



## Public Hearing & Regular Meeting Minutes

January 21, 2026, 6pm

Hope Gardens Older Adult Center (195 Linden Street) and Zoom

Chairperson: Robert Camacho | District Manager: Celestina León

**Meeting Start: 6:04pm**

### Public Hearing

- 1) **Anneliese Zausner-Mannes, Program Director, and John Martin, Bushwick Store Manager, Big Reuse** – providing an overview of the organization’s services and information about the new location in Bushwick.

#### Big Reuse’s Mission & Background

Big Reuse is an environmental nonprofit based in Gowanus, Brooklyn, operating out of a warehouse formerly occupied by ShopRite.

- Their mission is to support and build community-based initiatives focused on minimizing waste and strengthening local resilience against climate change.
- Activities include street tree care events and community composting.

#### 2025 Impact in NYC

In 2025, the organization supported 128 neighborhoods.

- A PDF map (shared with the board) detailed their activity by district.
- Big Reuse is opening a second location in Bushwick to broaden their reach.

#### Programs & Services

##### a) Tree Care / Tree Team

- Street tree care, planting, and affordable tree guards (collaboration with Council Member Lincoln Restler).
- Tree guards are available for purchase at \$375, with a DIY setup and toolkits for rent.
- Ongoing workshops in Manhattan, Brooklyn, the Bronx, and Queens.
- First season of tree planting with a DEC grant will start in Brooklyn (Navy Yard and Cypress Hills).

##### b) Community Composting

- Focus on community garden composting and curbside composting outreach.
- In 2025, installed 40 compost bins citywide and contributed to the master composter program (education for hands-on composting & community building).
- Collaboration with schools, translation of education material into English, Spanish, and Mandarin, plus student versions for engagement.

##### c) Reuse Centers

- Main Gowanus warehouse serves as a reuse center for furniture, home goods, books, clothes, and building materials.
- Discussion of the new Bushwick location to provide similar services but on a smaller scale.

d) Community Education and Volunteering

- Numerous volunteer events citywide, engaging youth, DOE schools, and sustainability specialists.
- Emphasis on community education as a way to promote resilience.

**Bushwick Store Details**

The Bushwick reuse center is located at 378 Troutman Street.

- It will offer home goods, books, and clothes (no furniture donations at opening).
- Expected to open in February.
- Aimed at foundation-building and becoming a resource for Bushwick.
- The space will be smaller than Gowanus, focusing on local engagement.

**Community Impact Data**

- In 2025, Gowanus diverted 150,000+ home goods, nearly 80,000 pieces of clothing, nearly 11,000 pieces of furniture, 5,000+ building materials, and over 54,000 books from landfill.
- Youth engagement, large-scale composting site openings, and new site in Central Park announced.

**Q&A/Discussion**

**Question about Large Item Donations and Pickups**

Lolita Member (Business owner in Bushwick)

Question: “If you want to make a large item donation, like furniture, appliances to Gowanus, do you do pickups for that?”

**Response:** John Martin (Bushwick Store Manager)

Sometimes. They only have one truck, which is often fully booked. While pickups are possible, they can only accommodate some larger item pickups due to resource constraints, and there may be a wait list. Bringing items directly to Gowanus is preferred and always appreciated. For multiple large items, donors should reach out through the donation page and Big Reuse will try to accommodate if possible.

**Question about Store Hours**

Nancy Keith (CB4 member)

Question: “I’m just curious what your hours are for dropping in for like, if you were customer and wanted to get some of the secondhand items, is it Monday through Friday or every day of the week?”

**Response:** John Martin

The exact hours are not finalized, but they are considering 11 AM to 7 PM, possibly extending hours. The store will likely be open every day of the week. Final scheduling will be determined soon.

### **Question about Expanding the Tree Guard Program**

Zachary Hendrickson (CB4 member)

Question: "...with the tree guard program that you all have, my understanding is that's like currently limited to a certain council district or generally. So with you all coming into Bushwick, I know that, like, there are a lot of street trees in the neighborhood that don't have tree guards... are there any thoughts or conversations about expanding, like some of your other offerings... to make those more accessible?"

#### **Response:**

John Martin: Stated that while he couldn't address the program's expansion directly, the team is in ongoing conversations about the issue; presence alone can help with outreach and impact; the Bushwick store will not run explicit compost or street tree work out of the space, but having a store and organizational presence in Bushwick is expected to make a positive difference, even if not all services are offered immediately.

Anneliese Zausner-Mannes: Expanded on efforts to spread the program, noting current funding covers 13 council districts and there was recent expansion thanks to a DEC grant, allowing 50 guards with youth anywhere in the city, especially in disadvantaged communities. They are actively looking for more opportunities and funding to broaden the reach. Anneliese also encouraged community members to reach out if interested in partnering or advocating for more offerings.

### **Clarification about "DEC"**

Robert Camacho (Board Chair)

Question: "I just want you what is DEC? Please."

Response: Anneliese Zausner-Mannes

DEC stands for the Department of Environmental Conservation (state agency).

### **Question about Lease Terms for the Bushwick Store**

Celeste (District Manager)

Question: "...I also have a question about the lease terms. How long are you going to be in the space? And do you have an option to renew?"

Response: John Martin

They have a 10-year lease at the Bushwick location, with an option to renew.

### **Question about Hallmarks of a Successful Year One and Community Involvement**

Mike Varley (Community resident)

Question: "In your mind, what are some of the hallmarks of a successful year one for you guys, and what are some of the ways you could see the community interfacing with those?"

**Response:** John Martin

This is regarded as a foundation-building year since it's the organization's first expansion to a second store. Success would look like: strong community connection, the store running smoothly, meaningful partnerships with local neighbors and organizations, becoming a valued community asset, learning and adapting based on community needs, and supporting the neighborhood. John acknowledged there is much learning ahead and a humble approach will be maintained.

### **Suggestion/Advice on Advocacy for Tree Guards**

Stephanie Anderson (CB member)

Question/Comment: Offered advice on how they got tree guards for their block from previous borough president funding and suggested advocacy via council or borough president for such projects.

**Response:** Anneliese Zausner-Mannes

Confirmed ongoing communications with the borough president's office regarding tree guards and supported the advice to use public funds and reach out to both council members and borough president for advocacy. Also shared personal perspective on community involvement and local history.

