



THE CITY OF NEW YORK

BOROUGH OF THE BRONX

COMMUNITY BOARD #5

Honorable Vanessa Gibson., Bronx Borough President

**Chairperson
Dr. Bola Omotosho**

**District Manager
Kenneth Brown**

General Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday January 26, 2022

Virtual Meeting

Community Board Five

- **Community Board Five Board Members**
- **Attendees** E.Acosta, B.Akumah, S.Bah, P.Blanco, A.Caballero, N.Graham.Jr., B.Lawrence, G.Medina, M.Rosado, Dr.B.Omotosho, J.Parra, L.Deng, B.Moore, E.Morris, R.Perez, S.Solano, C.Shorter, P.Rojas, , S.Rudolph, P.Stewart, and C.Westbrook.
- **Absent/Excused**
- P.Dominguez, J.Curiel, C.Camera, R.Gonzalez, M.Heath, L.Reyes, A.DeJesus, A.Hernandez, T.Mims, R.Owusu, J.Pope, and F.Ramos,
- **Welcome:**
 - Opening Prayer by N.Graham, Jr. (Board Member)
- **Quorum: 6:19 pm**
- **Approval of Minutes:**
 - December 8, 2021, General Board Meeting, approved with corrections.
 - First in Motioned by Nero Graham Jr., Seconded in motion by Angel Caballero
 - Roll Called: 19 Aye / 0 Nay / 0 Abstain
- **Chairperson's Report Dr. Bola Omotosho:**

BCC Campus * Gould Hall, Room 200 * 2155 University Avenue * Bronx, New York 10453
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Serving these Neighborhoods:
Fordham, Morris Heights, Mount Hope, University Heights

- Reports: Welcome back LaShawnda. It's a new year, a new beginning. The Borough President Vanessa Gibson called me to step up to give her details on Bronx Fire Victims at 333 East 181 Street. I also want to use this opportunity to talk to elected officials and especially The Borough Bronx President. She's been a trooper from beginning to end. At about 10 pm, Red Cross had to shut down during the whole episode, and OEM would shut down a level. After weeks later, some victims can move back to the apartments. Some of the victims were discharged from the hospital, and Borough President stepped up to the plate, making sure to increase the number of open hotels, which initially were three and eventually expanded to six, and have one on standby for those who was not discharged. She was there all day trying to troubleshoot. I was a little overwhelmed and felt concern. I want to say a special thank you to one of our own, and that is Shenia Rudolph was there in the beginning and end. The school and that was our Command Center. She used to work there. Of course, when the lights are out, she picks up the broom and mop to help the school on a Sunday to prepare for Monday morning. I want to thank the school principal for setting up different sections in the school because she made the victims lives much more accessible. For my colleagues on the board, we greatly appreciate all your support in terms of prayers and everything else. Thank you. The call of duty as the District Manager. Thank you so much. I was getting you to look at the information. I said Monroe college was a good resource for all needs of the victims. I needed permission from him, and he was living in between everybody else and giving advice. I'm saying all these because the Community Board has the resources in terms of the directory, which are the districts, various organizations, and community centers. And that directory came in very convenient. The district manager can be convenient and powerful to assist elected officials and various government agencies. In a new year, a new beginning, and transition into a new government, most operators do not develop a relationship to facilitate this appreciation. Ken and I were able to fill in, in terms of providing these opportunities. As you all know, most of virtually all diseases are from West Africa and the majority from Gambia. We have two families and one from Guinea. I believe we still have about 23 individuals in the hospital, which was on Friday. Yesterday about two or so, was discharged. And thank you, Councilmember; I mean, give us some of the details about the voucher, and it's still a long time to full recovery. Over the weekend. Several organizations have been donating towards this process. The drop-off at Davidson Center. Donation to Gambia youth organizations that are part of their district. Even Muslim Islamic center dropped off at Muslim Islamic Center at 367 East 181 Street; there are few other locations dropped off at the three hotels in our district. Some patients are still in the hospital outside the community in Manhattan. Victims were taken back to the Gambia to Senator Schumer's office, and Congressman Torres was very helpful. In facilitating the terms of reuniting families because the embassy in the Gambia what will come time and giving working without to get the proper verification the very sober moment and doctors, not something that anybody plans for or expected but there is a lot of work to be done. Before Sunday, the Hospitality Group reached out to me to support the victims. And on disclosure, I provide them with a rock-based list on the list from apartments. The individuals support those individuals using unique formula and adjust the head of household for the number of families. And at that point, it became apparent that the tenant's association for this building was non-functional. One is for the Hospitality Group, and I'm referring to the partygoers and the restaurant owners. They came together and donated money and had a matching from other groups. And they were able to come up with almost \$120,000, which they gave each a gift card \$500. I want to use this opportunity to thank our elected officials, especially for that reason. We use Davidson Community Center in our community on Sunday. Angel, thank you so much. Our district manager showed up from points, and the project was flawless when I say excellent for us in our district like ours to have under \$20,000 worth of gifts

has been given out in an orderly fashion. Commander Officer Potkay and his team, such as Community Affairs, provides security coverage. We turned back some folks who went back just quietly, and as a follow-up to that, tomorrow, by God's grace, will show them because now it's expanded to everyone. We had more funds that came in, and tomorrow will be devastating to give out your rights to other members or the victims in the building that did not fall into this category. Jessica, the President, she's been phenomenal to be part of these efforts. And I want to say thank you. There's a lot of work to be done. We also can encourage participation on the board because the application to join the board is now available online. I've started receiving some applications.

