



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 November 10 2021
Virtual Meeting
Community Board Five**

□ *Community Board Five Board Members*

▮ ***Attendees:*** E.Acosta, B.Akumah, P.Blanco, P.Rojas, S.Bah, A.Caballero, , R.Gonzalez, M.Estrella, A.Hernandez, B.Lawrence, L.Reyes, E.Morris, M.Rosado, Dr.B.Omotosho, J.Parra, F.Ramos, L.Deng, B.Moore, S.Rudolph, S.Solano, C.Shorter, P.Stewart, C.Westbrook. D.Perry, M.Heath, and R.Perez.

□ *Absent/Excused*

▮ P.Dominguez, J.Curiel, C.Camera, G.Medina, T.Mims, R.Owusu, N.Graham.Jr., J.Pope, and U. Smith

□ *Welcome:*

- Opening Prayer by C.Westbrook (Board Member)

□ *Quorum: 6:46 pm*

□ *Approval of Minutes:*

- October General Board Meeting 2021, approved.
- First in Motioned by A. Caballero, Seconded in motion by S. Bah
- Roll Called: 26 Yea / 0 Nay

□ *Chairperson's Report Dr. Bola Omotosho:*

▮ ***Reports:*** Good Evening; Elected Officials, representatives, liaisons, board members, and residents. In 2019, we had groundbreaking, a little a year ago, some of the Elected Officials in our community joined, such as SUS, HPD, Bronx Pro, Ken Brown, Frank Amato, and I. As soon as the rezoning was given the updates, the constructions began.

The Department of City Planning on Monday, August 21, 2017, and the review period for Community Board 4, 5, and 7 began on Wednesday, August 30, 2017, and must be completed by 2017. We shared our Jerome Avenue Rezoning Study. When the project started, the rezoning area was bounded by West 170th Street, Nelson Avenue, Shakespeare Avenue, and Corporal Fischer Place in the High bridge neighborhood of the Bronx Community District 4. We shared many plan goals in Community Board Five, especially right behind Davidson Center, the Jerome Avenue. We should be saying a Big Thank you to SUS, BronxPRO, and the entire community fully supporting Jerome Avenue Rezoning Study in our Community Board Five from the north and the south.

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

Reports: Dr. Bola and Cheryl Westbrook had a walk-through of the development in 1769 Jerome Avenue on the 29th of October. This was part of the oversight of the result because of Jerome Avenue rezoning. We were with the developer of Bronx Pro, and they also had staff from the social service operator as us on hand. They showed us the different floors and talked about the various amenities there. One of the continuing initiatives is the Friends of the aqueduct walk. This is an effort by the partnership for parks. And it is an initiative for the community to take ownership and stewardship of the aqueduct walk; we have ongoing monthly meetings—the general meeting for November on the fourth. There are scheduled and planned activities, including this coming Saturday, where there is available flower planting that will be happening around Aqueduct walk. And this is building towards a photo exhibit coming full circle is the title, which at the Roscoe Brown Plaza at 1:30, which is across the street from the Francis Martin library. And that is going to be a photo exhibit of the different phases and evolution of the aqueduct walk, people have asked for years, so they want to submit photos of the aqueduct walk. And that will be displayed to show its evolution over time. As part of that, we will be giving out bags filled with food and juice boxes and things like that and will be on December 4th. The Jerome Avenue revitalization committee is a consequence of the rezoning to address economic development issues. We also have monthly meetings. We continue engaged with Amalgamated Bank. Although they pulled out their branch on Burnside Avenue, we're trying to hold them to commitments to continue to invest in a community and ongoing discussions about how they can make investments. And they've instructed their partners to try to target back to the West Bronx.

New York Police Department 46th Precinct by Deputy Inspector Potkay and Community Affairs Officer Watson:

Report: Good Evening, everyone, this is Deputy Inspector Potkay from 46th Precinct. Inspector Seminara has moved on to the Intelligence Bureau. He had nothing but great

things to say about all of you, and I am looking forward to working with you. I have 23 years with the department previous assignments from the Detective Bureau, Transit, Housing Bureau, and Internal Affairs. I was also previously Executive Officer for the 46th Precinct Back in 2013, 2014, and I'm delighted to be back. Overall, year to date. Overall, the 46th Precinct is down 8 percent in the index crime with the significant, profound increase of felony assault, burglary, and grand larceny. Even in a few days, the unit was from eight, and we're down five. The shooting was down as well. I've only been here for a few days; as you know, the officers are out there still doing very well on crime. Last night they brought in a gun this Sunday Evening, so they're working very hard to keep you all safe. I look very much forward working with all of you, and I hope everyone has a happy and healthy Thanksgiving. Thank you so much.