**Final Remarks**

- Invitation for further questions and direct engagement.
- Encouragement for community partnerships and individual involvement.

**2) Tyler Roosa, Public Warning Program Manager, NYC Emergency Management – providing a winter weather safety presentation.**

**What NYCEM Does**

Small but citywide agency that helps New Yorkers before, during, and after emergencies through:

- Preparedness (planning and education),
- Public information during incidents,
- Support for response and recovery.

**3 Steps to Personal Emergency Preparedness**

**Make a Plan**

- Identify an emergency support network (family, neighbors, caregivers).
- Write down health info, medications, allergies, key phone numbers.
- Include a plan for pets/service animals.
- Know how you would evacuate (apartment, neighborhood, borough) and what transport options you have if subways/buses are down.

**Gather Supplies (Go Bag & Home Kit)**

- Go bag: ID/passport, cash, meds, extra glasses, small first aid kit, basic hygiene items, water, batteries, mask, gloves; pet food/supplies if needed.
- Home supplies: canned food, water, can opener, lantern/flashlight, utensils, warm clothing, blankets.
- Aim to have enough to manage up to 7 days without power, especially in winter.

**Stay Informed – Notify NYC**

- Free, official city alert system for weather, transit, traffic, health, flooding, and major incidents.
- Alerts available via text, email, phone, app, X/Twitter, Facebook and in many languages.

**Notify NYC – How to Sign Up**

- Text: Send NotifyNYC (one word) to 692692, then text your ZIP code(s) one at a time for local alerts.
- Online: [nyc.gov/notify](http://nyc.gov/notify) (best for language choice and customizing alerts).
- Phone: Call 311 and ask to be subscribed.
- App: Download "Notify NYC" from Apple or Google Play.

Strong recommendation for residents in basement apartments to sign up due to flooding risk alerts.

### **Winter Weather Preparedness**

- Winter hazards: extreme cold, snow, ice, freezing rain, leading to power outages, transit disruptions, downed trees, flooding from snowmelt, fire/CO risks.
- Residents should be ready to shelter in place during storms and comply with travel bans when issued.
- “Winterize” your kit with extra blankets, warm clothes, gloves, hats, socks, and a battery-powered radio.

### **Power Outage Guidance (Q&A)**

During community-wide outages, especially in storms:

- Utility providers (e.g., Con Ed) work to restore power quickly, but residents should still report outages directly to the utility.
- Stay away from downed power lines.
- Keep refrigerators/freezers closed to prevent food spoilage.
- Notify NYC will share updates and safety instructions.

### **Space Heater & Fire Safety**

- Use only indoor-approved heating equipment.
- Plug space heaters directly into wall outlets (no extension cords).
- Keep at least 3 feet between heaters and kids, pets, furniture, curtains, and anything flammable.
- Choose units with automatic tip-over shutoff; never dry clothes on a heater.
- Do not overload circuits; ensure working smoke alarms in every room.

## **Q&A/Discussion**

### **Power Outages Affecting the Whole Community During Snowstorms**

Felix Ceballos (CB4 member)

Felix thanked Tyler for the presentation, then asked specifically about snowstorms and community-wide electricity outages:

“When we are talking about snow, especially when we say snow, snow is something very dangerous. I want to know if you can talk a little more about when the electricity [is] going out in the whole community. Thank you.”

#### **Response**

Tyler Roosa (NYCEM)

Key Points in the Answer:

- Utility providers respond quickly, especially in storms
  - When there’s a power outage, particularly during severe weather (e.g., snowstorms where trees can fall on power lines), utility providers (e.g., Con Edison) are out working to fix the issue as quickly as possible.
- Use Notify NYC for awareness and guidance
  - Notify NYC will send alerts about:
    - Power outages in your area.
    - Recommended safety actions during an outage.
    - Residents should report outages directly to their utility

Even if it appears the entire neighborhood is out, residents should still report the outage to their utility provider, not assume it’s already logged:

“We always recommend when, if you sign up for Notify NYC, we’ll tell you when there’s a power outage... But we also always recommend, just in case that utility provider has not responded yet, making sure you call your utility provider to report the outage.”

### **Food safety during outages**

Tyler stressed not opening refrigerators/freezers to keep food from spoiling:

“We also recommend you don’t open your fridges to prevent any food spoilage during that time.”

### **General safety around downed power lines**

Treat all downed or low-hanging lines as dangerous.

After Tyler’s main presentation and Felix’s question, Mr. Camacho (Board Chair) asked generally: “Any other questions?” “Are there any on Zoom?”

There were no further specific questions about the NYCEM presentation.

Mr. Camacho thanked Tyler for the presentation.

## **Guest Speaker: Assemblywoman Maritza Davila**

Spoke during the transition between the public hearing and regular meeting, after returning from Albany.

### **1. Budget & Social Services Priorities**

#### **a. Food Insecurity & Food Stamp Theft**

Working on food insecurity in the state budget.

- Highlighted widespread food stamp (SNAP) theft where recipients lose benefits and cannot recover the stolen funds.
- Supporting legislation carried by Assemblymember Jessica González-Rojas to add security measures to SNAP:
  - All SNAP recipients would get a special card intended to provide at least 90% coverage (reimbursement/protection) in cases of food stamp theft.

#### **b. The “Fiscal Cliff” Bill**

Davila is the sponsor of a “fiscal cliff” bill that:

- Has passed three years in a row in the Legislature.
- Has been approved unanimously by both Democrats and Republicans.

Purpose:

- Study and address why people on public assistance fall back into poverty or lose benefits when their income rises (“falling off the cliff”).
- Requires a bipartisan committee to examine and propose remedies.

Issue:

- The Governor has repeatedly vetoed the bill.
- Davila believes the Governor does not like the committee structure and is resisting being told “how to do this,” but she pledged to keep pushing.

### **2. Immigration & ICE Enforcement**

#### **a. Limits of State vs. Federal Power**

- She stressed that ICE is a federal agency, and the state cannot abolish ICE.

- Personally and politically, she said that if it were up to her and many colleagues, ICE would have been abolished “yesterday.”
- She views ICE as causing fear rather than safety and notes it disproportionately targets communities like hers.