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

Reports: Thank you very much, Dr. Bola, and I'll be brief and let me extend a heartfelt appreciation for your efforts in this crisis. We get to see you in action, board meetings, and his various functions, but the leadership has been impressive, as someone else said at the conference Sunday. You know you're a blessing to the community. We're fortunate but I don't want to go into the details about the fire because I think Dr. Bola covered it. The library held a webinar which was conducted in November about libraries in the pandemic and the role that libraries can play. And there was a presenter from the Brooklyn Public Library that talked about their open newsroom program. This is about the December 17 note that district managers report an open newsroom program to train citizen journalists. And they use the branches as a meeting point and a point of reference and as a mechanism to introduce people to be citizen journalists. And if funding comes in, maybe to publish newsletters that are locally based. I reached out to the New York Public Library, covering the Bronx, to see if that's a program that could have a sister program here in the district. So once we catch our breath, I'll have to follow up with NYPL and see the status of bringing it back to this section. As Dr. Bola said, the Community Board membership applications are live now. Those applications are available both at our website under the Get Involved tab. The borough president's office and those are due on March 4. I want to note that although the city in the world has responded very generous with donations to the fire victims, the community-based organizations have made contributions. Suppose people want to send expressions of condolences, sympathy letters, cards, that kind of thing. The Islamic Center of the Bronx is acting especially as a story of those kinds of letters. The Islamic center is at 295 East 166 Street, Bronx 10456, and on the envelope, you would note in care of the fire victims. Councilmember Sanchez very kindly put in the chat the phone number for Bronx Works, which is doing the case management for the fire victims. And in case you need to pass this along. The number is 646-993-0801. I think everything else is in the district manager's report. Thank you very, very much, Ms. Lashawnda. In this crisis, although she's been sick, she's, of course, stepped up and kept the ship off the rocks of the office. So as always, I'm very, very thankful for her. Everyone has risen to the occasion and thank you all very much.

- **New York Police Department 46th Precinct**

- Reports: Police Officer Stacy Ann Kennedy Community Affairs. You can reach me at 929 273 7481 or Stacyann.kennedy@nypd.org

- **Presentation by New York City Fire Department, Fire Safety:**
 - Visit: www.fdnysmart.org
 - To request Free Smoke/CO Alarm Registration contact 1-877-RED-CROSS (733-2767)
 - For Further information regarding FDNY please contact CommunityAffairs@fdny.nyc.gov
 - Presenter this evening was Captain Michael Kozo, Director of Fire Safety Education
 - Presenter this evening was Fabricio Caro, Director of FDNY Community Affairs
 - To reach us please contact either Communityaffairs@fdny.nyc.gov or firesafetyadmin@fdny.nyc.gov
- Reports: Good evening, Dr. Bola. Thank you and good evening, Ken Brown, and all the elected officials, community members, and board members present this evening. My name is Fabricio Caro. I'm with the FDNY community affairs officer, the program director. We oversee community engagement, fire safety, education, and public training. I expressed myself to the Department and the community—our heartfelt condolences, thoughts, and prayers to all families and those impacted by the fire. The Department is with you, and we are the first responders in the efforts that occurred that day. Still, beyond that, we do and continue to do every year to provide and enhance that fire safety awareness so that tragedies like that do not occur based on prevention and safety education like Captain Kozo going to speak about today. Before I turn it over to Captain Kozo, I wanted to thank the elected officials on the call today; for reaching out to our fire safety education unit to organize presentations in the coming weeks to strengthen that message. Even though it's on a virtual format, most of them, at least it's education, are getting out to the community itself to reinforce safety. I want to thank our Bronx Borough president, Vanessa Gibson. On February 9, we are working with our partners and us at the American Red Cross to host a borough-wide interfaith virtual fire safety training. I will be sharing the flyer to invite any faith-based leader or member of a specific denomination or congregation to learn about fire safety training. The Department is ensuring that we are working collectively and collaboratively to strengthen that approach of reinforcing fire safety seasonally year-round, with different safety tips to share digitally and in-person and organizing in advance events. Basically, to have our fire safety educators out in the public providing that message. Fire Safety education is essential that we reinforce that message and that only can happen with partnerships like the one here tonight with the community board, organizations, community leaders, schools, and public groups. The terms of bringing and inviting our first responders to provide awareness on the topics that Captain Kozo will talk about today. Safety starts with prevention, and prevention begins with education. I think we all must work collectively to learn from tragedies of how we can, how we can prevent that in the future from happening. I will put all the information in the chat about requesting a fire safety presentation and connecting with community affairs. Beyond just fire safety education, we provide mobile CPR training. We work with our partners at the Red Cross to provide free smoke alarm installations that are working smoke detectors. It's probably getting closer. We'll talk about is the first line of defense in a home safety plan in being saved from fires. I'll provide all that information in the chat. Please count on community affairs. We do have borough liaisons, and I have dispatch throughout city-wide that we work specifically with community boards and district managers constantly. Contact

us, at community affairs email fdny@nyc.gov. I wanted to thank you again for allowing me to speak.

