



Queens Community Board 13

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Donovan Richards
Borough President

Michael Carlier
Director of Community Boards

Bryan J. Block
Chair

Mark McMillan
District Manager

GENERAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES
February 24, 2025
Zoom Virtual Meeting

Attendance

Present:

Maximus Barton; Corey Bearak; Bryan Block; Ella Caynes; Barbara Clements; Bobbie Cole; Latanya Collins; Sylvia Cothia; Marissa Cronin; Bess DeBetham; James Delaney; Lorraine Gittens-Bridges; Robert Glover; Richard Hellenbrecht; Fay Hill; Leonard Hookum; Bonnie Huie; Mohamood Ishmael; Rhonda Kontner; Sophia Mighty; Laura Morand; Curlene Nelson; Marcia O'Brien; Michael O'Keeffe; Cinnamon Paltoo; David Pecoraro; Latchman Persaud; Sandra Persaud; Nagassar Ramgarib; Anup Ramnauth; Sheila Beverly-Skinner; Ronald Summers; Steven Taylor; Lourdes Villanueva-Hartrick; Pritpal Singh Walia; Jackie Wilson

Absent:

Angela Augugliaro; John Boyd; Kyle Bragg; Delroy Dawkins; Stephanie Delia; Sequoyah Douglas; Charles Farruggia; Vernal Holder; Michael Mallia; Loleta Beckett-Nicholson; Lenroy Pascall

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm by Chair Bryan Block.

Pledge of Allegiance led by Chair Block.

Chair Report

- Lists meetings and events attended since last General Board Meeting.
- Motion to accept by BM David Pecoraro, seconded by BM Richard Hellenbrecht.
 - Unanimous approval.

January General Board Meeting Minutes

- BM Bess DeBetham motion to accept, seconded by BM Corey Bearak.

- Corrections on page 4 – change “prose” to “propose” and add after parks, “, schools.”
- Unanimous approval.

Elected Officials

Nathaniel Hezekiah – **Congressman Gregory Meeks’ Office**
 Georgia Katsalis – **Queens Borough President Donovan Richard’s Office**
 Kevin Morris – **Mayor Eric Adams’ Office**
 Marlon Palacios, Jr. – **Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz’s Office**
 Adjani Pridgeon – **State Senator James Sanders Jr.’s Office**
 Irene Cheung – **Assembly Member Edward Braunstein’s Office**
 Elizabeth Sowunmi – **Assembly Member Alicia Hyndman’s Office**
 Alisha Alli – **Assembly Member Khaleel Anderson’s Office**
 Imade Omozore – **Assembly Member Clyde Vanel’s Office**
 Daniel Sparrow – **Council Member Linda Lee’s Office**
 Norman Jones – **Council Member Selvena Brooks-Powers’ Office**

Captain Douglas Moodie, C.O., 105 Precinct:

- Crime is down 24% year over year.
 - Robberies and GLAs (tires and rims) are up.
- Response times:
 - 35 minutes for 311 calls.
 - 5:45 for 911 calls.
- The smoke shop ZaZa on Linden Boulevard has been shut down.

Captain Jean Sony Beauvoir, C.O., 116 Precinct:

- Crime is down 26% in the past 28 days –
 - GLAs – Honda CRV, Accord and Infiniti are targets.
 - Thieves track your car by putting something in the window.
- They are working on the Wi-Fi in the community room.
- A truck operation was done the previous week on Brookville Boulevard by Rockaway Boulevard in an area that was overwhelmed with illegal truck parking.
- Use of cones to save parking is not permissible on city streets; NYPD will remove when found.

District Manager Report (written)

- Motion to accept by BM Corey Bearak, seconded by BM Leonard Hookum.
 - Unanimous approval.

Queens District Attorney Presentation on Illegal Smoke Shops

- Shanan LaCorte, Bureau Chief
 - Director of Intelligence; deals with illegal vans and brick-and-mortar shops.