**b. Planned State-Level Protections**

- Recognizes they cannot stop ICE from entering New York, but the state can pass laws to regulate their conduct within NY:
- Unmasking requirement:
  - ICE agents would not be allowed to wear masks when operating in New York (no anonymous raids).

Proof of criminality:

- If ICE claims it is arresting a “criminal,” they must provide proof and proper court/charge documentation.
- The goal is to stop broad sweeps where people (including U.S. citizens) are picked up without cause.
- Noted that over 70 people have died in ICE custody, many due to lack of medical care, including younger people.

**c. Enforcement and Lawsuits**

- In response to questions about enforcement:
- Mentioned that if ICE violates state rules (masking, proof of criminality, etc.), there would be grounds for lawsuits against the federal government.
- The Governor, in her State of the State, referenced including such protections in law to provide legal recourse when people are wrongly detained or harassed.

**d. Fear, Representation & Community Defense**

- Emphasized that fear keeps people from speaking up, including in Congress.
- Praised local Congressional representation (implicitly Rep. Nydia Velázquez and also “our Congresswoman” who “speaks up”).
- Warned that 60 Congressional members are expected to leave, often from fear or frustration.

For New York, she insisted:

Communities will not tolerate masked, aggressive ICE raids:

- “My community will fight... they will stand up on all sides.”
- The state will monitor conditions to prevent abuse locally.

**3. Criminal Justice & Prison Reform**

**a. Elder Parole & Medical Neglect**

- Working on a criminal justice reform package, especially elder parole:
- Concerned that many elderly incarcerated people are dying in prison due to lack of medical attention.

Position:

If someone did not receive a death sentence, they should not be left to die behind bars.

**b. Domestic Violence Legislation**

Drafting legislation focused on domestic violence, especially:

- Repeat offenders (not necessarily first-time offenders, acknowledging that “things happen in life”).

Goal:

Better protect survivors and treat repeat abuse with greater seriousness.

**4. Additional Social Policy & Community Perspective**

**a. Veterans & Returning Service Members**

- In response to a question from Z (board member) about services for returning veterans:
- Acknowledged there is a “slew of services” at the state level for veterans.
- Committed to providing a complete list of programs if residents call her office.

#### **b. Broader Social Services Role**

She is Chair of the Assembly Committee on Social Services, so her portfolio touches:

- Housing support
- Public benefits
- Seniors
- Veterans (coordination with other committees)

#### **5. Tone, Personal Background & Community Message**

Davila framed herself as deeply rooted in Bushwick:

- She and Chair Robert Camacho both grew up in the neighborhood.
- Stressed they’ve seen Bushwick “burn down” and come back.

She emphasized:

- Bushwick is now “the seventh most wonderful place in the world to visit” (citing Vogue).
- They want to maintain current improvements and not “go back in time.”
- The future of the community depends on understanding and empathy between older residents and newer arrivals.

Expressed strong appreciation for CB4 members:

- Thanked them for volunteering and for understanding the community’s history.
- Acknowledged ongoing fights to protect the character and people of the neighborhood.

#### **6. Engagement & Follow-Up**

Encouraged residents to contact her district office for:

- Details about budget items.
- Up-to-date information on ICE-related protections.
- Information on veterans’ services.
- Continue to hold her accountable and work with her on issues like:
- ICE enforcement
- Social services & benefits
- Prison reform
- Domestic violence protections

### **Q&A/Discussion**

#### **1. Question on Taxing the Rich**

Tax on High-Income Earners

Zachary Hendrickson, CB4 Board Member

Zachary thanked the Assemblywoman for her work and asked if she plans to advocate for taxing the rich, specifically:

- A 2% tax on people making over \$1 million/year,
- Estimated to generate about \$4 billion,
- And where she stands on this “big, contentious issue.”

**Response** – Reluctance from Governor, Ongoing Advocacy

Assemblywoman Maritza Davila

She and colleagues have been trying for years to enact higher taxes on the wealthy.

Obstacle: The Governor consistently does not want to do that, especially in an election year.

- She expects there will be an increase in some tax in the budget, but:
- It likely won't be on the rich, and
- It won't be a broad tax on "us" (regular residents) either.
- She suggested it might take the form of a narrower measure, possibly something like a "vaping-type" tax, not yet finalized.
- She offered to provide more specific budget details from her office once things are clearer.

#### **Follow-up comment**

Zachary Hendrickson

He encouraged her to "keep pushing" on taxing the rich, noting "we need it."

- She responded affirmatively that she would continue to push.

## **2. Question on Protecting New Yorkers from ICE / Abolishing ICE**

How to Protect New Yorkers from ICE & Position on Abolishing ICE

Nancy, CB4 Board Member

Nancy thanked the Assemblywoman and asked:

Can you speak more on how you want to protect New Yorkers against ICE? And do you support abolishing ICE?

**Response** – State Limits, Desire to Abolish, and State-Level Protections

Assemblywoman Maritza Davila

#### **On abolishing ICE**

- She stated clearly that, personally and politically, if it were up to her and many colleagues, they would have abolished ICE "yesterday."
- She emphasized that ICE "plays no real role other than fear" in communities like hers.

#### **State vs. federal powers**

- She stressed they are the state legislature; ICE is federal.
- The state cannot abolish ICE but can regulate behavior within New York.

#### **Proposed state-level protections**

- Unmasking requirement:
- ICE agents operating in NY would be required to take off masks—they cannot operate masked and terrorize communities.

#### **Proof-of-criminality requirement:**

If ICE claims to be coming for a "criminal," they must produce proof:

- Documentation that a crime has been committed,
- A warrant or similar legal paper signed by a judge.

She criticized current patterns where ICE claims criminal targets but ends up picking up many non-criminals, including citizens, to meet quotas.

#### **Risk of unrest and community response**

She warned that aggressive ICE tactics will not be tolerated in New York City:

- "My community will fight... they will stand up on all sides."
- She said it's already "coming to a boil" in places like Minnesota, and New York must act proactively.

#### **Role of Congress and fear**

- She pointed out that fear keeps many in Congress from speaking out.
- Noted that around 60 members of Congress are expected to leave, highlighting instability and fear at the federal level.
- Praised local representation (e.g., "our Congresswoman") for speaking up.

## **3. Comment / Praise from District Leader**

Support for Her Work in Albany

Felix Ceballos (CB4 Member, also identified as a district leader)

He thanked Maritza for the information and her work.