- Good evening, everybody. My proposal here with the FDNY is the fire safety education unit. I want to talk about a few things about fire safety. Our typical presentation is usually around 45 minutes to an hour, and we go over all the aspects of residential fire safety. I will point out a few of the most important things about some of the hot topics - three things are prevention, early detection, and then planning. Prevention, we go over how to prevent a fire from happening in our homes. What are the common causes of fires that we're seeing? So many things that we're seeing are fires in the kitchen. One of the most common causes of fires in the kitchen is unattended cooking. The fire marshals are getting their reports and what they're finding out is that people are cooking and walking away from the stove. I understand we're all trying to multitask. We're trying to do a bunch of things at the same time. Unfortunately, cooking can't be one of those things that we're trying to multitask. If you're going to be cooking, you should stay in the kitchen and watch the food. Suppose you feel the need to walk away for some reason. Throw an oven mitt on your hand. Set a timer to remind yourself it only be a few minutes before the timer goes off. Remember that you have this oven mitt on your hand, and you're going to say I'm cooking. That is something that we do recommend. Try to keep them away from children's possible, very least three feet away from the stove always. I'm sure we all remember the fire back in 2017 that had started from a child playing with a stove. So again, we do want to keep that message in mind. We do have those safety knobs, the childproof knobs for your stoves now, so that's something that we should be taking advantage of, you know, local 117 because of that fire. What are some of the other things we're seeing? We're seeing a lot of electrical fires. I think many of them right now are the result of the space heaters. I wanted to go over some safety features regarding space heaters. Space heaters must be plugged directly into the wall; you should not be using an extension cord. It would help if you were not using a surge suppressor, a power strip, or anything else plugged directly into the wall. The reason is that anything that heats or cools draws a tremendous amount of power and what happens over time as it starts to heat up, the longer the framework, the further that current must flow, and the longer the cord is going to heat up. We recommend that you use the cable that comes with the appliance, and it's plugged directly into the wall. Space heaters need space three feet around. A space heater should be free of anything that can burn. We often tend to see when people want that heat right on top of them. What they tend to do is they have it blowing right on top of them while they're lying-in bed. What happens is sometimes you end up falling asleep. You knock the comforter over and falls on top of the space heater just running, and that's what we see some of these fires. The proper way to use this space heater is that you should be running it in the room that you want to warm up while you're still awake. Once you go to sleep, you should turn off and unplug the space heater. It should not be running all night long while you're sleeping. Also, buying a space heater, you want to look for one tested and approved by a reputable company such as a laboratory or ETL. You'll see those ETL symbols on the appliance and look for one with an automatic shuttle feature on it. Should the space heater tip over by mistake, it will automatically shut itself off. You will manually have to pick it up and turn it back on again for it to turn back on. So that's just a few things regarding space heaters. Early detection, we're talking about our smoke alarms. Again, we want to make sure that having and maintaining a working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. A working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms reduce your chances of dying in a fire by 50%, that is a considerable number. And right now, the latest for the list of statistics we have is 70% of people that are dying in fires do not have working smoke alarms in their homes. These are high statistics and a simple fix. We should have these alarms in our homes. The NFPA recommends a smoke and carbon monoxide

alarm on every level of your home and a cloud of smoke only alarm in every bedroom. That is what they recommend, and that's what we are looking to see everybody have now. They have the ten-year-old (10 years) sealed alarms right now. Any smoke alarm being sold on the market today cannot be one where the battery is being removed. You can't take the batteries out of these alarms anymore. What was happening? People were getting annoyed a lot because the alarms going off. When the alarm goes off while cooking, people were taking the alarms down and pulling the batteries out, but they were never putting them back in, so they now came out with these alarms. You don't have to worry about changing the batteries every six months. You must make sure you test the alarm once a month to ensure that it is working correctly. And inside is a lithium-ion battery. The battery is good for up to 10 years. So you don't have to worry about checking the batteries changing the batteries once the alarm starts chirping once every 30 to 60 seconds, telling you that the battery is dying. You want to go out and get a new light, and that's the same as the alarms we had with the batteries we were replacing. The warning would start to turn once every 30 seconds. 60 seconds right. Typically, the battery is fantastic, but the battery died at like two o'clock. Three o'clock in the morning, right? The batteries never died in the afternoon. It's insane. But keep that in mind. If that goes off that you want to replace the alarm. It sets off because it's a combination of one that makes two different noises. It will make one set of noises for smoke or fire one set of noises for carbon monoxide, and we need to know the difference. Three long beeps are for smoke or fire. We're for quick chirps is for carbon monoxide. So that is something that we want to keep in mind because for carbon monoxide, you're not going to know that that gas is there, right? You can't see it, smell it, taste it, hear it. You have no idea that it's there other than the fact that the alarm is going off. You want to make sure that you know the difference and have a working carbon monoxide alarm in your home. Okay. The same thing with the warnings, you want to make sure that they are tested and approved by a reputable company. You'll see the little circle with the UL in it if you look here. I want to see that the alarm has been tested and inspected and is approved by a reputable company. We will share a program for people to sign up and register to get free smoke alarms and the alarms installed in their homes. We will put that in the chat room or store any information you place there, but it's a program that will tie the FDNY into the American workforce. A program that everybody should be taking advantage of if they can—police, I want to know when you're building and having an escape plan. We need to keep a few things in mind and knowing the type of building we live in is where it all begins. The two main types of buildings we're talking about are fireproof and non-fireproof. That should be posted in the lobby of a building, or you can look on the Department of Buildings website. You need to know the difference because that will change what you're going to do if there is a fire in your building. It's going to change dramatically. So, if you live in a non-fireproof building and the fires in your apartment, you get out and close the door behind you. We must make sure that we close the door to isolate that fire. Keep it inside your apartment. If you live in a non-fireproof building, a fire is not in your apartment you are to still stay inside. The building is not fireproof; the fire can spread from one apartment to the next, as we saw in that fire in 2017. The fire was on the first floor. The door was left open in the firewall as people tried to escape the building. They were running smoke because they were being left open, allowing the smoke to contaminate the rest of the building or staircase, and that's where everybody was running. We found many people out in the hallways, so we closed that door in a fireproof building fire in your apartment would not spread. We're going to leave near the door behind. Everything changes in a fireproof building; if the fire is unsafe, stay inside your apartment rather than go in the hallway. We have, so we must know that if you see smoke coming in from underneath the doorway, throw a damp towel up around the door frame if you see some smoke coming in over the vents tape them.

Open your window if you want some fresh air if smoke isn't coming in from outside, don't hesitate to call 911. Let us know that you are in the building, but we will send somebody up to you to check it out. If everything is okay, we will check on you. If we feel the need to evacuate you, we will do it ourselves. But these are essential things that we want to keep in mind. If there is a fire in our building, we need to know how we live. I'm not sure if anybody's aware, but a lot of it is on the staircases. They had no idea that smoke was surface cases knowledge; I don't believe anybody was found deceased in their apartments anybody that's been in their apartments or was okay. So, you want to keep in mind the message you're trying to push out there. The importance of closing the door and no type of living is very, very important. So, you know, in summary, those are just a few of the things that I did. But like I mentioned earlier, everything is daily. I have members out there all the time going into schools, going to Senior Centers, doing virtual; we're both in-person and doing virtual. It's about a 45 minute or so presentation, and we'll go over all the aspects regarding fire safety, how to prevent them, and everything else. We will share all that information in the chat with anybody interested. And that's it unless anybody has any questions. We'll throw everything in the chatroom in a minute. Thank you.

