



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

May 24, 2023

Bronx Community Board 5

Community Board 5 members in attendance: Bobby Akumah; Eloise Bennett; Angel Caballero; Catherine Cudjoe; Annette DeJesus; Shannon Goodson; Roxanna Gonzalez-Jimenez; Michelle Heath; Nanette Mathews; Basil Moore; Benjamin Richardson; Patricia Rojas; Shenia Rudolph; Carlos Veras; Cheryl Westbrook.

Absent/Excused: Lucia Deng; Esmeralda Hernandez; Charles Shorter; Theresa Mims; Juan Parra;

Welcome: Opening prayer by Cheryl Westbrook

Quorum: 6:16pm.

Welcome by Angel Caballero, Chair, Bronx Community Board 5.

Approval of the April 2023 minutes: 1st motion: Patricia Rojas. 2nd motion by Annette DeJesus. A roll call vote was taken. The minutes were approved as submitted. 12: yes; 0 no.

District Manager's report: There are ongoing discussions with Western Governor's University to plan a virtual Town Hall. This university is exclusively on-line. As per a Con Edison resource fair, on April 25th, there is expected to be an average rate hike of 8.7% starting in June through September. The Public Utility Law Project may be able to help those eligible for assistance in lower bills. Their telephone number is: 877-669-2572. Catholic Guardian Services has won a grant to open a Family Enrichment Center in Community Board 5. This will have

BCC Campus * Gould Hall, Room 200 * 2155 University Avenue * Bronx, New York 10453
Telephone (718) 364-2030 * Facsimile (718) 220-8426 * bx05@cb.nyc.gov

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programming and services as directed by the community. On May 11th the Federal Reserve Bank of New York hosted a conference with the Small Business Administration. The SBA has programs that give preferences and resources for minority and women-owned businesses. This includes grants and the potential to apply for no-bid contracts with the Federal government. The Federal Government makes purchase of \$665,000,000 each year. By law, 23% must be set aside for small businesses.

Public Session:

- Sallie Smith. Resident. New buildings that are being constructed is creating debris on the street.
- Melissa Guzman. St. Barnabas' Hospital. Every third Wednesday the St. Barnabas Wellness Center has Wellness meetings every 3rd Wednesday. There are CPR classes that will be held on June 2nd. However, there is no certification for this class. On June 18th a Wellness event will be held and on June 29th a Pride month event will be held.
- Enrique Colon. CASA. On June 5th there will be a meeting in the Bronx of the Rent Guidelines Board. They will be at Hostos College on June 5, 2023. They are considering a 2-5% rent increase.

Voting items:

- **Election:** 1st Vice Chair. Roxana Gonzalez-Jiminez (only candidate). Vote: Yes: 15. No: 0.
- **Vote to remove Board member Dwayne Owens.** 1st motion by Patricia Rojas, 2nd motion by Michelle Heath. Mr. Owens has failed to attend ½ of the General Board meetings of the current season. The vote to remove him as a Board member was: Yes: 15; No: 0.
- **Vote for a letter of support:** BSA waiver for the property at 2386 Jerome Avenue. A waiver will exempt the property from reconstruction so as to comply with zoning requirements for the backyard to be shortened by 6 inches. A motion was presented for a vote affirming the waiver. 1st motion by Patricia Rojas, 2nd motion by Annette Dejesus. Vote was in the affirmative: Yes: 13; Absentions: 2

Elected Official's reports:

- Leonardo Coello, Mayor's Office. The Mayor is piloting a new way to engage the public concerning the budgeting process. From May 10th through June 25th, people can vote on budget priorities. In order to vote on the budget go to: nyc.govpb. For seniors that are interested in employment, they can go to Senior Corps. This is for those 55 years and older for employment help. To be eligible

one must meet the age criteria and be unemployed. To access this resource, call: 212-244-6469, or email at: silvercorpsaging@nyc.gov.

