



THE CITY OF NEW YORK

BOROUGH OF THE BRONX

COMMUNITY BOARD #5

Honorable Vanessa Gibson., Bronx Borough President

**Chairperson
Angel Caballero**

**District Manager
Kenneth Brown**

General Board Meeting Minutes

March 22, 2023

Bronx Community Board 5

- **Community Board 5 members in attendance:** B. Akumah, E. Bennett, C. Cudjoe, A. Dejesus, L. Deng, S. Goodson, R. Gonzalez-Jimenez, N. Graham, jr., A. Jackson, B. Lawrence, N. Matthews, T. Mims, B. Moore, Dr. B. Omotosho, J. Parra, F. Ramos-Guareno, B. Richardson, P. Rojas, S. Rudolph, C. Westbrook.

- **Absent/Excused.** E. Acosta, P. Blanco, A. Caballero, J. Frias, J. Gutierrez, M. Heath, E. Herrera, G. Medina, M. Nyang, D. Owens, Rev. R. Perez, J. Pope, L. Reyes, M. Rosado, C. Shorter, C. Veras.

- **Welcome:**
 - Opening prayer by E. Bennett.

- **Quorum:** 7:10PM.

- **Welcome by Nero Graham, Jr., 1st Vice Chair.** Community was informed that the chair, Angel Caballero, is not present due to a family emergency. Mr. Graham invited the community to reach out to their local officials if they have concerns. Agenda will be modified until there is a quorum. Morris Heights Health Center has received a grant to rebuild their health center on 181st Street. Last night was the 46th precinct council meeting.

- **Approval of minutes:** None available.

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- **District Manager’s report.** The Jerome Avenue Revitalization Collaborative hosted a walk-through for the new Community Reinvestment Act officer at Amalgamated Bank along Burnside Avenue on February 13th. Business owners were engaged in conversation. The needs of businesses were discussed and there is an expectation that Amalgamated Bank will deploy resources to meet the business community’s needs. On March 15th there was a re-imagining the Cross-Bronx community engagement virtual session. The community will be engaged in the re-design of the Cross Bronx Expressway. There will be subsequent meetings to gather public input on the redesign. A plan should be made available in approximately 1 year. There is engagement with ‘Sole Wash’ a program in Washington DC that washes sneakers and hosts arts programming. There are conversations leading towards opening a branch in the district.

- **46th Police Precinct report.** The next Precinct Council meeting will be held on April 18th. Officer Watson and Officer Postmonovic. Yesterday was the 46 precinct community council meeting. Inspector was unavailable to come to this meeting.

- **Public Session.**
 - Sallie Smith, resident, spoke in regards to her following concerns: There is a need for an allocated space for bus parking at the Morris Senior Center. The current stop is at the corner of 181st Street and Morris Avenue and this is a hazard. Garbage has been piling up at 2086 Valentine Avenue since Sunday. Mr. Graham said that the Department of Transportation will be asked if a stop can be accommodated
 - Melissa Guzman, representing St. Barnabas Hospital. The Wellness Center is open and has services for the community. These include a Health Plex, which is open Monday-Friday, 6.30-8.30, Monday through Friday, Saturdays 9-4 and Sundays 9-2. The address is: 4507 3rd Avenue. Telephone number is: 718-960-

9245. There are also monthly healthy cooking classes. There is a Ramadan event on April 15th. Classes are \$5 per class. A food pantry is at the same location, first floor. Walk-ins are welcome. Every Thursday 1-4PM.

- Carrie Cuthbertson, President of Morris Bean Garden. She is concerned about the constant gunfire near the garden. This occurred as they were walking home from the 46th precinct meeting. She also distributed flyers for Spring events at the Garden.
- James Hwang. He is the owner of the laundromat that burned down on Grand Concourse 2 weeks ago. Recited incident of the fire. He has lived in the Bronx since 8 years old. Store was owned for 15 years. Landlord has been difficult. Supermarket damaged laundromat. Con Ed rebuilt gas lines. Building was shut down. He informed Con Ed that there were other concerns. Supermarket expanded. Fire was responded quickly, within 4 minutes e-bike fire was doused. (Told that time was limited by Nero Graham and recommended that he share this with the Fire Marshal). He asked that 2 more minutes be afforded him, which was denied. Started to speak asking if he could finish. Was told that he should not do that and if he continued he would be escorted out. Mr. Wong said he would leave.
- Pilar Maschi. City Parks Foundation. The Catalyst program is for the City's most neglected parks. The next park to be added to this program is Echo Richmond Park.
- Odette Wilkins. Presented concerns about 5G towers. Bronx CB 5 is slated to have 20 Link 5G towers installed. 7 of these are scheduled for construction. The comment period ended on March 4, 2023. An extension for comments would have to be requested to the Office of Technology and Innovation. Ms. Williams asked that she present to the Municipal Services' committee in May.