- **Board Member Question:** What happened if the building caught on fire?
- **FDNY:** Allowed to escape, you're going to go smoke heat rises, we all know what happens is it's going to find it's going to go where are we going to find that area right in the status. All you get dizzy; That's what's going to happen, press out it's instant that you don't have time. Exactly what happens, and that's why we emphasize the importance of closing that door. We're going to keep everything inside, which will allow us first responders to get to the fire without countering any smoke or gases, or heat. It's so closed your doors are at the hinge point the door requirement now, for whatever purpose. You can speak on the specificity of this building. The investigation is ongoing, but one message to stay is that members always check as part of their emergency escape plan. They live in a facility that does require so ultimately due to wear and tear due to other factors. Sometimes, issue posing is not working immediately on the front means of reality. Management is not responsive and departing, and the people left during the first responders I'm talking about a client next when they go to the next one that they exude, and we don't have time to advise the employee. Unfortunately, there are not many tricks once we run out of air; we avoid sharing perspectives. The best thing that we can do is get ourselves out of there. And we will get down. You're going to be lying off, and anybody in that situation would understand what I'm saying if you're in that kind of situation or on your stomach pushing to try and get that air, so that's what we will do. The other thing is that young may refuse to force the door to an apartment or be knocking on an apartment door appointment and be drawn out of arrows and a closer look.
- **Board Member Question:** I've noticed a combination of carbon monoxide and smoke detectors. Most people place this detector hot carbon monoxide as you add more dense gas. My question is if I set that detector high and I'm sleeping, and carbon monoxide comes into my room?
- **FDNY:** It's no higher than 15 inches unconscious by the time carbon monoxide, which smoke detectors know only if it starts right underneath you, then possibly, but yes, it is a denser gas. However, it is still slightly lighter than the air. Carbon monoxide does still rise, and the smoke, the smoke, and carbon monoxide alarms up on the ceiling do go off, and you know multiple tests and

things have been proven to show that they do work while being installed on the wall. They have plugged-in ones where they are slightly lower to the ground. However, it is lighter than air, so it does rise so that these alarms will activate for that carbon monoxide.

- **Presentation by the Bronx Botanical Garden's Food drop-off program**

- **Contact: palvarez@nybg.org**

- Sign up for Curbside Composting: <http://dsny.force.com/curbsidecomposting/s/>
- Food Scrap Drop-Off's-on.nyc.gov/dropfoodscraps
- Composting at home-<https://www.makecompost.nyc/>
- Reports: My name is Pamela Alvarez, and I am a project manager. Project sit by the year botanical data. The only way to see the background is that seven projects in the city represent the Bronx's similar design. We teach educational workshops and tell people what compost is. It's identical to recycling your cans, cardboard, and aluminum; instead, you're recycling food. As you're cooking those foods, there is one way that crops turn into compost, which can be used as a soil amendment to make our soils a lot healthier. Excuse me. A bit of what we do is we teach educational workshops. We established a bootstrap job boss, which Dr. Bolo mentioned. And right now, the only community board not served in New York City. Not just in the Bronx, but in New York City is community board five. We've been trying hard to get a food scrap to drop off an established community or five for the past year or so. And what does that mean? A food scrub chop off-site is where residents, neighbors, and hopefully, people who live nearby can bring their food scraps to be composted instead of being thrown away in the trash. Because it's a valuable resource, right? It doesn't belong in the garbage. What that means is it could be a school, it could be a community garden community center, it could be a school. We have a college on board. It could be a church place of worship. Any site willing to put a bin outside at least once a week must be accessible to the public. And what we do is we will connect you to a partner site that will pick up those scraps either once a week or once a month, so you don't have to hold on to, you know, a pile of garbage for too long. We're just here to put the word out; if anyone knows of any site willing to become a food scrap drop-off, please reach out to us and let us know. Because this is I think this is important. Our environment is just as important as everything else. We got to watch out for our children and their grandchildren and the ones who will be hereafter us. Composting is great. We'll reduce the number of rats in our city and the trash, and this is our town. Because once those wraps, those rats rip into those bags at night, and then sanitation comes and picks it up, the bag rips, and then there's trash all over our city. So just something to keep in mind. What I'll do is put some links in the chat. Maybe if anyone has any questions, I'll take them now. You know, add some links, all relating to what we do. What is composting, why is it beneficial? They also have a curbside composting program that you can sign up for, and what that means is the same way the citizen picks up your trash. They will pick up a brown bag with your food scraps at your building or residence.

Public Session

- **SUS Job Fair by Minjung Park**

Reports: Good Evening to all the Elected Officials and Board Members. A virtual job fair is happening next Wednesday, February 2nd, from 10 am – 3:00 pm. The zoom Meeting ID is 811 1427 5489; the passcode is Jerome. Thank you.

- **BJT Bronx Merchant Association Commercial District by Jessica Betancourt**

- Reports: Hi, everyone. Thank you and Good Evening to all Elected Officials and Board Members. We have a site where the community can visit us online to learn about BJT Bronx how we support our community. That we're doing in collaboration with others, and I'm honored to help everyone achieve a goal to help the victims of the families get on their feet again. I, thank everyone for allowing me to be here with you guys. I will be attending many more meetings to represent and fully support the community and merchants. Thank you for the information. Thank you, Dr. Bola, for always giving the community what we're putting on. Boards, resources. Thank you.

- **Bronx Health Reach by Ms. Moria Byrne-Zaaloff**

Reports: I'm here from Bronx health reach. Our organization focuses on health-improving health equity in the Bronx, specifically focused on Latino and African American communities in the Bronx. I am the program manager on the COVID and flu initiative. We're here to provide presentations, updates on COVID-19 and flu testing, boosters, anything that you're interested in hearing about. I'm happy to come back and present. We also set up vans, tents, indoor events for COVID, and we have a flu clinic in your community. We have some flu clinics in your neighborhood available on Tuesdays at Mount Hope Family Health Center. I can send flyers. I want to encourage everybody to use the flu clinic. It's a free flu clinic from 1:00 pm to 3:30 pm on Tuesday and on Wednesdays. I'm also available to talk about COVID and flu and answer your questions. We can set up an appointment for you. It's an excellent facility. And if it isn't close to where you want to do a flu shot or COVID shot, I'll put my phone number in the chat. I'm happy to help you. I also have a staff member who's fluent in Spanish, who can answer questions and book appointments for flu or COVID.