- When cannabis was legalized by the state legislature, there no mechanism for punishment for unlicensed selling.
- Present tools for law enforcement are NYC Sheriff and NYPD.
- Neon signs and advertising indicate illegal selling of cannabis.
- Licensed dispensary:
 - clear marketing with a NYS Logo and QR code.
 - not within 500 feet of a school and 250 feet of a house of worship.
- Initial enforcement against illegal shops used eviction proceedings against both landlord and tenant:
 - However, this was a slow process.
 - Presently, the DA's office works with NYC Sheriff to padlock locations after an inspection.
- Send information to the Queens District Attorney's Office about suspected illegal smoke shops to: cannabistips@queensda.org
 - Include address of the location.
 - What is suspected?
- Closing a location is a lengthy via due process in the courts.
- Smoking cannabis on the streets is legal.
- NYC Sheriff is given legal authority to padlock illegal smoke shop locations:
 - There are legal challenges to this process.
 - Nuisance abatements (NYPD),
 - Buildings cannot be closed or confiscated unless FDNY and DOB are involved in the process.
 - This requires a lot of time and resources.
 - There are many membership clubs at illegal locations making enforcement more difficult.
- There are consequences to landlords who knowingly lease to illegal smoke shop lessees:
 - They are liable for civil fines and penalties
 - The DA gives "notice"
 - It is hard to prove "knowingly"
 - For the most part, landlords are cooperative
 - Landlord has five days to initiate eviction proceedings once notice is given
 - Landlord-tenant court can take 3-9 months before removal possible
- Sheriff action: NYPD, DOB, Marshals, QDA
 - A plethora of penalties and fines levied.
- Information from the community helps.
 - Do not try to do anything on your own.

Roll Call: 36 members present, 11 absent.

Committee Reports

Public Safety Committee – Committee Chair Michael O'Keefe:

- Both precinct commanders have been very accessible to the community.
- Lists liquor license applicants and findings.

Youth, Education, Libraries & Special Needs Committee – Committee Vice Chair Lorraine Gittens-Bridges

- Dr. Asa Johnson, founding principal of HBCU High School – graduates get an Associate's degree and admission to Delaware State University.
- Discussion on the importance of community engagement with local schools.
- Meeting before next committee meeting to write a resolution that addresses "weed shops" and proximity to schools, libraries and parks to support bill on this.

Transportation Committee – Committee Vice Chair Sophia Mighty

- Held a hearing on the first application for sidewalk dining – approved by the committee.
- DOT Presentation on Hillside Avenue Improvement:
 - A change to the bus lanes.

Health & Hospitals Committee – Committee Bonnie Huie:

- A call for more attendance.
- Presentation on cardiovascular disease in women:
 - Different because of estrogen.
 - More prone after menopause.
 - Gender bias in diagnosis.

Economic Development Committee – Committee Chair Sophia Mighty:

- James Trent spoke about Bellerose Business Development:
 - The challenges of getting funding.
 - Working with elected officials to build business areas.
 - Residential civic associations should organize to get the business community together.
- James Trent is presently Chair of the Board for the Queens Farm Museum.

Parks & Environment Committee – Committee Chair Fay Hill

- Jess Turner spoke about coastal resiliency in Jamaica Bay.
- Parks NYC spoke about upcoming tree planting to occur in Queens Village.
- A report on a February 6 meeting at Robert Ross Johnson Center by NYC Parks Commissioner on parks allocations from the city.

- A venue found for dog walk – 147 Avenue across from the basketball courts at Springfield Park.

Public Speaking

- BM David Pecoraro: advocates for proposed state legislation keeping cannabis shops away from certain areas:
 - He states he spoke to legislators in Albany and the two bills proposed are not dead.
- Charline Ogbeni is a proud NICU mom and Owner of Supporting Our Mothers Initiative, LLC, a company created to address the needs of birthing individuals in Queens, NY and beyond.

The meeting was adjourned @ 9:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark McMillan
District Manager
Queens Community Board 13