted related to Covid-19 is small.
- ✚ We are seeking information on the measures being taken to encourage cultural awareness around challenges to those mandates.
- ✚ Safety precautions for employees and doing enforcement are a responsibility of the public advocate.
- ✚ Essentially, we must recognize the disproportionate spread of the virus versus adequate medical resources.
- ✚ In the long-term recovery from Covid19 in the communities of color that are being hardest hit will be a protracted process.
- ✚ We are pursuing legislation to create a task force to enact this law.
- ✚ The Public Advocate has also released a statement about hotel rooms to be made available to thousands of homeless New Yorkers who are among the most vulnerable.
- ✚ This new crisis has added to the City's Affordable housing and homelessness crisis. The 60,000 people in shelters demand public health and emergency responses.

❖ ***Honorable Ruben Diaz, JR., Bronx Borough President Representative is absent***

❖ ***Honorable Vanessa L, Gibson, Council Member District #16 Representative is Nereida Gomez***

- ✚ Good Evening and blessings to each and every one of you.

- ✚ Certainly, we will keep Frank Amato and Leon Johnson memories alive in our community and continue to work and pray for everyone who has been affected by Covid-19.
- ✚ Please share with your neighbors, family, friends, co-workers and others about how our district is accessing food, meals or groceries, and access to testing sites for Covid-19.
- ✚ It is extremely important to follow the guidelines.
- ✚ Our City Administration, Elected Officials, Senators, and Councilman have been working together on adding more sites to bring them online as well as food access.
- ✚ Grab and Go meals are still being served at 400 school sites throughout New York City. For more details please call our office or Community Board 5.
- ✚ There are Covid-19 testing sites throughout the city, including the drive thru sites at Lehman College and Bay Plaza Co-op City. There is one more location at 1225 Gerard Avenue Bronx NY and there are open from Monday to Saturday at 9am – 3pm, it is walk site. For more details and locations please call our office or Community Board 5 Office at 718 364 2030.
- ✚ We are facing an incredibly challenging year, unlike any other; we have about \$7 billion in lost revenue, and lost sales taxes.
- ✚ Most of the proposals are not finalized. They are still in the process of determining whether they will be eliminating some of youth and summer camp programs. At this point, there are no programs, which is a real problem.
- ✚ Every one in this community should be focusing on access to health and wellness, housing, and public safety. Start to wear masks and cover your face.
- ✚ We will help you in anyway we can.
- ✚ Most importantly, be safe, everyone be healthy, check on neighbors family, friends, particularly seniors, and those that are homeless.
- ✚ For more details, please call our District Office at 718 588 7500, Monday to Friday from 10am to 5 pm.

❖ ***Honorable Ritchie Torres, Council Member District #15***
Representative is absent

❖ ***Honorable Fernando Cabrera, Council Member District #14***

- ✚ Good Evening to all the Board members and the community.
- ✚ The Davidson Community Center will be able to have access to food for its pantry. This food can be distributed to help the community.
- ✚ Mayor DeBlasio allocated \$170 Million dollars to the district.
- ✚ We will resume normal operations in few weeks.
- ✚ To get more details, please call our office at 347 590 2874.

❖ ***Honorable Victor M. Pichardo, Assembly Member District #86***
Representative is Heidi Salazar

- ✚ Good Evening to all the Board members and the community.
- ✚ Please observe the social distancing guidelines.
- ✚ Please wear masks to cover your face.
- ✚ The legislative session or Albany is still actively working on creating bills.

- ✦ The city government is talking about police force and how to reform this matter.
- ✦ You can visit our Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to get more updates. Recently, I updated the resources about Covid-19 that is relevant to the community.
- ✦ Morris Heights Health Center received a grant to help with the work that they're doing to combat Covid-19.
- ✦ Davidson Community Center has distributed many groceries to serve the community's needs.
- ✦ I want to extend my condolences to the MTA family that we have lost during this outbreak.
- ✦ To get more details, please call our office at 718 933 2034

❖ ***Honorable Michael Blake, Assembly Member District #79***
Representative is absent