- Kenny Agosto, Borough President Vanessa Gibson (347-213-0357). He wished all a Happy Mother's Day. The Borough President has formed 3 new Task Forces. These are: African Community, Domestic Violence, and HIV. There will be a Task Force formed for maternal health. There has been a total of 547 applications made for Community Board membership.
- Kathleen May-Lamas. Council Member Oswald Feliz. The 6th Annual Night market will be held on May 27th. Attention was called to the Youth Food Advocates. This is a training program for youth that offers a \$500 stipend.
- Sharon Quitisaca, Council Member Pierina Sanchez. The last meeting for the Kingsbridge Armory redesign effort held its last meeting today. Tours of the armory are available through their office on Fridays. On June 2nd a networking event will be held on June 2nd. This will be co-hosted with the Bronx Chamber of Commerce. Also on June 2nd the New York Legal Action Group will be at the Council Member's office. Contact the office to make an appointment. The office number is: 347-590-2874. The Rent Guidelines Board has voted to permit increases in rent-stabilized apartments.
- Sharon Williams. Assembly Member Latoya Joyner. \$8.5 million has been allocated to Sedgewick Houses.
- Tiara Davis. State Senator Gustavo Rivera's office. The Senator has introduced a bill for more prevention overdose centers. The State Senator has allocated: \$15,500,000 for legal help for tenants, \$140,000 to the HOPE program, \$20,000,000 to Bronx institutions, and \$10,500,000 to the Kingsbridge Armory. For anyone that is interested in participating in the Kingsbridge Armory survey, they can call 718-933-2034.
- Vincent Sepulveda (Vsepulveda@nysenate.gov). State Senator Luis Sepulveda. The Senator's office hours are: Monday through Thursday, 10-3pm. The office telephone number is: 718-991-3161.
- Lucia Bradshaw. State Senator Robert Jackson. The State budget will include \$2.63 billion for schools. There will be no tuition increases at SUNY or CUNY. Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) has re-opened. On June 2nd at 133rd Street and Ft. Washington Street there will be an anti-violence event. On June 9th there will be legal assistance for tenant-landlord issues.
- Ricardo Cosme. Bronx District Attorney, Darcel Clark. An anti- gun violence march will be held on June 3rd from 1-4pm.

Committee reports

- Housing committee: Nanette Mathews, chair. The committee met on May 18, 2023 at the Davidson Community Center. An affordable housing agenda was discussed for CB 5 and how jobs for construction can be made available for CB 5 residents from contractors.
- Land Use committee. Angel Caballero, ex officio chair. Chair is presently vacant. The committee met on May 18, 2023 at the Davidson Community Center. A training from the Department of City Planning was made to the committee related to and Use applications and the ULURP (Urban Land Use Review Process).
- Economic Development Committee. Shannon Goodson, chair. The committee met on May 23, 2023 at the Davidson Community Center. Tree planters have been installed at Burnside Avenue and Tremont Avenues.
- Health and Human Services committee. Annette DeJesus, chair. The committee meet on May 3, 2023 at the Davidson Community Center. The committee meets on the 1st Wednesday of each month. Fidelis Care presented on their services and how to deter frauds and scams. Aetna also presented on senior health matters.
- Youth Committee. Eloise Bennett, chair. The committee met on May 3, 2023 at the Davidson Community Center. 5 awardees have been selected for the Yankee scholarships. The awardees will go to Yankee stadium to see a game on May 25, 2023.
- Cultural Affairs. Patricia Rojas, chair. The committee met on May 23, 2023 at the Davidson Community Center. Mind-Builders is accepting applications for their summer 2023 intern program.
- Veterans' Affairs. Juan Parra, chair. The committee met on May 9, 2023 at the Davidson Community Center. Mr. Welby Alcantra, benefits Advisor at the New York State Department of Veterans' Affairs presented. He spoke about the benefits available through his office. These include: Property tax exemptions, the Homes for Veterans program, Restoration of Honor Discharge Upgrade program, and Disability Compensation benefits. The chair of Veterans Affairs represented Community Board 5 at a Civics Engagement Commission training related to Fair Housing on April 26th and an Affordable Housing training on May 2nd. On May 3rd the chair attended the Cinco de Mayo event hosted by the Bronx Borough President. On May 10th the chair of Veterans Affairs attended the Veterans Appreciation luncheon hosted by the Bronx Borough President. The Major Richard Star Act (legislation pending in the US House of Representatives). This act seeks to reconcile payments to veterans through retirement and disability pay. The proposed US Department of Veterans Affairs 'Disability Rating Overhaul', which should include mental health, tinnitus, and sleep apnea.
- Municipal Services. Lucia Deng, chair. The Municipal Services Committee met on May 9, 2023 at the Davidson Community Center. There was a presentation on Green infrastructure. The Washington Bridge reconstruction was discussed. This

was presented by the Department of Transportation and sought the Community Board's feedback. The Department of Transportation also discussed their Loading Zone portal.

Meeting adjourned at: 8:30pm.

The next General Board meeting will be held on June 21, 2023.

Submitted by:

Ken Brown

Ken Brown
District Manager
Bronx Community Board 5
BCC Campus, Gould Residential Hall, Room 200
Bronx, NY 10453
(office) 718-364-2030
(cellular) 646-988-7423
Kennbrown@cb.nyc.gov