- **Ms. Sallie Smith – Resident**

Reports: Good Evening everyone. Trying to get on. Thank you. I've been trying to get on ever since from six o'clock. I finally got in. Thank you to Pooi and Ken for walking it through with me? I was on the phone first. I want to thank all the first responders and community and public

officials of everyone who assisted the residents of 333 East 181 Street. I was on the ground there every day and at the center, and it was good to see our board members were there. And tomorrow, I'll come over there and help you sort out stuff. And if you need me, Angel, you could always call me because I was going to the other side. But they were closed and said they didn't need anyone because I was going last week. So I will be there. I'll come in there tomorrow afternoon. And then you can tell me what you need me to help you do. Thank you so much.

- **Ms. Shenia Rudolph – Community Board Member 5**
- Reports: Dr. Bola, thank you also for being so helpful. I was here on Sunday. I also went back on Monday, and I stayed there for about ten more hours to help everyone. There was something that Tom had mentioned earlier regarding two laptops for PS 85, and you had asked the question regarding the high schoolers. We also have some middle schoolers that also went to the school and from that building, and now they're also in need, and I know they're at different locations. I was wondering if Tom could help the students from there with any laptops or any things that we can continue helping them with? I also could try to come and help. I will check tomorrow. I believe they went to more than one school today. We also have a list of some of the families that was from 333 East 181 Street. Many kids also went to the PAL, and those kids and families are still affected. We also still have been sitting everyone across the street for continuing donations. They went to PAL and from PAL to the synagogue and continued there. I was wondering the next place to make donations would be the Davidson Community Center.
- **Ms. Lashawnda** – Community Coordinator
Reports: Yes, we need prayers for everyone, especially those who suffered the last couple of weeks. I'm sorry, I'm a little out of it. I have been sick. I had COVID. But it's been a tragedy for our district. From my end even though I've been sick, I was getting people over to donate items such as clothes, toiletries and monetarily. I helped a family find their father and make sure the father who lived in 333 East 181 street get back to his home and receive resources. He's a senior, and he refused to live with his daughter. He would instead go back to his home, which is understandable, and he gave his daughter a hard time. I assisted them to get him back home. He is happy to be back at home, I'm just delighted that he was. He is okay and everyone else but those who unfortunately perished, you know, my heart goes out to all those families.
- **Follow-up regarding committee functioning by Dr. B. Omotosho**
Reports: Our first meeting was in September 2021, which is the functions of the various committees, narrative a bit of why I changed the report. This year we have all the Committees to collect more resources to support the community. One of our Council Members, Pierina Sanchez, supports Community Board Five in Housing and Immigration to update us. Then we are just going straight to the source. We will not be scrambling to get various agencies to come and

tell us exactly what we need or try to get them to come in. It makes especially the Chairperson a lot easier to locate each Committee from New York City Council Committees. I'm changing the narrative and including the chapters at sea level. These lists of our various committees, now we'll leave it to Ken Brown to email all the Committee Details to Members the next day.

Elected Official's Reports

- **Honorable Eric Adams, Mayor**
- **Community Affairs Unit Paula Caquias** Pcaquias@cityhall.nyc.gov
<https://www1.nyc.gov/ate/cau/index.page>
- Reports: I just wanted to let you know we are here. The mayor has been in the Bronx a lot this year, and he is committed to getting the resources they need. I want to comment that community board five, the leadership here, who did a fantastic job, and nonprofits and organizations regarding helping the fire victims. We continue to give our support all the way we can to continue making sure the families get the resources they need. I also wanted to let you know this week regarding as Dr. Bola said about the shootings recently in the Bronx and East Harlem. The mayor announced two days ago, the blueprint to end gun violence. I will send you a link with the documents, and I just wanted to give you some points. Some points that have for the papers for now. For example, for police, NYPD, and the Public Safety Unit, will create a neighborhood safety team that focuses on gun violence. They're going to host listening tours, and they're just going to focus on communities with high crime when it comes to gun violence. Working on expanding partnerships with NYPD and state police, more resources for making sure that illegal guns do not get into the city. You're going to see also more police officers on patrol in affected areas with high crime and gun violence. Other long-term issues would be making sure you get jobs, focusing on foster care youth to ensure that they get the resources they need from city agencies. They're going to identify an anti-gun liaison for each agency. They're also going to be a quality-of-life task force with leadership from NYPD, Sanitation Department homelessness, and mental health experts to help deal with areas with high gun violence. The mayor is very committed to this. I'm going to share the blueprint document with you. I'm also going to share the CEU website, my email, and the CEU email. I encourage you to please sign up for our listserv. I can keep you informed with us. We get we send a newsletter every Friday. It's a pleasure meeting everyone, and I look forward to connecting with you in the future.
- **Honorable Vanessa L. Gibson, Bronx Borough President**
- **Director of Community Boards Tom Lucania**

- **Reports:** Good evening to all the members of the Board, Ken and Lashawnda. Once again, thank you for all the work that you have done over the last two weeks. I know the Borough President was very pleased with your efforts on behalf of the victims of this tragedy. We continue to work with the families and the city agencies with whoever needs assistance for services for these families. The borough president and the new deputy borough president Janet Peguero have been out there consistently over the last two weeks working with these families to provide needed materials. They were at one of the public schools PS five, where At&t provided 100 laptops or tablets, for students and children who lived in the buildings that were affected, and they were able to obtain these tablets as well as a knapsack filled with Baka which gives them school supplies for them to use. We will continue our work along with the council members, the president, the other Elected Officials, you, Dr. Bola, Ken, anybody on the board; why don't we sustain a couple of other quick items. And of course, thanks to the fire department and the police department and those agencies that were part of this and have helped in this situation. On another note, I want to mention reappointment applications for community board members.

