



Community Board No. 5

Borough of Queens
Ridgewood, Maspeth, Middle Village and Glendale
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Walter H. Sanchez
Chairperson

Gary Giordano
District Manager

Minutes of Queens Community Board 5 Public Meeting of May 13, 2026

Board Members Present

Vincent Arcuri, Jr.; Carol Benovic-Bradley; Eric Butkiewicz; Rachel Caracci; Deepak Chaudhari; Elizabeth Chen; Walter E. Clayton, Jr.; Patricia Crowley; Dmytro Fedkowskyj; Steven Fiedler; Melissa Garcia; Mati Gonzalez; Carmel Gorton; Gail Grabowski; Fred T. Haller; Daniel Heredia; Christopher F. Herman; Maryann Lattanzio; Diego Leclery; Edward Lettau; Matthew Mahoney; Edgar Mantel; Kathy Masi; Naho Matsuzawa; Charles Ober; Michael O'Kane; Donald Passantino; Valeria Paz Reyes; Kenneth Rehberger; Theodore Renz; Luis Rodriguez; Walter H. Sanchez; Lily Scarabino; Katarzyna Syta; Barbara Toscano; Patrick Trinchese; Sebastian Vivas; Brandon Zwagerman

Board Members Absent

Jessica Boiardi; Emily Coyne; Dorie Figliola; John Gentry Fitch; Fred Hoefflerle; Paul A. Kerzner; Huaman Maura; Margaret O'Kane; Alex Ritter-Jung; Ravahn Rodriguez; Enriquez Rosa; Lee S. Rottenberg

Elected Officials and Staff

Clare Collins – Queens Borough President Donovan Richards
Kate Boehme – Queens County District Attorney Melinda Katz
James Mongeluzo – NYC Comptroller Mark Levine
Muhammad Hodzik – NYC Council Member Phil Wong, 30th CD
Kimberly Vega – NYC Council Member Jennifer Gutierrez, 34th CD
John D'Angelo – NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr., 15th SD
Irene Stathatos – NYS Senator Michael Gianaris, 12th SD
Miles Ashton – NYS Assembly Member Steven Raga, 30th AD
Carlos Munoz – NYS Assembly Member Claire Valdez, 37th AD
Rohanee Gocool – NYS Assembly Member Jenifer Rajkumar, 38th AD

Staff

Gary Giordano, District Manager-QCB5

Guests

Joseph Ottomanelli – NYC Department of Sanitation
Christina Perdos-Vuollo – Landscape & Natural Areas Coordinator, Forest Park & Highland Park
Portia Dyrenforth – Forest Park & Highland Park Administrator, NYC Parks / Forest Park Trust
Gabriel Salnica – JPCA Board Member

Board Chairperson Walter Sanchez welcomed everyone to the Board Meeting and called the meeting to order at 7:33pm with the Salute to the Flag. Mr. Sanchez then announced that the evening would begin with two presentations.

PRESENTATION RE: RESIDENTIAL CONTAINERIZATION MANDATE

New York City Department of Sanitation

Joseph Ottomanelli, representing the New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY), provided an update on the residential containerization mandate. He explained that, beginning June 1, 2026, residents of buildings with one to nine units would be required to place their trash in an official NYC bin.

Mr. Ottomanelli stated that the bins were available for purchase at Home Depot or through several delivery applications, including Uber Eats, Instacart, and DoorDash. He noted that Home Depot was actively restocking the bins and encouraged anyone who had encountered low inventory to continue monitoring availability. He clarified that the official bin was strictly required for garbage and was not required for recycling bins.

He further explained that residents enrolled in the STAR program could apply for reimbursement through nyc.gov/freetrashbin, and that anyone experiencing delivery issues from the DSNY website prior to the program being serviced exclusively through Home Depot was encouraged to contact the vendor directly at info@otto-usa.com.

PRESENTATION RE: VOLUNTEER STEWARDSHIP OPPORTUNITIES – FOREST AND HIGHLAND PARK

Forest Park & Highland Park / Forest Park Trust

Christina Perdos-Vuollo, Landscape and Natural Areas Coordinator for Forest Park and Highland Park, presented an overview of the landscape program and ongoing stewardship opportunities. She noted that the presentation was co-prepared by Jillian May Prago, the volunteer coordinator funded through the Forest Park Trust.

Ms. Perdos-Vuollo explained that Forest and Highland Park are managed by Borough Operations in Districts 16 and 5A and are considered sister parks, with Forest Park comprising 543 acres and Highland Park 198 acres. Together, the administration manages playgrounds, historic buildings and structures, wetlands including Strack Pond, the Ridgewood Reservoir, the Bandshell, and miles of trails. Forest Park is also home to the Queens operational headquarters. She noted that the Forest Park Trust, formed in 1998, is the parks' longest-standing nonprofit partner and supports community programming, applies for grants, and helps fund additional seasonal employees.