Discussion on Committee functions and Board Member responsibilities

Reports: 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. The Jerome Avenue Oversight and Land Use are in common. Each committee has an individual Chairperson. These three committees are Housing, Land Use, and Jerome Oversight, are in common. This month, we are looking forward to filling in the co-chair for Jerome Avenue Oversight. If you have passion in this area or sector, please reach out to Ken Brown or me. I will not nominate anyone because I want to open to the public for the new upcoming board members. Next are other committees, such as Parks and Recreation, also have income coming from Councilmember capital budget that investing or allocated for community improvement as part of the city capital movements for adopted the rezoning, Morton Playground and Davidson Playground. Thank you to Angel Caballero for being active in Economic Development. The meeting held on the fourth Tuesday of the month. I cannot overemphasize Health and Human Services; that chairperson is Annette DeJesus; she is taking time off due to family emergencies.

We do not have any co-chair for Health and Human Services, and it is open to all members to participate and those of you who have a passion for health, please reach out to Ken Brown or me. For Education and Youth, we need some board members to fill in as co-chairs for these committees. We have more than 30 members, and you have passions on those committees that have not yet been filled and please reach out to Ken Brown or me. I salute Chairperson Roxana Gonzalez and co-chair Juan Parra. Congratulations to you and Juan Parra. The Chairperson of Municipal Services is graham Nero Jr. and the co-chair is Lucia Deng. Congratulations to you. Housing the Committee chairperson is myself Dr. Bola, and co-chair is Anthony Hernandez. The Executive Committee Chairperson is myself and co-chaired by First Vice-Chair, Angel Caballero. This

uniqueness committee is Ad Hoc Community Outreach; Chairperson is Charles Shorter, and co-chair is Nero Graham Jr.

Public Session

▮ Sallie Smith – Resident

▮ Good Evening Board Members, and I hope you have a Happy Thanksgiving. I am concerned about the new infrastructure plan budget coming from the State and City. The budget should be coming to our community to create jobs, programs, parks, and other amenities. We need the State and City to invest in our Jerome Avenue and Burnside Avenue to build an elevator. I want the board members to collaborate on creating centers, bringing some complimentary programs, or finding sponsors to invest in our community board five. Thank you so much.

▮ Ashley Brodeur DDS, Philip Lynn, Jaynemie Ferrari

Elected Official's Reports

▮ **Honorable Ruben Diaz, Jr., Bronx Borough President**

▮ *The Representative is* Tom Lucania

▮ Reports: Good Evening, Dr. Bola, Ken, and Angel, members of the board. Thank you once again for being here this evening and participating in the November board meeting. As Ken said, this was a quick turnaround for your monthly meeting. And so much of what we discussed two weeks ago still pertains today. I did send out a new Borough President report earlier this week, which I believe Ken will send out. It does include some information events modified until the end of October, 100 or so people doing a tour with the borough president and the ability to do a virtual tour online. In addition, the report and the newsletters still contain the most updated information on the vaccine site and on the COVID testing site. Anyone is still in need of FEMA assistance because the hurricane was over about a month ago now. The new board members who received documents, if you have not already sent in your certification form to the office, please do so, as soon as possible, I want to complete that. And in addition, all board members will probably be receiving a letter from our office within the next month regarding the next round of sexual harassment training, which community board members are required to take. We are working with the DCAS and with the city's DOITT folks, information technology folks to gain access to a couple of other training modules. Board members will be invited to take part of the city's requirement that board members must take these training courses to be familiar with EEO policies, LGBTQ policies, accessibility issues. It'll be like the last few years where it will be online. It is similar in that you will get a unique password

sent to your emails to access the city site for the sexual harassment training course. I want to wish all of you a very healthy, and happy Thanksgiving. We look forward to a prosperous thanksgiving for you all. And once again, thank you for your commitment to your community. Thank you.