The board five applications should have gone in the mail today, so you should be receiving them at your homes if you are up for reappointment this year. As we said earlier in the meeting, new applications are available online. If it's not up now, the application online will be up by tomorrow, also in Spanish if that is your language. Both the reappointment and the new applications are due back on March the fourth, and then hopefully, those reappointments and new appointments will be made in the spring. I want to end by saying that the community board unit does now have a new member. I think he is still on. I know he was on a little earlier. Mr. Bah, still on. There you are. Okay. Mr. Bah joined the community board unit as one of my staff members, and he will be your direct liaison beginning at the February meeting. I will always be around, and you can always still reach out to me, but Mr. Bah will now become the expert on board five. He will get to know all of you. He will work closely with Ken, Dr. Bola, and all the board members, and he will become the resident expert on community board five. So, welcome t, and we look forward to working with you. And that is my report, Dr. Bola.

- **Honorable Council Member Althea Stevens Office District #16**
- **District Director Tyreke Israel / Tisrael@council.nyc.gov / 7185887500/ district16@council.nyc.gov/ 1377 Jerome Avenue Bronx NY 10452 / Hours are Monday – Friday 9 am – 5pm**
- **Reports:** Thank you so much, Dr. Bola. I appreciate you and all that you've done. You have been on the ground, supporting our families and everyone after this tragic fire that happened two weeks ago, and thank you for your leadership. We have a lot of work still to do. But we know that the Bronx is resilient. Dr. Bola, thank you for your leadership because you have been with those families. You've been praying with them, ensuring that they're getting services, translating, and doing everything we need. So, thank you for your work as well. I am the council member of District 16. We have been serving constituents, so please feel free to

reach out to us. My District Director Tyreke Israel's staff is here and, on the call, and he'll be with you guys at all your meetings. He'll drop all our information in the chat. So, if you have any questions or concerns or have input that you want to put in, please feel free to reach out to our office. One of the initiatives in my office is doing a strategic collective impact group to bring community leaders and folks together so we can make goals for our district. I am also making it available to everyone by bringing community leaders, community-based organizations, young people, and everybody together to talk about the needs of our community and move forward. What is spending? How am I going to negotiate what we need? So, I am all about including everyone. We're going to have advisory boards. I'm also going to be the Youth Chair. I've spent the last 20 years working and serving our young people throughout the city. And I'm excited to make sure that we are moving forward in the right direction. We are focusing around youth development, crime prevention, education, and all those things, so I'm ready to put those things at the forefront. Vanessa Gibson has done fantastic work as the council member, and now she's our Borough President. Still, I heard she's already told me my assignment is to do not what she did but take it to the next level, and I'm ready to do the work and stand for the community. So, like I said, Tyreke will drop our information in the chat. I'll be here throughout the night if folks have questions or concerns and want to hit me up privately. But I'll be here listening and getting to know the issues and so thank you for allowing me to speak.

- **Honorable Ritchie Torres, Council Member District #15**
- **Representative is Joseph McManus**
- **Contact: 718-842-8100, Tuesday -Friday (10am-3pm) by appointments.**
- Reports: Dr. Bola, this is Joseph. Yes. I didn't make the last meeting. I think I had COVID, I was under the weather, but I like to mention that you have a great team that you Angel, can get great resources, and I get a lot of help from those guys. Feel free to suggest to the Congressman, anything, anybody needs please call our office at 718-503-9610, and we will help the victims as much as we can. The Congressman did have a press conference with Senator Schumer to discuss the problems there or the issues that might help this place that you know would have the same problems and stop a fire, so one of the things they talked about was sprinklers and self-closing doors. It is, and since the building was put up with some federal funds, they wanted to make sure that the federal government could add investigative powers. And that would help. You know, shed a little light, more light on how the building is done. How the upkeep of the buildings. I know I worked in a hospital for many years and once a month, we'd go around and check this the sprinkler system. Thank you to community board five for putting so much effort to help in this tragic situation. And our office will be there to help anybody as much as we can. Thank you.
- **Honorable Pierina Sanchez, Council Member District #14**
District14@council.nyc.gov / 347 590 2874

Reports: It's so good to see you all. This is my home and the community board that I served. So, it's always good to be back. I did want to share a few updates. It is a difficult start in the Bronx with the fire at 333 East 181 Street But Dr. Bola, I want to thank you for your partnership. I want to thank this board for your collaboration. Angel, thank you so much for hosting the event over the weekend where we could do well; organizations could provide some more funding for affected families. The update is just in case folks here might be connected to families or receive questions. I do want to share a top-of-the-hour update. Number one, the service center at Monroe College on Jerome in Council District 14, continues to be open but operates on a minimal basis. Every city agency has its social services, Homeless Services, Department of Health there. We had emergency management. There were about a dozen agencies that were there to respond to families. We only have the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, and we have Bronx works there. It is moving to a case management model. So, it is a center where people went in and got all their needed services. Now families will be worked with on a one-to-one basis through Bronx works. A couple of general numbers don't quote me on this, there are 118 units in the building. And of those, we have issued 56 vouchers. And so that means that 56 families will be relocating from 333. The rest of the families, we continue to work with them, some want to stay, and that's their preference, and of course, they're right, and they can do that, and others who want to move we will continue to work with that. God bless this powerhouse of an elected official, Vanessa Gibson. She has been excellent and responsive to all the families, and it's been, you know, a beautiful thing amid the pain of seeing how everybody works together. The community organizations, religious institutions, and everyone else where we're just connected and try to make sure that we leave nothing unanswered for the families first and foremost. And then, on the other hand, on the policy side, looking at the long term, there's a couple of things that the elected officials are doing. So first, our council member Sorry, no more council member, Congressman Richie Torres has established an intergovernmental fire safety task force that includes all members representing the district and all levels of government. Congressman Richie Torres, Assemblywoman Yuldelka Tapia, Councilmember Feliz, and I, we're all on the task force, working together and then separately to give us more energy on this issue. The New York City Council Speaker, Adrienne Adams, recently appointed herself and established us. She has appointed a special committee on fire safety, so the City Council will all work together to leave no questions unanswered, leave no stone unturned. Some things that went wrong. There were code enforcement issues. There were self-closing doors that didn't make themselves close. All these things will continue to be looked at, looking forward into missing policies, policies that should have been in place and should be in place for the future to prevent this kind of thing again. I'll try to do better with you. The second update is just on participatory budgeting. District 14 is for the first time in the 12-year history of participatory budgeting, we are participating. I am dedicating \$1 million discretionary funds, which is 20% of my discretion to places that need capital improvements in the neighborhoods, so these are parks, these are school auditoriums, school improvements. So capital funding actual construction with a five-year lifespan that costs \$50,000 or more. I want to hear from you. We have a portal; I'll drop it into the chat. Just please participate. We just got back from Burnside and