- Said he has known her a long time and appreciates her support for the community and her work in Albany.
- Urged everyone to come together to support the community in any way possible.

No direct policy answer was required; it was acknowledgment and appreciation.

#### **4. Question on Enforcement of ICE-Related Laws (Police vs. ICE)**

How Would State Laws Actually Be Enforced Against ICE?

Samuel Hirsh (member of the public)

Samuel referred to what she said about masking and documentation for ICE arrests and asked how enforcement would work:

- What discretion would the state have to enforce these laws if ICE violates them?

He cited a comment by the Governor of Minnesota suggesting that local police technically could arrest ICE agents for breaking state law but chose not to, to avoid a “breach to civil society.”

- Asked whether arresting ICE agents who violate state law is “on the table” in NY, or how she imagines enforcement would work in practice.

**Response** – Lawsuits as Primary Tool; Details to Follow

Assemblywoman Maritza Davila

##### **Primary enforcement mechanism: lawsuits**

- She emphasized that if state laws setting those rules are passed, violations (e.g., wrongful detention, harassment, masked raids) would create grounds for lawsuits against the federal government / ICE.
- Framed people wrongly held or harassed as effectively being “held hostage”, making civil legal action appropriate.
- Governor’s role
- Pointed to the State of the State where the Governor referenced protections.
- Stressed that the Governor must ensure these provisions are in writing to protect innocent people.

##### **On arresting ICE agents**

- She acknowledged this is a tough, complicated situation.
- Did not directly endorse arresting ICE agents with state or local police (as in the Minnesota scenario).
- Instead, she promised to come back with more concrete details and to share the exact legislative language so people can read it for themselves.

##### **Commitment to follow-up**

She told Samuel she would return to the community with the bill text and more detail once available.

#### **5. Question on Veterans’ Services for Returning Service Members**

Support for Veterans Returning Home

Z, CB4 Board Member (on Zoom)

- Thanked the Assemblywoman for coming.
- Asked if her office provides services for veterans who are coming back home after serving and settling back in New York.

**Response** – Many State Services; Office Will Provide Full List

Assemblywoman Maritza Davila

- There are “a slew of services” for veterans at the state level.
- She could not list them all off the top of her head.

- Invited Z or any resident to call her office, promising to provide an entire list of veterans' programs and supports.

## 6. Question on Following Up About Nightlife / Prior Conversation

Contact Person for Prior Nightlife Discussion

Giovanni "Gio" Justiniano, CB4 Board Member (on Zoom)

- Thanked her for coming in person and wished more representatives would do the same.
- Said that as a constituent, he had tried to contact her office about a prior conversation on nightlife/Wyckoff with a business owner concerning nightlife issues.
- Mentioned he had not yet received a response from her office and asked:
  - "Is there someone I can contact for that?"

**Response** – Specific Staff Contacts & Instructions

Assemblywoman Maritza Davila

- Advised him to call her office around 9:30 AM the next morning.
- Named two staff contacts:
  - Joseph Yanis and Debbie Villanueva
- Gave the office phone number: 718-443-1205.

Said if Joseph is not available, Debbie can also schedule a personal meeting with her.

## 7. Zoom Hand-Raise Clarification (No Substantive Question)

Clarification – Borough President's Office Staff on Zoom

Celeste (District Manager) and others

Brief discussion about a hand raised on Zoom (someone from the Borough President's Office).

It was determined they did not have a question at that moment; any questions could be sent via chat for follow-up.

# Regular Meeting

## 1) First Roll Call

**Present:** Isa Abney, Stephanie Anderson, Robert Camacho, Felix Ceballos, Alan Gamboa, Jason Gers, Christopher Graham, Anne Guiney, Zachary Hendrickson, Courtney Henley, Luisa Jose, Nancy Keith, Cindy Lebron, Kristine Malden, Cirilo Nuñez, Shray Richardson, Pablo Rivera, Raul Rubio, Eliseo Ruiz, Josue Salazar, Milagros Sandoval, Annette Spellen, Bee Spiderman, James Steward II, Savannah Thais, Christian C. Tate, Ben Tocker, Linda Whitfield

**Present via a remote waiver:** Andrew Choi, Deborah Hicks, Tanesha Honeygan, Barbara Jackson (sound issues – unable to speak), Virgie Jones, Giovannies Justiniano, Zulma Novoa, Jerry Valentin

**Excused:** Freddy Fowler, Romicka Nichols-Barnes,

**Absent:** Tiany Belliard, Jo-Ena Bennett, Joanna Fuentes-Singh, Elaine Hamilton (informed the district office), Courtney Henley, Tara Jones-Thomas, Alex Móreno, Juan Serra (informed the district office)

**Resigned:** Tevin Campbell (moved out of state), Elvena Davis, and Freddie Mattison

27 board members were in attendance, which constituted quorum.

2) **Acceptance of the Agenda**

Motion: Raul Rubio made a motion to accept the agenda.

Second: Annette Spellman

All in favor, motion carried.

3) **Acceptance of Previous Meeting Minutes**

Motion: James Steward made a motion to accept the previous meeting minutes.

Second: Raul Rubio

All in favor, motion carried.

4) **Parliamentarian's Note – Jo-Ena Bennett**

Ms. Bennett, the Parliamentarian, was not present. The meeting proceeded directly to the 83<sup>rd</sup> Precinct report.

5) **83rd Precinct Report — Deputy Inspector Thomas Maffei, Commanding Officer**

Spoke during the regular meeting to report on 2025 crime stats, recent incidents, and current enforcement focus in Bushwick.

**1. Follow-ups from Prior Meeting**

Deputy Inspector Maffei first addressed outstanding questions from the previous meeting:

**Website issue:**

- The NYPD department website for the 83rd Precinct had not been updated correctly.
- He stated this has been corrected and now shows current information.

**Arrest at a bar/club on Halsey Street:**

- That arrest was done by an outside agency and an outside precinct.
- The 83rd had very limited information.
- It was related to storage of narcotics at the location.
- The location has been sealed and closed and is not currently operating.

**Hydrant condition complaint:**

- There had been a complaint about a condition near a hydrant.
- The precinct initially struggled to find the exact location.
- He stated he now has the complainant's phone number to pinpoint it.
- Officers issued two summonses on that corridor, but he isn't yet sure if they addressed the specific hydrant of concern.