❖ ***Honorable Latoya Joyner, Assembly Member District #77***

❖ ***Representative is Sharon Williams, absent***

❖ ***Honorable Gustavo Rivera, NY State Senator District #33***

Representative is Hennessy Reyes

- ✦ Good Evening to everyone, I hope all of you are well and staying safe.
- ✦ Since our office is closed due to Covid19 we are all working actively remotely.
- ✦ We have an office in Albany and we are still negotiating on the New York State Budget.
- ✦ We are being active on social media and please sign up in our newsletter.
- ✦ For more detail on any budget issues or health resources, please call us at 718 933 2034 or visit our Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram pages.
- ✦ There are more testing sites available in the South Bronx. For more detail on the locations, please call our office the number is 1888 362 3065.
- ✦ Residents of this community have access to food resources whether it is connecting them to assistance, cash assistance or SNAP benefits.
- ✦ We're also helping them locate food pantries for the community.
- ✦ We are actively updating this on a regular basis.
- ✦ We are helping the local senior centers to make sure that they have everything that they need.
- ✦ For any Senior Citizen that needs food, please call 212 446 4696 or 311 for more resources.
- ✦ We have been getting allot of unemployment cases and some of them were incomplete applications and you can reach out to our office so we can help you with your application.
- ✦ To receive a device of tablet or a computer for your children to gain access for remotely learning through the Department of Education, please act now, as the dateline will be tomorrow at 5pm.

❖ ***Honorable Jose Marco Serrano, NY State Senator District #29***
Representative is Terrell Brocks

- ✦ Greetings to all the Board members and the community.

- ✦ We were very saddened to hear of the former Board Members loss. Our heart goes out to their families.
- ✦ For more information please call out office at 212-828-5829 or email us at Serrano@nysenate.gov
- ✦ On February 13, 2020, Senator Serrano passes bill requiring Cultural Competency Training for Medical Professionals. The reasons of passing this bill because of combating the Opioid Crisis in the Bronx; such as heroin, abuse, or addiction. We are still waiting for the results.
- ✦ The immigration legal services to keep families together and we will be able to move forward with issues like prevailing wage, banning single use Styrofoam, debating for price gouging for our community on medical supplies, and legalizing E-bikes.
- ✦ Our Senator will work hard to find ways to make our city better one.
- ✦ We are also debating legislation related to suspending rent payments in response to the outbreak of Covid-19.
- ✦ We were busy with many bills that have to be passed. Please call or email our office or you can visit at Facebook, Instagram, or twitter for more details.

❖ ***Honorable Jose E. Serrano, Member of Congress District #15***
Representative is Hatou Camara

- ✦ Greetings to all the Board members and the community.
- ✦ Congressman Serrano is finding out where to get the money to support the community from FEMA.
- ✦ Our office, located at 1231 Lafayette Avenue, 4th Floor Bronx NY 10464 is closed to Covid-19 but we are working actively remotely. You can access us by calling this number 718 620 0084.
- ✦ We are seeing issues with small businesses. Therefore we are actively working to improve the district to offer free services to get those loan applications up and running.
- ✦ For education, the Congressman has asked the Governor and the Mayor for more funding for grants to the students that graduate from High School during this crisis.
- ✦ For more resources on how to receive free food, medical supplies, masks or gloves, please call us at 718 620 0084.

❖ ***Honorable Adriano Espaillat, Member of Congress District #13***
❖ ***Representative is absent.***

❖ ***Honorable Scott Stringer – NYC Comptroller***
Representative is absent

❖ ***Honorable Darcel D. Clark, Bronx District Attorney***
Representative is absent

❖ **Committee Comments**

- ✚ Cheryl Westbrook: we are still waiting for the Yankee Scholarships Organization to distribute the checks to the winners, although it was approved. Lashawnda Dodson said that we are currently closed due to Covid19 and therefore the scholarship cannot distribute the checks.
- ✚ Ken Brown the District Manager, just want to make an announcement about our Office is closed and we are actively working remotely. If you have any questions, please reach me at 718 364 2030.

➤ **Old Business:** None

➤ **New Business:** None

➤ **Announcements:** None

➤ **Meeting is adjourned**

- At 9:27 PM

Prepared and Submitted by

Ms. Stewart

Board Member and Secretary of Community Board 5