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

□ **Reports:** Good Evening, everyone; I thank you all newly Board Five our District during the second round and all Members of CB five Residents of the community and elected officials and staff. It's so great to see all of you this month for your monthly view; I'm so honored to say, here I am, the Bronx Borough President-Elect. After the election last, we're able to get 80% of the vote, and we are looking forward to this new chapter in this new seat Leadership; I am so grateful for all of you. For eight years, you've allowed me to be your Council Member of this City District 16 as we worked hand in hand together. For our small businesses, our city Leaders, faith leaders and so many great things we've done as we got through the rezoning. Grateful that we're now seeing all the fruits and the benefits of that rezoning, we establish the Jerome Avenue revitalization. Dr. Bola and I were so grateful to work; good job and a lot of the things we will do to carry on. Economic Development and financial lives receive so many programs that we know children and family lately; I wanted to thank you for the eight years. Thank you so much for being so supportive. As I leave this position of the city council, I look forward to working with you. A lot of you have talked about Community Board reforms. I'm going to be very interested in many of the ideas you bring to the team's table. I want to make sure that we are collaborative, and we're talking about putting in access and outreach using technology to reach as many residents as we can. We have so much participation, but I know there were many residents inconvenient was five I would like to be involved in may not go about the work we do. I want to encourage more young people to join the community board starting from 16 years old. I wish for more partnerships with our high schools in this District 10. As our colleges at Bronx Community College. I would love to see more internship opportunities to create a pipeline so young people. We're still doing city council work. I have a couple of weeks. I think it's 50 days left. We co-chair the Women's Caucus, so we're doing a little more work on women's issues. Next week, we are looking to pass legislation that we are doing on behalf of the mayor to provide peace sick leave for parents to allow their children to get vaccinated. They need to take time off from work or amend the current page simply law and let any New Yorker get their child vaccinated, and it's also going to apply to those parents. These children are affected by COVID-19. They may have tested positive, and mom or dad or parent needs to tend to their child. We also allow that to happen. You're still active. We're still busy—no worries in the council. So, in the community have forward to working with you, and I thank you all, whether it be issues around small businesses. Is the street vendors digital Burnside bid? You all have always been there, and for that, I'm genuinely grateful. Let Nereida Gomez; the team is on tonight's call; we can help and follow up with you. Please let us

know how we can be helpful. We're still doing citizens ship and family law clinics. We are in remotely, not at the office; we get it ready for the season of Thanksgiving, so we're going to be doing several Thanksgiving dry, both turkeys and fixing. So, we're working with many churches. Another CBO, and then we'll prepare for the season of Christmas. We have a couple of events coming up, so we will share that with you in my final newsletter that will hit households next week; a little bit of sweet It's been eight years, so I'm grateful I thank you all.

□ **Honorable State Senator Gustavo Rivera District #33**

Representative of Oriana Shulevitz Rosado

Reports: We have the Veterans Hall of Fame, which will be virtual, like this meeting. And it's going to be held at noon on the Senate homepage. I will start giving updates; we'll celebrate the 2020 Veterans Hall of Fame honorees tomorrow. Senator Rivera is honoring our very own CB5 Roxanna Gonzalez at the senate district 33 Veterans' Hall. And I want to say that the veteran's program will be tomorrow, and anyone can join. I recommend that folks join at noon. I'm honored to virtually present the plaque on his behalf to our vet's committee, Chairwoman, and Brock's leader, Roxana Gonzalez, Congratulations! And we're hoping to do the actual meeting in person soon. And I will reach out about that. And now, I will go back to the less exciting but still critical general updates from our office. So just letting folks know, the Senator is still visiting senior centers, mostly giving out some resources, just on October 26. He saw the guest's neighborhood Senior Center since many senior centers were closed during the pandemic, and our seniors were very isolated. So he wants to do a check-in on the senior centers as well as the seniors. He has also been door-knocking in buildings to give constituents information about the emergency Rental Assistance Program, ERAP. If you know anyone affected by COVID-19, lost their jobs, and are behind on rent or utilities, please reach out to our office. We would be happy to help you make the application. I would also like to let you all know that the vaccination program has been open to children who are from five to 11 years old, and there is a new governor's website which I will be dropping into the chat as well. So now five to 11 year old children can get vaccinated. And you can go to the website if you have any questions about those vaccinations. Another program the Senator has been trying to get the word out is the Home Energy Assistance Program, which has applications open to help folks pay for heat. This winter, you can call 311 or call our office if you would like assistance in applying. Lastly, we have two representatives from the Comptroller's office coming to our district office on November 15. This week, 11 am to 4 pm, I apologize next week. Will there be looking for unclaimed funds, which is money that has been left dormant is unclaimed with a bank insurance company corporation or the courts? The New York State Comptroller holds this money until the individual can claim it. If you have a clue that you may have some

unclaimed money, you can call our office; the number is in the chat, and we can set you up with one of the Comptroller's representatives. Congratulations to Roxane Gonzalez, the Veterans Hall of Fame ceremony tomorrow is online, and everyone have a great Thanksgiving.