**Broadway & Myrtle narcotics concerns / smoke shop takedown:**

- A smoke shop takedown near Broadway and Myrtle occurred in November;
- It was conducted by the neighboring command (81st Precinct), not the 83rd.

For Broadway & Myrtle narcotics activity, he did a 3-year lookback:

There were 859 (stated as "eighty 591" but contextually ~859) 911 calls related to narcotics at that intersection.

Reasons for persistent activity:

- A transit facility there – some people use narcotics on the transit side.

- A nearby hotel.
- Many 911 calls are anonymous, which severely limits what officers can do.

He encouraged residents:

You can still remain anonymous with the public, but give your info to the NYPD so they can ask follow-up questions and better address the problem.

## **2. 2025 Crime Summary for the 83rd Precinct**

Overall crime:

- 2025 crime was down 8% in the 83rd.
- Transit crime (TD 33 within the precinct) made up only 1% of total crime.
- Domestic violence incidents accounted for about 15% of overall crime.
- Sector David (one of the precinct's sectors) had the most crime, about 34% of the total.

Robbery

- Down 38% in 2025.
- About 30% of robberies involved juveniles (youth-based robberies).
- Robberies are at the lowest level in over a decade.

Assault (Felony Assault)

- Down 7%.
- Most assaults are domestic violence-related.

Burglary

- Down 30%, also the lowest in over a decade.
- Majority are residential burglaries.
- About 15% are commercial burglaries, and 15% involve vehicles (e.g., burglaries from cars/garages).

Grand Larceny (GL)

- Down 18% overall in 2025.
- About half of GLs involved vehicles.
- The most commonly stolen car: Honda.
- The other half were two-wheel devices:
- Mopeds, scooters, Vespas, e-bikes, etc.

He stressed: even with decreases, “once there is one crime, we’ve already failed”; every crime has a victim and the goal is always zero.

## **3. Area of Concern: Grand Larceny (2025 Increase)**

Despite overall decreases, one category went up:

**Grand Larceny (GL)** was up 17% in 2025 (different slice than the GL overall figure above; he was flagging a problem area).

Drivers of this increase:

### **Clubs and bars:**

A lot of unattended property theft (phones, bags put down and left, etc.).

Pickpocketing by organized crews who travel across the city and hit nightlife areas.

### **Cars:**

- Break-ins where people leave valuables visible in cars.
- Nightlife / Club Zone Focus
- Within the 83rd, there are 90 licensed premises (bars/clubs) in just 2 square miles.
- In one concentrated area (around Jefferson to Willoughby; Star, Troutman, Irving, St. Nicholas—sector David), there are:

17 bars and clubs in a few blocks.

This area is driving much of the nightlife-related grand larceny.

**Response / plan:**

Developed a nightlife plan:

- Meetings with establishments:
- Establish contact and shared goals: both the NYPD and businesses want less crime.
- Increased foot posts in the club zone.
- Working to extend foot post hours later into the night to cover closing time (around 4 AM).

**4. Auto Crime & Catalytic Converter Thefts**

Car Break-Ins

“Traditional” car breaks:

- Thieves break windows to steal items left in cars.
- Others simply check car doors and take from unlocked vehicles.

Advice to residents:

- Do not leave valuables (or anything that appears valuable) visible in your car.
- Better yet, do not leave valuables in the car at all.
- Always lock your vehicle, as people regularly check door handles looking for unlocked cars.

Catalytic Converter (cat-con) thefts

- These are carried out by professional crews:
- They come with special tools and equipment.
- Jack up the car and can cut off a catalytic converter in about 90 seconds.
- Very difficult to catch in the act.

Recent enforcement success:

The 83rd arrested two individuals involved in catalytic converter theft about two weeks prior to the meeting.

- They had other catalytic converters in their possession, indicating they do this regularly.
- The suspects are not from the neighborhood.
- The precinct is now tracking and monitoring them and hopes they do not return to the area.

**5. Recent Shooting Incidents**

He provided updates on two notable gun violence incidents:

**Food Bazaar Shooting (Dec 14)**

Status: No arrest yet.

Case is still open and under investigation.

**Stanwix Community Space Shooting (Jan 11)**

Incident: A male was shot once in the right leg at a community space event in a building near 115 Stanwix Street.

Status: No arrest yet; investigation ongoing.

Early findings: Many people who attended the event were not from the neighborhood. Suspects who committed the shooting also appear not to be from the neighborhood.

**Q&A/Community Discussion**

## **Request for Checkpoints in the Community**

Felix Ceballos – CB4 Board Member

Felix said he had encountered a checkpoint earlier that day “after Broadway,” where officers stopped his car. He expressed that this is important for the community because it helps control driving and safety. He then asked: Is there a possibility to have checkpoints in some locations in our area here in Bushwick?

### **Response**

Deputy Inspector Maffei – Commanding Officer, 83rd Precinct (Speaker 16)

The 83rd already does checkpoints regularly within the command.

Checkpoints serve two main purposes:

- To fight crime, and
- To address vehicular accidents and traffic safety.
- Most people who pass through a checkpoint do not receive a summons:
- Often they are given informational flyers and safety education.

A checkpoint doesn’t necessarily mean “something bad happened”; it can also just signal:

- “We’re in the area,”
- Officers are making sure the intersection is safe while they’re there.

## **“What is GLA?” and Broader Concerns about Youth & Parks**

Two-part exchange: a brief clarification request and a longer comment.

(a) Clarification: What is GLA?

Robert Camacho – CB4 Chairperson

After hearing the crime stats, the Chair asked the Deputy Inspector to explain:

“Could you tell me, what is GLA...?”

### **Response**

Deputy Inspector Maffei

GLA stands for Grand Larceny Auto, i.e., stealing a car.

(b) Chair’s broader community comment (no question to NYPD)

After the brief clarification, Chair Camacho transitioned into a broader statement (mainly directed to the board and community, not specifically as a question to the Deputy Inspector):

Robert Camacho

Emphasized that youth and parks policy are connected to crime trends like GLA and shootings.

Noted many local parks are designated “12 and under”, which means:

- Once kids turn 13–18, they are often pushed out of those spaces.
- There are parks that older kids technically could use, but rules and enforcement often limit their access.
- Stressed that most recent shootings citywide are being committed by youth 18 and under.