Jerome Avenues. We were out there with music and getting people to tell us what they want a million dollars to spend on, which is fascinating. We're on a very condensed timeline because we just took office. But we are we're very excited and want to hear all your ideas. And just so you know, upon the process, all the ideas will come in at step one, the community. Step two is that the city agencies will vet the projects, and they're going to say, this is great. We can try to do this. Here's the cost estimate, or they're going to tell us no, this project isn't fundable, unfortunately, because it's on private property. Step three is that we are going to get we're going to get I'll tell you in a second. We're going to get all these vetted projects back, and then they're going to be a total of \$500 million. And so that committee will vote to let us know what projects will get the funding for a million dollars. You all decide, I'm out of it. I don't get a choice in the million dollars, and I look forward to your participation. The deadline for the initial idea proposal is this Sunday, the 30th, at 11:59 pm. We have a few days left, and then it goes to voting, and then it comes back for a vote. I will take any questions in the chat and drop our contact information. Our office is under construction. We will be remaining where our predecessor was at 2065 Morris Avenue. It's under construction right now. We don't have a time estimate yet. But hopefully, within a week or two, we'll be open. I will be inputting the contact list in the chat. Thank you. Good to see you all.

- **Honorable Yudelka Tapia, Assembly Member District #86**
- **Representative is Leon Tulton the Community**
Liaison/Tultonl@nyassembly.gov/718-933-6909/2175 **Jerome Avenue, Suite C, Bronx NY 10453**
- Reports: Good evening. My name is Leon Tulton, a liaison for Yudelka Tapia, the Assembly Member. She succeeded Victor Pichardo. I'm just here to introduce myself as the assembly member's representative. Let everyone know we're still at the predecessor's office. Everyone knows our office hours are Monday and Wednesday from 11 am to 7 pm. To accommodate those coming from work, and Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, from 9 am to 5 pm. Our phone number is 718 933 6909. I'll say one more time on 718-933-6909. Our offices are open to help the community with any state-related issues. I posted my information in the chat, but I'll post it one more time. And I'll end by giving my email address, which I forgot to do. Thank you so much for the time, and I look forward to working with the board to serve the constituents. Thank you, and Happy New Year.

- **Honorable Latoya Joyner, Assembly Member District #77**
- **Constituent Liaison Sharon Williams,**
- **718 538 2000, williams2@nyassembly.gov**
- Reports: Well, thank you so much, Dr. Bola. You're amazing. The community board five members. I'm excited and thankful to be part of this evening. How sad we all are about what happened, but it's a beautiful thing that when the Bronx is such a forgotten borough, they say, but in this time, we all came together of one accord. Beautiful families came out to support, Assemblywoman Joyner herself endorsed the mayor's Fund and the Gambian Youth Organization as well. It was such a horrific time, but the families that came together on one accord were indeed a blessing for the Bronx. Assemblywoman Joyner will also be giving a distribution out for the COVID self-testing, which will occur tomorrow. And then she's also going to be having one again on Friday that will take place this coming Friday at 8 am at PS 236. And that address, I believe this on Walton Avenue. This coming Friday, January 28, starting at three o'clock, Assemblywoman Joyner will be having her co-drive again. That's going to take place at the Bronx Terminal Market. This year, we're going to be closer to GameStop. We are asking that because of the inclement weather, we want to get as many constituents as possible registered so that they're not out in that climate weather this coming Friday. And I just wanted to remind everyone again that my name is Sharon Williams. I'm the constituent liaison for Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner. Furthermore, if you have any issues or concerns, we are accepting appointments only, and our community office number is 718-538-2000. Thank you.

- **Honorable State Senator Gustavo Rivera District #33**
- **Director Of Community Affairs Francisco Aquino Ramirez**
- **By appointment only:2432 Grand Concourse, 5th Floor Suite 506**
- **718-933-2034 / Aquino@nysenate.gov**
- Reports: Hello, Ken Brown, Dr. Bola, and the community board members. Our office wanted to share condolences with the families of the two officers that were lost after the domestic dispute. Last week, the senator was present at the 11-month-old baby shot on Valentine's Avenue. If you have any questions or issues, please reach out to our office.

- **Honorable Jose Marco Serrano, New York State Senator District #29**
- **Liaison Terrell Brook**
- Reports: Good evening. My name is Terrell Brooke, and I'm the community liaison for State Senator Jose Serrano. Our Office was deeply saddened about the recent Bronx fire. We want to thank and support the efforts of the first responders, the CB five city agencies, and other elected officials for all the work that you put in to help assist all these families in need. Some genuinely great stuff. And it was great to see the

community band together to help each other out in an awful situation. And a similar point, I'd like to say that Senator Serrano sent a letter to Governor Hochul asking her to extend the eviction moratorium, which recently expired. Our Office recently did an at-home test giveaway to get more than 300 at-home tests to constituents in the district. And if you'd like to get notified about when we'll have the next one, please send us an email, email to Serrano at Add New York senate.gov, And we will put you on the mailing list. The senator recently denounced the violence that we've seen around the city in recent days, and he looks forward to working with his colleagues to ensure everyone in New York City feels safe. He recently secured a 50k or 50,000 for anti-gun violence initial, and his colleagues are currently working on the state budget. And Governor Hochul presented her proposed budget this month, which is a 216 point 3 billion, a record-high amount. And now the governor and the legislature will negotiate, and in April, the Senate and Assembly will vote on the final budget. You can contact the Office at 212-828-5829, and we're currently working remotely, but if you get us, we could set up an office appointment. Also, make sure to put all our information in the chat. Thank you