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

□ *Representative is Terrell Brock*

□ Reports: Good evening, everyone. My name is Terrell Brock, and I'm a community liaison from State Senator Jose Serrano's office. This year, the New York State Senate passed a large package of legislation to support older New Yorkers. And the bills include the SR trail guide. Senator Serrano sponsored this bill S 6208. It mandates the public posting of a senior trail guide that identifies walking and hiking opportunities for active seniors within the state park system and along with the public, non-motorized multi-use trails within the state. And then, we also have senior housing protections. And this bill, S 1106, was sponsored by the Senate Majority Leader, which prohibits the termination of tenancy in housing facilities with 20 or more units occupied by senior citizens and persons with disabilities without cause or court approval. And then there's also the there's Bill S by five for the encore entrepreneurs. This bill, sponsored by Senator Rachel May, will direct the office for the Aged and the Department of Economic Development to expand more entrepreneurship in the state to empower individuals. To become first-time business owners, we are fifty years of age or older, and then we also have elder abuse, shelter aftercare demonstration program—this bill S 1065. Sponsored by Senator Biagi will establish a more senior abuse shelter as the care pilot program to evaluate the effectiveness and potential to expand temporary elder abuse shelters. And I also like to mention some significant COVID-19 financial assistance resources. But of course, as we said, there's the emergency Rental Assistance Program. And there's still time to apply the short term to play and include a significant economic relief to help low and moderate-income households. Households are at risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability by providing rental arrears, temporary rent assistance, and utility arrears. The program will provide up to 12 months of rent payments. The payments are made directly to the landlord on behalf of the tenant. And we also have the pandemic small business recovery grant program. And this grant provides funding for small businesses, including for-profit arts and cultural institutions impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic. And we also have the restaurant result. We do you see a program, and this was one has 25 million in grant funding is available to support restaurants that provide meals to distress and underrepresented communities. And there's also the New York port loan fund. And the New York loan fund is an economic recovery loan program aimed at supporting New York State, small businesses, nonprofits, and small residential landlords. And there's also the capital funding application from the New York State Council on the Arts, which recently opened. It will assist organizations facing health and safety issues in their spaces and then use Mugu's needs. Facilities and capital support will be available through funding approved in our state budget, and any nonprofit arts and culture and culture organization is encouraged to play. Applicants must be pre-qualified by the application deadline on January 4. If you have any questions, please reach out to our office at 212-828-5829 or you can email us at serrano@ny.gov.

□ **Honorable Darcel D. Clark, Bronx District Attorney**

□ *Representative is Eric Sawyers*

□ *Contact: 718-561-9253, sawyerse@bronxda.nyc.gov*

□ **Reports:** This Sunday at noon, November 14, there will be the Veterans Day Parade. The parade, like I, said starts at noon. It starts at Lafayette and East Tremont Avenue. I will be there on Sunday, the DA will be there, and it will be a great event. I hope to see some of you constituent there as well.

□ **Committee Reports.**

□ **Housing:**

□ **Chairman Dr. Bola reports:**

□ **Jerome Avenue Oversight:**

□ **Chairperson Cheryl Westbrook reports:** We have Fernando Tirado from the Department of Health, and he presented on Healthy Villages. He spoke about a combined effort and community outreach, which had started before the pandemic. The Health and Human Services, I inherited it because Annette DeJesus is on leave right now. And are approximately 50 different agencies from throughout the Bronx, primarily within our district, participated in developing, proposing various healthy village initiatives. The board, this group of interested agencies met up until October 2020. I met with Fernando last week: we discussed reinstating this committee. Start we've been trying to meet one another on the telephone. We've kept missing one another. Hopefully, we'll be able to have this up and running by January 2022.

□ **Land Use:** Chairman Pablo Blanco reports: We will be discussing the rezoning at SOHO and NOHO, which is happening now in New York City. I invite you to come to the meeting at six o'clock. This is Cheryl, and I would like to add to your meeting; the following Jerome Avenue oversight committee will be on November 18, at 6 pm. At that time, on JARC will be the Jerome Avenue revitalization collaborative will be presenting at the Jerome Avenue oversight committee. I invite everyone to attend that meeting first and then move right into the Land Use committee meeting. Thank you.

□ **Immigration Committee:** Chairperson Pooi Stewart reports: Good Evening everyone, the immigration committee meeting will be held tomorrow at six o'clock. Some of these board members attending the general board meetings will attend the immigration committee meeting tomorrow at six o'clock. Tomorrow we will be talking about Haitian immigrants. What is the status between the borders of Mexico and those coming into our country, the United States of America? We want to find out the quality of the Haitian

immigrants if you are interested in knowing more about or maybe your neighbors who are in those positions anticipating those immigrants who come into our country. Hopefully, you guys will be joining our meeting tomorrow.