Argued the community needs to:

- Create programming in parks for teens (13–18),
- Prevent youth from being disenfranchised and pushed into the streets,
- Address the lack of safe, age-appropriate spaces as a prevention strategy against violence and auto theft.

Note: The Deputy Inspector did not give an extended response to this broader policy comment; his direct contribution here was defining GLA. The rest was the Chair framing community priorities for the board.

## **6) Introduction of Elected Officials and Other Representatives**

**Assemblymember Erik Martin Dilan**

Representative: Jackie Reyes, Deputy Chief of Staff  
Office address: 366 Cornelia Street, Brooklyn, NY  
Phone: 718-386-4576

**Assemblymember Maritza Davila**

Assemblywoman Davila spoke but did not recite full office contact info during her earlier remarks. However, when directing a constituent to call, she gave:

Office phone: 718-443-1205

Key staff contacts she named:

Joseph Yanis

Debbie Villanueva

**New York State Senator Julia Salazar**

Representative: Maria Valdes  
Office address: 212 Evergreen Avenue, Brooklyn, NY  
Phone: 718-573-1726

**Council Member Sandy Nurse**

Representative: Fran (staff)  
Office address: 56 Pennsylvania Avenue, Brooklyn, NY  
Phone: 718-642-8664

**Council Member Jennifer Gutiérrez**

Representative: Juan Mayancela (set-up / staff)  
Office address: 244 Union Avenue, Brooklyn, NY  
Phone: 718-963-3141

**Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez**

Representative: Johnathan Betancourt  
Office address: 266 Broadway, Suite 201 (2nd Floor), Brooklyn, NY  
Phone: 718-599-3658

**Kings County District Attorney Eric Gonzalez**

Representative: Jonathan Pomboza  
Office address: 350 Jay Street, Brooklyn, NY  
Phone: 718-250-2340

7) **Committee Reports**

**Civic/Public Safety/Religious + Health/Human Services/Senior  
Citizens/Veterans – Annette Spellén**

**NYC Smoke-Free / Public Health Solutions Presentation**

Guests: Julia Cumberson (Community Engagement Manager, South) and Lila Molina (Youth Engagement Manager), NYC Smoke-Free at Public Health Solutions.

Focus of their work in Brooklyn & Staten Island:

- Reducing tobacco and e-cigarette use, especially among youth.
- Promoting smoke-free housing policies in residential buildings.
- Supporting tobacco-free outdoor spaces for employers and faith-based organizations.

### **Youth Data (NYC 2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey):**

~9,000 public high school students smoke cigarettes.

~32,000 use e-cigarettes/vapes.

### **Youth Engagement – Reality Check Program**

Program teaches youth leadership, public speaking, and civic engagement around tobacco issues.

- Offers opportunities to collaborate with young people from other boroughs and states.

### **Smoke-Free Housing & Tobacco-Free Outdoors**

Initiative to help building owners adopt voluntary smoke-free policies (multi-unit housing).

Separate initiative encourages employers and faith institutions to create tobacco-free outdoor spaces.

### **Committee & Board Concerns Raised**

Marijuana & E-Cigarettes:

- Committee member Pablo Rivera highlighted concerns about increasing marijuana use and vaping THC among teens.
- Presenters acknowledged the issue but explained their program is funded and structured to focus on tobacco products, and that federal research on marijuana is still limited due to recent legalization shifts.

### **Social Media & Marketing:**

Board member Zachary Hendrickson asked about strategies to counter systemic promotion of tobacco and vaping via social media advertising.

Presenters said they face limits on direct legislative advocacy but focus on education and youth empowerment to push back.

### **Outreach & Collaboration Opportunities**

Chair Robert Camacho suggested connecting presenters with:

- Parent coordinators,
- High school superintendents,
- Local CBOs, to expand youth education.

Annette invited NYC Smoke-Free to participate in CB4's annual Health Fair in June.

### **Fire Safety & Recent Bushwick Fires**

Annette reported four recent fires in Bushwick and reminded residents to:

- Check home wiring,
- Not bring e-bikes or their batteries indoors to charge,
- Reduce fire risks in homes and multi-unit buildings.

### **Wyckoff Hospital Community Meeting (Family & Community Advisory Council)**

Annette and board member Luisa attended Wyckoff's monthly community meeting.

- They asked about the previously closed Wyckoff Diabetes Center on Myrtle Avenue; hospital staff cited financial issues for the closure.

Update: Wyckoff now anticipates reopening the Diabetes Center by the end of 2026.

- Annette offered to bring questions or issues about Wyckoff from residents to future meetings and report back via CB4.

## **District Office – Robert Camacho**

### **Board Attendance & Removals**

The District Office Committee reviewed board member attendance.

Recommended removal of two members for chronic absences (3+ excused/unexcused, no improvement after letters and calls):

- Tiany Belliard
- Alex Móreno

The full board later voted to remove both, consistent with the City Charter and CB4’s TNA (time & attendance) standards.

### **Simplified Committee Participation Expectation**

To avoid overburdening members, the committee affirmed that:

Each board member is expected to attend at least one committee meeting plus the full board meeting (not multiple committees) to be considered in good standing.

### **1420 Bushwick Avenue – Building Conditions & Future Use**

The committee discussed serious issues at 1420 Bushwick Ave (CB4’s building), managed by Family Services Network:

- Poor maintenance (heat, electrical problems, pests, overall conditions).
- Very low occupancy despite being a large, city-owned building.

#### **Concerns included:**

- Longstanding lack of a clear, executed plan from the current operator (promised for ~2 years).
- The City’s push for more housing, and the opportunity to consider affordable housing and better community use of underutilized space.

#### **Next steps:**

- Meet with HRA, Family Services Network, elected officials, and CB4 leadership.
- Require Family Services to present a detailed plan for the building’s future at an upcoming committee meeting.
- Commit to sharing updates with the full board and elected officials to ensure transparency and community input.

## **8) Chairperson’s Report**

### **Advocacy on 1420 Bushwick / City-Owned Building**

Reported poor conditions at 1420 Bushwick Avenue (pests, heat, electrical issues, low occupancy) where CB4’s office is located, managed by Family Services Network.