- **Honorable Brad Lander NYC Comptroller**
 - **1 Centre Street New York NY 10007**
 - **212 669 3916**
 - **Representative is Khadim Niang**
 - Reports: Good evening, everyone. Thank you so much, Dr. Bola. My name is Khadim Niang, the senior communities' liaison, for the new controller Brad Lander. Very happy to be here. I also want to send our deepest sympathies and support to the entire community because of what's happened with the fire, and the recent violence, the controller sends his best regards. For those who are not familiar with the new controller, I will send the information here about basically his biography and what our office will continue to serve New York City. Thank you so much. And I will send put my information here. Have a great night.
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- **Honorable Darcel D. Clark, Bronx District Attorney**
 - **Representative is Eric Sawyers**
 - **Contact: 718-561-9253, sawyerse@bronxda.nyc.gov**
 - Reports: How's everybody this evening? I don't have anything specific to announce or anything of that nature. But I did want to make the people aware of the most recent gun buyback on December 19. I was not able to be present that day. I was already on vacation. But during that gun buyback which was a collaboration with many other people such as the mayor's office and the Bronx rising and others, they were able to take in 70 guns, including a ghost gun, a nine-millimeter pistol, and assault style rifle. But that's thinking about how amazing that is to have that many guns off the streets. I will put the rest of my information in the chat just in case some people might not have it, and I hope everybody's having a great new year. And the DEA, of course, is sending her condolences and support to those affected by the fire.

- **Committee Reports.**

- **Jerome Avenue Oversight:** Chairwoman Cheryl Westbrook

Reports: Good evening. The most significant report is a walk that I took with Sally Smith, who took me on a walking tour of our community board. Miss Sally Smith is a wealth of information. She wanted to point out every infraction in our work to me, and she's so knowledgeable. I was able to take pictures so that those areas which need special attention especially in reference to sidewalk tables and sanitation. It wasn't an official meeting, but she did call me several times to set up a walk with me. And it was highly successful. I saw things that I had not seen before my eyes were opened. And hopefully, Miss Smith be a contributing member to Jerome Avenue Committee. Thank you.

- **Economic Development:** Chairman Angel Caballero

- Reports: Good evening, everyone. The BJT Bronx Merchant association is still looking for a program manager for neighborhood 360. We are in the last year of our neighborhood 360 grant. Still, we continue working with the consultant for a BID formation piece, which is hopefully one of our primary and essential steps. We are also trying to see if we can turn your insight into our business improvement district for insight. It's a work in progress. We have kind of something that we hired a consultant, and is working very diligently to get in touch with property owners. Next month, I will give you a better update on where we're at. We will be having several merchant and community meetings that are going to be formed to get several merchants and business owners to approve the business improvement district as we go along. We have already on Devaney Park planted the Christmas tree as everybody knows. We had our first tree lighting ceremony in December, which we did and was well attended. The commissioner of Parks was there with us. We had some of our assistant agency representatives that participated, and it made it a fantastic event for our community for Christmas.

- **Immigration Committee:** Chairperson Pooi Stewart

- Reports: Good Evening to all the Board members and communities. I have exciting news for you. If you want to become a Canadian citizen, it is for free right now. And can you just send all the information out this month of the link on how you can get free citizenship from Canada. If anyone has any questions, please ask. You can send the info because I already forwarded to him. Our next immigration meeting for next month will be on February 10, 2022. And at 6pm Thank you.

- **Veterans Committee:** Chairperson Roxanne Gonzalez

- Reports: We went through the Committee meeting of the government's benefits for veterans. Other than that, our next meeting will be on February 8 at Six o'clock. Thank you.

- **Municipal Services:** Co-Chair Lucia Deng

Reports: This is Lucia. Dang, I'm the co-chair. We had a meeting, and we had a productive conversation with some NCOs from the precinct. We talked with them about the persistent double parking and illegal parking issues plaguing our district. And they gave us some feedbacks and are going to do some follow-up. And we also heard from the lovely folks about composting from the botanical garden, and we recommended that they present at tonight's meeting, which they did. I think that's all we had to present. Thanks, everyone.

- **Governing Committee:** Chairperson Belinda Lawrence
- Reports: The governing committee doesn't have any updates currently. Still, to reiterate what Tom had said earlier, we will continue to have virtual meetings until the governor has officially declared that the state of emergency has ended.

- **Housing: Chairman Dr. Bola Omotosho**
 Reports: We have a request from First Union Baptist Church, about the pending construction on 2064 Grand Concourse, and they will be coming to the Committee Meeting next month. They sent a letter to report and, we did receive another request, a letter which I don't know if most of you will remember, Sydney Flores, and he came up with a brilliant idea. They want to have a memorial in front of 333 East 181 Street. During the walkthrough, we found out that there was a basketball court which a section has been closed off for a very long time, relatively long time, and from an attorney to put a request together. Of course, it will be coming before the Housing Committee as well, this is something that will come before the General board as well.

- **Ad Hoc Community Outreach: Chairman Charles Shorter**
- Reports: Good evening. The ad hoc engagement and outreach committee. We're going to be moving forward with the informational news-letter, one-pager for the community. For this to be a success, we need each committee, committee chair, or co-chair to send a quick blurb to me on your presentation. When you have someone present in your committee, who, when, why, where, and their contact information. Email me CharlesWshorter@Gmail.com, and we will include that in the news and get that out to the community. But to be successful, we must have the information from the various committees. Our next meeting will be next Wednesday at 6 pm. Thank you very much.

- ***Adjourned at 8:48 pm.***
The next General Board Meeting will be held on February 23, 2022

The location of the February 2022 meeting will be determined, pending development in the ongoing health crisis.

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