Voting items

- **Presentation by the Parks and Recreation Department. Voting for a Letter of Support for the Jenny Jones playground redesign. \$4.3 million allocated for project.**

Vandalism and noise are concerns. (This was interrupted as Mr. Wong returned. He was told by Mr. Graham to leave. Board members said that this ejection was inappropriate). Only concern was about crossing the street to get to the park on both the Jerome Avenue and Cross-Bronx sides of the park. A safety barrier was proposed to the Department of Transportation by Parks to see if this can be mitigated. A self-closing gate was recommended. This was presented on March 14th. 1st Motion: Cheryl Westbrook. 2nd Motion: Juan Parra. Yes: 16; No: 3; Abstention: 0. The motion passed.

- Announcement that Kathy Speller (a former Board member, had passed away). Her funeral will be held tomorrow.
- **Voting item: removal of Board member, Jaqueline Pope.** 1st Motion: Annette Dejesus. 2nd Motion: Patricia Rojas. Yes: 18; No: 0; Abstention: 0. The motion passed.
- **Voting item: removal of Board member, Griset Medina.** 1st Motion: Annette Dejesus. 2nd Motion: Benjamin Richardson. Yes: 18; No: 0; Abstention: 2. The motion passed.
- **Voting item: removal of Board member, Jose Frias.** 1st Motion: Benjamin Richardson. 2nd Motion: Eloise Bennett. Yes: 18; No: 0; Abstention: 2. The motion passed.
- **Voting item: removal of Board member, Laura Reyes.** 1st Motion: Benjamin Richardson. 2nd Motion: Annette Dejesus. Yes: 19; No: 0; Abstention: 1. The motion passed.
- **Voting item: removal of Board member, Mbaheh Nyang.** 1st Motion: Benjamin Richardson. 2nd Motion: Eloise Bennett. Yes: 15; No: 0; Abstention: 5. The motion passed.
- **Voting item: Bronx Community Board 5 Preliminary Fiscal Year 2024 budget response.** Capital Item # 16 should be removed. Requested item is to have a parcel of land, along 181st Street and Grand Avenue has been acquired and the recommended repair to a retaining wall has been completed. Motion to submit repose. 1st motion: Benjamin Richardson. 2nd motion: Shannon Goodson. Yes: 19; No: 0; Abstention: 5. The motion passed.
- **Public Session:**

- **Elected Officials' reports.**
 - Mayor's Office: Leonardo Coello. A lithium battery law is pending. If there are illegal smoke shops, please report them to the local police precinct, 311 and elected officials.
 - Bronx Borough President: Kenny Agosto.
 - State Senator Robert Jackson: Lucia Bradshaw.
 - State Senator Gustavo Rivera: Tiara Davis.
 - Council Member Oswald Feliz. Nicole Aguila. Restrict sale of lithium batteries bill signed into law this week. It is to regulate the safe sale of e-bike batteries. 718-842-8100-office number. Open 10-4, Monday through Thursday. July-August will have 'health bucks available'.
- **Committee reports:**
 - Housing committee. Nanette Mathews, chair. Report given. Priorities set. Apologized on behalf of the community board. Look to other community board's housing plans. Last meeting March 16th. Considering a Town Hall. Working to develop a 'strategic plan'. Voucher monies at State remain unspent. The next meeting will be on April 18th.
 - Economic Development will meet on meet on March 28th.
 - Health and Human Services committee. Annette Dejesus, chair. Report will be submitted at the next meeting. Next meeting will be on April 5, 2023.
 - Education. No meeting yet. A camera was installed at his school. He implored all to join the committee.
 - Youth committee. Eloise Bennett, chair. Report given. Yankee scholarship eligibility explained. Applications are due to the office on April 21st. Next meeting is on April 5, 2023.
 - Cultural Affairs committee. Patricia Rojas, chair. Report given. Next meeting is on March 28, 2023. Bronx Documentary Center will be presenting on their project: Missing Them. This is about people that have passed due to COVID.

- Immigration committee: March 9th. A proposal for a Town Hall meeting about lithium batteries.
- Veterans' Affairs committee. Juan Parra, chair. March meeting was cancelled due to inclement weather. Next meeting is on April 11, 2023. Recognition was afforded to the former Veterans' chair.
- Municipal committee. Next meeting April 11th. March meeting was cancelled due to inclement weather. All should come to the committee meetings. This is where issues can be more fully discussed. Committee meetings are where issues are more fully explored. That can then be proposed for the General Board meeting. Things may have been difficult tonight.
- Governing Committee. Will meet next on the same date as the Municipal Services meeting.

Board member Shenia Rudolph has long worked on the Yankee scholarship. Bobby Akumah has also worked on this in the past.

The next General Board meeting is on April 26th.

Meeting adjourned.

Submitted by,

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