- Met with the CBO and elected officials; wants to explore using the building more fully, including creating affordable housing in unused space.
- Next steps include a tour with HRA and partners and requiring Family Services to present a detailed plan for the building’s future at an upcoming committee meeting.

### **Board Membership & Attendance**

Noted that with term limits, long-time members are cycling off and it's critical to recruit new members who represent all of Bushwick.

- Stressed that this is not Manhattan—there is no 200-person waiting list; community members should apply to CB4.
- Emphasized that Borough Hall will remove appointees with poor attendance if the board doesn't act first; he prefers CB4 to proactively review attendance and recommend removals under the Charter.

### **Transition & Staffing in the District Office**

- Acknowledged the departure of Kimberly (staff), thanked members who came to recognize her last day, and described the work done to transfer her duties cleanly.
- Highlighted the heavy workload now on Celeste and the part-time staffer and asked members to consider helping in the office (especially while hiring is underway).

### **Myrtle–Wyckoff Plaza & Programming Equity**

Raised concerns that Myrtle–Wyckoff Plaza, formally in Queens CB5 but heavily used by Bushwick residents, is being programmed primarily by the Ridgewood BID, due in part to insurance/financial requirements.

- Argued Bushwick CBOs (e.g., RiseBoro) and CB4 should also have access to program and use the plaza, not just Queens entities.
- Questioned why MTA retail space at Myrtle–Wyckoff station remains closed instead of being activated for community-benefiting uses.

### **Support for Churches & Community Institutions**

Expressed concern over churches being priced out or closed, citing Cathedral of Joy shutting down after ~45 years due to rent.

- Attended 83rd Precinct clergy meetings and is seeking ways to connect churches needing space with potential locations, to preserve faith-based and community anchors in Bushwick.

### **Youth, Parks, and Public Safety**

Linked youth involvement in gun violence and auto theft (GLA) to a lack of age-appropriate recreation space.

- Noted many parks are designated “12 and under,” effectively excluding teenagers (13–18) from safe public recreation.
- Called for more programming and access for teens in local parks to prevent them from being pushed into unsafe situations.

### **Human Impact Stories & Call for Solidarity**

Shared a case of two seniors (ages 83 and 84) sleeping in a car after losing their apartment, underscoring the stakes of housing insecurity.

- Repeated a core message: “Talk to each other, not at each other” and insisted he will only support initiatives that benefit the whole community, regardless of whether residents pay \$1 or \$3,000 in rent.

## **9) District Manager’s Report — Celeste León**

### **Staffing & Hiring**

CB4 is hiring an Assistant District Manager.

- Official job notice (with CityJobs link) will be posted once approved by the Borough President's Office.
- Applicants who don't use CityJobs will also have a way to apply directly through the district office.

The office is currently staffed by Celeste (DM) and Adelina (part-time, Mon–Thu 9–4); Fridays Celeste is alone.

- Community members and board members interested in volunteering (phones, basic office support) are invited to contact [bk04@cb.nyc.gov](mailto:bk04@cb.nyc.gov).

### **Remote/Hybrid Meeting Logistics**

There is no dedicated Zoom operator yet; thank-you was given to Christian for helping run Zoom this month.

- Goal: ensure all board members with remote waivers receive panelist invitations consistently and to develop a reliable Zoom process going forward.

### **Board–Office Relationships & Governance**

Celeste expressed concern about a broader citywide trend of growing gaps between some boards and their district offices, and between chairs and district managers, often driven by internal conflict.

- She stressed CB4's strength has been its ability to disagree but still work together for the community and urged the board to protect that culture.

### **Collaboration & Planning with City Agencies**

Met with City Planning (DCP) to discuss:

- District Needs,
- Better coordination on planning,
- Implementation and education around Charter Revision land use amendments.

Raised a concern with DCP leadership after a miscommunicated meeting about those amendments:

- Some boards were invited, CB4 was not, and it was unclear who the intended audience was.
- DCP acknowledged the mistake and committed to more transparent, inclusive engagement going forward.

### **Community & School Partnerships**

- Call with Principal Julia Hines (PS 145) about their school culinary lab as a possible site for intergenerational cooking programs (e.g., youth and older adults together).
- Ongoing coordination with Bushwick Community Partnership (meets 3rd Tuesday, 10–12 at Hope Gardens) on topics like human trafficking awareness, with strong encouragement for members seeking professional development and local coordination to attend.

### **Independent Budget Office (IBO) Engagement**

Met with the Independent Budget Office about how they can better support CB4.

- Celeste suggested IBO should ask the community and board directly what analyses would be most useful, and they are considering outreach/survey options.

### **General Note on Workload & Support**

With staff changes and increased responsibilities, Celeste underscored the need for:

- Board members to participate actively in committees,
- Patience as the office transitions and hires,
- Continued focus on community outcomes rather than internal friction.

## **10) Recommendations**

### **Removal of Two Board Members for Attendance (District Office Committee Recommendation)**

Context:

District Office Committee recommended removal of two members for chronic non-attendance (after letters, calls, and no improvement):

- Tiany Belliard
- Alex Móreno

**Annette Spellen – Motion:** Approve the committee’s recommendation to remove both from the board.

**Second:** Jason Gers

All in favor, motion carried.

## **11) Old Business**

### **Challenge to E-Bike / Cycling Enforcement Resolution Process**

Chair Robert Camacho stated he had submitted a letter to City Council legal and the Brooklyn Borough President’s office challenging the procedural handling of the prior month’s resolution on criminal penalties for cycling/e-biking.

- He argued he attempted to use his authority under Robert’s Rules and the City Charter to “discharge the committee” (stop the committee’s resolution from advancing before a final report) but was ruled out of order by the parliamentarian and not allowed to make the motion.
- He contends the resolution was not community-driven, relying only on internal board input rather than broader public engagement.

### **Board Discussion on Process vs. Substance**

District Manager Celeste emphasized that CB4 traditionally expects external community input (e.g., petitions, outreach) before adopting policy resolutions, and that the prior recommendation shifted that norm.

Board members Zachary Hendrickson and Jason Gers argued that:

- Community boards can proactively take positions (as many boards do),
- Board members are themselves community representatives, and
- Most board actions do not have wide public polling beforehand.

