

**THE CITY OF NEW YORK**  
**BOROUGH OF THE BRONX**  
**COMMUNITY BOARD 7**



HON. VANESSA L. GIBSON, BOROUGH PRESIDENT   LEURYS ACOSTA, CHAIRPERSON   KARLA CABRERA CARRERA, DISTRICT MANAGER

**VETERANS AFFAIRS & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE**

|                               |                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Chair:</b>                 | <b>Deahna Penn</b>                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Meeting Date:</b>          | <b>September 16, 2026</b>                                                                                                           |
| <b>Meeting Time:</b>          | <b>6:30 PM</b>                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Meeting Location:</b>      | <b><u><a href="#">Bronx Library Center</a></u><br/>310 E Kingsbridge Rd, Bronx, NY 10458</b>                                        |
| <b>Members In Attendance:</b> | <b>✓ Deahna Penn ✓ Alfred Grant ✓ Chad Royer<br/>✓ Craig Rijkaard ✓ Jake Wilson ✓ Jean Hill<br/>✓ Tobie Buford ✓ Yanill Andujar</b> |
| <b>Minutes done by:</b>       | <b>Deahna Penn</b>                                                                                                                  |

**Minutes:**

**I. Guidelines & Code of Conduct: Read by Deahna Penn**

**II. Introductions/Attendance:**

A. Quorum was met: 8 Present; 0 Absent.

**III. Review Of Previous Minutes**

A. The June 17, 2026 meeting minutes were approved; motioned by Chad Royer, seconded by Craig Rijkaard.

**IV. Review From Previous Meeting:**

A. Michelle Velez from the Lehman Prevention Collaborative provided an overview of her campaign to alert the public of outdoor alcohol usage, sharing it with other organizations to assess the awareness of the community.

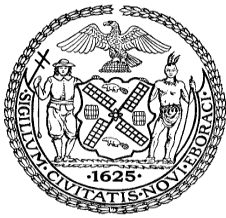
B. Veteran Banner Project discussed.

1. Features Veterans from the Bronx on street poles, running from East Kingsbridge Road to West Kingsbridge Road/West 225th Street.
2. City council members Dinowitz, Sanchez, and Feliz have been contacted; however, further details and input may need to be provided by the Community Board to support the case for such a project as a priority valued by the community.

THIS AGENDA IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. FOR THE MOST UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION, CONTACT US AT:

229-A EAST 204TH STREET ♦ BRONX, NY 10458 ♦ PHONE: (718) 933-5650

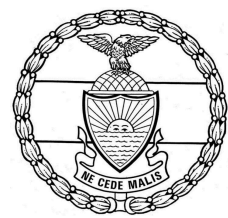
E-MAIL: [KCABRERACARRERA@CB.NYC.GOV](mailto:KCABRERACARRERA@CB.NYC.GOV) ♦ WEBSITE: [NYC.GOV/BRONXCB7](http://NYC.GOV/BRONXCB7)



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C. Alfredo Jones, Chief Operating Officer at North Central Bronx Hospital, provided updates that may affect the surrounding community.

1. With the Correctional Health Services and the Department of Corrections from Rikers Island, there are plans to coordinate Outpost Therapeutic Housing Units (O.T.H.U.). These units are designed for individuals in custody who need medical attention that is only available outside the jail (on floors 14-16 and half of 13).
2. Construction is underway to address aging infrastructure, expand the emergency room and behavioral health department, upgrade elevators, and improve a myriad of other systems vital to its maintenance.

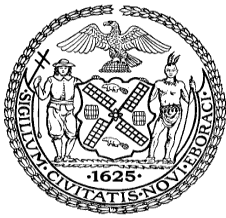
#### **V. New Business**

##### **A. Lehman Prevention Collaborative Presentation, Michelle Velez**

1. Michelle Velez came back to the committee to present updates on the public alcohol awareness campaign. She thanked us for sharing the information and asked for feedback on the surveys.
2. Additionally, LPC is seeking individuals to participate in a paid focus group (\$75.20, with \$5 for follow-up). The purpose of this meeting is to gain insight into the best ways they can develop public service announcements/commercials to advertise their alcohol awareness campaign. LPC is looking for feedback from the community, as opposed to only students.

##### **B. Review of Notification of Adult-Use Cannabis Retail Dispensary License Applications at the following proposed locations:**

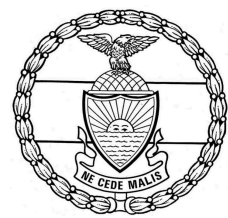
1. Higher Reason L.L.C., 4 West Kingsbridge Road, Bronx, NY 10468.
  - a) Owner Bret Holm appeared in person to represent himself on behalf of his business. Originally from Queens, NY, Bret explained that his attempts to open his business near home in Fort York were difficult, prompting him to relocate his search to Manhattan and now to the Bronx. The challenges included proximity to schools/daycares (500 ft), houses of worship (200 ft), and other cannabis retailers (1,000 ft in NYC), in accordance with the Office of Cannabis Management (OCM). The



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committee voted on a motion to provide a letter of support to Higher Reason L.L.C. at 4 West Kingsbridge Road.

- b) The property owner has offered Bret Holm, as well as another business owner, Unbothered Bud II, to bid on the corner property directly next to the above location: 2 West Kingsbridge Road, Bronx, NY 10468.
- 2. Unbothered Bud II, 2 West Kingsbridge Road, Bronx, NY 10468.
  - a) The owner of Unbothered Budd II was not present at this meeting. The committee voted on a motion to withhold a letter of support for Unbothered Bud II.

#### C. Fiscal Year 2028 CB7 Statement of Needs and Budget Requests

### VI. Motion(s)

A. Chad Royer motioned to send a letter of recommendation to the Office of Cannabis Management for an Adult-Use Cannabis Retail Dispensary License, Higher Reason L.L.C., proposed at 4 West Kingsbridge Road, Bronx, NY 10468 ([bit.ly/4ripiuk](https://bit.ly/4ripiuk)). The motion was seconded by Tobie Buford.

Motion passed: 8 Yes; 0 No; 0 Abstain; 0 Absent

B. Chad Royer motioned to send a letter to the Office of Cannabis Management ***not recommending*** approval of an Adult-Use Cannabis Retail Dispensary License of Unbothered Bud II at 2 West Kingsbridge Road, Bronx, NY 10468 ([bit.ly/3TxllWm](https://bit.ly/3TxllWm)). The motion was seconded by Craig Rijkaard.

Motion passed: 7 Yes; 0 No; 1 Abstain; 0 Absent

### VII. Announcements

A. Helene Hartman-Kutnowsky advocated on behalf of Norwood News. Parks, Recreation, & Cultural Affairs already has a motion on the floor regarding this.

### VIII. Next Meeting Date: October 21, 2026

### IX. Adjournment

A. Motion to adjourn meeting by Chad Royer, seconded by Jean Hill.