



*Donovan Richards  
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# Community Board No. 2

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*Anatole Ashraf*

*Chairperson*

*Debra Markell Kleinert*

*District Manager*

January 22, 2026

## Environment, Parks, and Recreation Committee Meeting Minutes

**This meeting was teleconferenced using zoom**

### **Committee Members Present:**

Carlos Castell Croke

Lauren Springer

Alaina Van Slooten

### **Committee Members Absent:**

Nellie Afshar

Alexandra Gonzalez

Benjamin Lucas

Andie Olivares

Jolly Patel

### **Committee Public Members Present:**

Kevin Davis

### **Guests:**

Natalie Russianoff, Beyond Plastics

Victoria Augustine, Beyond Plastics

Carlos Castell Croke, Chair of the Environment, Parks, and Recreation Committee, welcomed everyone to the committee meeting.

### **Beyond Plastics**

Natalie Russianoff and Victoria Augustine of Beyond Plastics gave a PowerPoint presentation that discussed the Packaging Reduction and Recycling Infrastructure Act, a bill that is in the New York State Legislature. The organization is seeking a resolution from Queens Community Board 2 to encourage its New York State elected officials to continue supporting the bill. They shared the following information:

- In the Senate, the bill is S1464, and in the Assembly, it is A1749.
- If passed, the legislation would reduce plastic packaging by 30 percent over 12 years.
- Companies subject to the bill would pay fees to cover the waste management costs of their packaging, saving taxpayers money.
- The bill would not impact small businesses. Companies exempt include those that gross less than \$5 million in annual sales, as well as companies that manufacture vaccines and medical foods.
- The proposed legislation would ban 17 of the most toxic chemicals currently used in packaging.
- The bill is viewed favorably by New Yorkers, environmental groups, and elected officials. According to a 2025 Siena poll, 73 percent of New Yorkers support the bill.
- The legislation was passed by the New York State Senate in 2024 and 2025 but was not called up for a vote in the Assembly.
- Beyond Plastics will host a lobby day on February 9, 2026, in support of the bill. Transportation to Albany, including buses and car rides, will be provided.

### **Committee Updates**

- Carlos Castell Croke, Chair of the Committee, shared a Google document outlining state-wide environment-related legislation that the committee could encourage Queens Community Board 2's elected officials to support.
- Alaina Van Slooten shared that the committee should consider monitoring the Walk to Parks initiative, as it is relevant to the Environment Committee.

A motion to adjourn was made by Alaina Van Slooten, and it was seconded by Carlos Castell Croke. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Rafael Nava