Pablo Rivera noted that some issues (like severe injuries from e-bikes) warrant broader outreach beyond routine practice due to their seriousness.

### **Motion to Table Further Debate on the Floor**

**Cirilo Núñez moved to table** the ongoing process discussion and hold it at a separate, earlier meeting dedicated to board procedures and the e-bike resolution, rather than continuing late into the full board meeting.

**Motion was seconded by Eliseo Ruiz.**

**Opposed** (raised hands; counted by name): James Steward, Nancy Keith, Alan Gamboa, Ben Tocker, Jason Gers, Isa Abney, Christian Tate, Savannah Thais, Giovannies Justiniano, Zachary Hendrickson

**Abstained:** Anne Guiney, Annette Spellen, Tanesha Honeygan  
Motion carried.

## 12) New Business

### **Wyckoff Heights Medical Center – New Services**

Annette Spellen reported that Wyckoff now has:

- A prenatal care unit for newborns and expecting parents, and
- A separate children’s emergency room, providing dedicated pediatric ER services.

### **Hope Gardens / Wavecrest Management Concerns**

Chair Robert Camacho clarified he has no relatives living in Hope Gardens, countering claims of nepotism, but emphasized that Hope Gardens residents are his “Bushwick family.”

- He and Annette Spellen raised serious concerns about Wavecrest Management’s treatment of tenants, including high rents and poor conditions, and called for increased tenant advocacy, oversight, and potential complaints to higher authorities.

### **Arts & Public Space Opportunities for Local Artists**

Zachary Hendrickson announced three time-sensitive opportunities:

- DOT Programming Partners for free programming in plazas/Open Streets (deadline: Jan 30).
- MTA Arts call for art at Broadway Junction (deadline: Feb 8).
- Sanitation Foundation “Art on Trucks” contest to feature art on DSNY trucks (deadline: Feb 8).

## 13) Announcements

### **Bushwick Housing Independence Project (BHIP)**

- Hosting monthly community meetings at 420 Bushwick Ave (3rd floor), last Wednesday of each month, 6–7:30 PM.
- Upcoming focus: understanding rent histories and using them to challenge illegal deregulation/overcharges.
- Contact: 929-234-7358 or [bhiporganized@gmail.com](mailto:bhiporganized@gmail.com).

### **Youth Arts & Education – The Good Good Collective**

- New Bushwick nonprofit offering tuition-free, high-quality arts education (music, theater, dance) for youth; has already served 48 students with 3000+ instructional hours.

- Launching adult music, songwriting, and cumbia classes, with a focus on Latino, Black, and Indigenous culture.
- Flyers are available; classes located near Troutman / Jefferson St. area.

#### **Council Member Jennifer Gutiérrez's Office**

- Offering tax help for forms 210 and 214 (for Social Security, SSI, welfare recipients).
- Continuing mobile office hours at CUFF (2nd Tuesday monthly, 11 AM–2 PM) and Bushwick Library (with FDNY on site for free smoke alarm sign-ups).
- Organizing trash-focused cleanups and will host a DSNY/DOT town hall in March to push for traffic and sanitation improvements.

#### **Congresswoman Nydia Velázquez's Office**

- Warned about the expiration of ACA tax credits, leading to rising premiums; House passed a bill to extend them—awaiting Senate action.
- Pushing provisions in the Housing for the 21st Century Act to support co-ops and keep senior/low-income housing affordable.
- Monitoring risks of government shutdown and speaking out against growing military escalations abroad.

#### **Senator Julia Salazar's Office**

- Highlighted work on prison reform (ending prison violence), and the Maternal Health Dignity and Consent Act (bans non-consensual drug testing except in emergencies).
- Hosting Tenant Support Unit hours first Tuesday of every month, 10:30 AM–12 PM and ongoing Housing Connect help every Tuesday, 11 AM–5 PM at 212 Evergreen Ave.

#### **Council Member Sandy Nurse's Office**

- Free tax clinics at her office Jan 30–Apr 10 (including ITIN applications; warned residents never to pay for ITIN).
- Continuing to loudly oppose ICE abuses and planning a job fair and ICE preparedness town hall (including school family plans).

#### **Local Cleanups & Recreation**

- Council Member Gutiérrez's office joined Clean Bushwick Initiative, removing 500+ lbs. of trash from Maria Hernandez Park; more cleanups are planned.
- Bushwick Sports & Recreation announced winter baseball and soccer training at Progress High School (Tues/Fri evenings, Saturdays noon–4 PM); phone contacts: 347-388-8271 and 718-626-5486.

#### **ICE Protest & Community Mobilization**

Zachary Hendrickson announced a large citywide protest/general strike at Union Square, 4 PM Friday, in solidarity with actions in Minneapolis after the killing of Rene Good by ICE.

- Encouraged Bushwick residents to show up and oppose ICE abuses.

## **14)Second Roll Call**

**Present:** Linda Whitfield, Ben Tocker, Savannah Thais, Christian C. Tate, James Steward II, Bee Spiderman, Juan Serra, Milagros Sandoval, Eliseo Ruiz, Pablo Rivera, Shray Richardson, Cirilo Nuñez, Romicka Nichols-Barnes, Kristine Malden, Cindy Lebron, Nancy Keith, Luisa Jose, Tara Jones-Thomas (did not sign in), Barbara Jackson, Courtney Henley, Zachary Hendrickson, Elaine Hamilton, Anne Guiney, Christopher Graham, Jason Gers, Alan Gamboa, Freddy Fowler, Felix Ceballos, Robert Camacho, Jo-Ena Bennett, Stephanie Anderson, Isa Abney

**Present via a remote waiver:** Jerry Valentin, Zulma Novoa, Giovannies Justiniano, Virgie Jones, Barbara Jackson (sound issues), Tanesha Honeygan, Deborah Hicks

**Excused:** Romicka Nichols-Barnes, Freddy Fowler

**Absent:** Juan Serra, Alex Móreno, Freddie Mattison, Tara Jones-Thomas, Courtney Henley, Elaine Hamilton, Joanna Fuentes-Singh, Jo-Ena Bennett, Tiany Belliard

**Resigned:** Freddie Mattison, Elvena Davis, Tevin Campbell

#### 15) **Adjournment**

Raul Rubio motioned to adjourn. It was seconded by Nancy Keith. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:03pm