☐ **Veterans Committee: Chairperson Roxanne Gonzalez reports:** Good evening, we've recognized it as a beautiful month for our community. We held our Veterans Affairs Committee yesterday. Thank all who have served or still are serving in our great military branches. It's quite an honor to be among those who have served, congratulations. Thank you for your service. Tomorrow there's going to be a NYC parade happening. Free lunch, grab and go at the VA hospital located at 130 Kingsbridge Road, between 12 pm and 1:30 pm. For veterans that are in the area, you're welcome to come. Quite a few events, they're also giving away some turkeys over at the Fisher House parking lot, right across from the VA within the facility in the parking lot at noon. On the 23 of November 2021, all those interested in veterans, please stop on that we will also be reminded by our representative, our liaison, Sean Kingston, yesterday that boosters are available. And the third scene is for those who are autoimmune suppressed or have a condition offered for veterans. The most exciting thing that's happening is plenty of discounts available for all our veterans throughout the city. Especially Home Depot, complimentary appetizers in Applebee's, so there's plenty of things. If we haven't done and we will send the link through our fantastic district manager. And then this way, he could share it with all. Make sure that if you know of anyone, please take advantage. We're entering the holiday season. We have families and friends that are suffering from depression. During these difficult seasons, especially, they lost anyone on top of anything else they experienced. So be mindful because we read off some of the symptoms and have special care for them. We've all been told, and our next meeting will be on the 14 of December at 6 pm. We are very thankful for participating in our discussions, and we hope that more will participate and join us. And finally, Happy Thanksgiving to all, and don't push away from the table. Stay right there. Enjoy, eat, and be merry with the family. Thank you.

☐ **Municipal Services:** Chairman is Nero Graham Jr.

▮ Reports by Dr. Bola: Lucia Deng is appointed by Dr. Bola for our CB5 Co-chair of Municipal Services.

☐ Reports by District Manager, Ken Brown: At municipal, it was on at municipal services last night. It was on the agenda; it is a regrettable, unavailable presentation by a High-Class memo asking for a letter of support for the continuation of their base. There was a transmission from an elected official's office; there was no video present. The committee members felt that it was uncomfortable to proceed, given that we couldn't see who was presenting or saying that they were giving from high-class. The committee decided that the request to submit would be postponed to the December meeting.

☐ **Ad Hoc Community Outreach:** Chairman Charles Shorter

▮ Reports: Good evening, everyone; thank you. I'm Charles Shorter and the Ad Hoc Community Outreach chair. We had a lot of this conversation in the past meeting. Ad Hoc is looking at ways to engage the community and make sure the community gets

information to the public. We are here to serve the community. The idea came through last night's meeting of presenting the newsletter, per se, and filtering information to all the committees. When we have guest speakers, our community has many resources that are not now being forwarded. I'm looking at the information and the chat. We certainly have the technology. But we need to use that technology to get the info out and then also in the old fashion in outreach which I consider my specialty, is one of the thoughts. In the conversation we had at the meeting last week, the committee will present information very soon on the ideas such as Newsletters. Ad Hoc will do one page and then work on today's technology and the old-fashioned way. To get that out to the community churches, schools, Association's bulletin boards, supermarket and of course using technology since Ms. Smith has been working with our committee. And we need to engage the community, and then the community needs to know what we're doing. So that's our idea I would love to hear from you guys, but most importantly, I would love the committee chairs, to bring information to the Ad Hoc Committee, and we will be responsible for putting it out, one page every month. Any comments or thoughts, or suggestions? We're very open to hearing from every one of you tonight. Again, thank you to Miss Westbrook, who also attended the meeting and brought up ideas. And now, we need members to step up and come to a committee meeting as well.

□ **Governing Committee:** Chairperson Belinda Lawrence reports: The governing committee doesn't have any meeting scheduled at this time, but we'll have something soon. We're always trying to fine-tune our bylaws to make sure that we're covering all, you know, the bases for compliances and then have a clause in it that, you know, protects the board members, also giving them some leeway latitude. Case in point, you know, when we said that, we had put a clause in, you know, if you had to go out and sleep for some time, you wouldn't be deemed as absent, but it will be documented. We're looking forward to fine-tuning it some more, that we have a robust set of bylaws.

□ **Executive:** Chairperson Dr. Bola Omotosho reports: We already had the executive from the Ad Hoc Committee Outreach committee; we meet every second Wednesday of the month. This month we do not have Executive Board Meeting. The next meeting is on December 8. And I want to use this opportunity, especially to thank everyone, meaning the executive and the staff in the office. Thank you. Now we are going to go to old business.

□ *Adjourned at 8:45 pm.*

The next General Board Meeting will be held on December 8, 2021.

Prepared and submitted by Ms. P. Stewart.

Secretary of Bronx Community Board Five