On horticulture management, she reported that there are more than 98 formal garden beds throughout the park, including bulb and annual planting, perennials, and shrubs. The team maintains the 9/11 memorial beds at Dry Harbor Playground and by the Bandshell and works closely with forestry on the memorial oaks, one area of which is now listed among the Great Trees of New York City.

On natural areas management, she stated that the two parks contain more than 430 acres of Forever Wild natural area. Work includes ecological restoration, invasive species management, and plantings where

possible. There are more than 12 miles of trails, including a four-mile crushed-stone bridle path, along with ongoing drainage and erosion control, corridor clearing, and social trail closures.

She described the current team as consisting of one full-time parks gardener, one City Park Worker for natural areas, the landscape and natural areas coordinator, and a part-time volunteer coordinator, plus two staff in the Highland Park Community Garden, with additional support from the Queens Greenhouse, Parks District staff, the Natural Resources Group, and other partners. She added that the Trust was a sub awardee of a three-year DEC core grant that should allow the hiring of a full-time crew leader and two natural areas crew members.

Ms. Perdos-Vuollo summarized the 2025 volunteer program, reporting 92 volunteer events, more than 1,234 volunteers, and over 2,709 total volunteer hours across the two parks. She explained that public events are posted on the NYC Parks website and cross-listed on the Forest Park Trust website (<https://forestparktrust.org/>), and that a volunteer form for private events is available at <https://forestparktrust.org/volunteer-form>. Volunteer tasks include invasive species removal, trail maintenance, young tree care, horticulture help, and planting. She highlighted the Restoration Fridays series, which alternates between Forest Park and Highland Park, and began in 2023 in Forest Park and in 2024 in Highland Park, as well as the Parks Department's Super Stewards program, which trains volunteers and permits them to work independently.

She also reviewed a volunteer survey, noting that all respondents reported feeling prepared for events, all reported learning something new, and a majority reported sharing what they learned. She shared positive feedback from a volunteer and reviewed upcoming events, including Restoration Fridays at Highland Park (the next on May 29, generally 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.), a weekend vernal pool restoration on Saturday, June 20 meeting at the Vermont parking lot, and a Celebrate the Garden Day at the Highland Park Community Garden.

During the question-and-answer period, Steve Fiedler, Parks Committee Chairperson, confirmed that residents are permitted to enter the park independently. Fred Haller raised concerns about dead trees he had seen fallen in the natural area. Ms. Perdos-Vuollo explained that, in the Forever Wild natural areas, fallen trees that do not block a trail are left to return to soil, but that the resulting canopy gaps can invite invasive species, so staff weed and replant in those areas to encourage native regeneration.

Vincent Arcuri asked about the feasibility of a hiking trail along the terminal moraine from Highland through Forest Park. Portia Dyrenforth, Forest Park and Highland Park Administrator, responded that she had considered the idea and toured the area with Steve Fiedler, noting that while a trail could be challenging due to private property and cemeteries, she would ideally like the sister parks connected, at minimum by a bikeway or greenway.

Brandon Zwagerman asked about the division of work between the Trust, Parks, and other groups at Highland Park. The presenters explained that NYC H2O has been especially helpful removing phragmites in the reservoir basins, working on the causeways in coordination with Parks staff, and obtaining a grant for tree planting along Highland Boulevard and Vermont Place, while generally remaining within the reservoir. Steve Fiedler asked about the status of the approximately \$5.5 million effort to remove invasive species in the reservoir basins. The presenters reported that the contract, run through the Parks Department's Environmental Planning Natural Resources Group, is largely complete on the two outer basins, with trees planted and now under their guarantee period and only spot work remaining to close

out the contract. It was further noted that the building on top of Basin 2 is complete and that there is currently no funding for additional capital projects there, including a restroom at Upper Highland.

Mr. Sanchez thanked Portia Dyrenforth and Christina Perdos-Vuollo for their positive efforts and said that the two parks look much better than they did ten years ago.

PUBLIC FORUM

Gareth Solan, representing Nowadays at 56-06 Cooper Avenue, provided the venue's annual update. He noted that Nowadays has come to speak at a Community Board 5 meeting every year since its founding in 2014, that it renewed its lease at the beginning of the prior year, and that it is now in its 12th year of business in Ridgewood. He reported that the venue had recently opened its backyard for the summer season, with programming over the next four to five months including artist markets, record fairs, wine festivals, a weekly Sunday dance party, a Pride celebration with the public arts organization Creative Time, fundraising events with community groups, World Cup screenings in June and July, and weddings.

In response to a question from the Chairperson about security and crowd management following a large gathering on election night, Mr. Solan stated that the venue operates with an experienced security team accustomed to large crowds, that it regularly hosts comparable numbers on summer Sunday afternoons, and that it can accommodate roughly 800 to 1,000 people with live music and DJs. Daniel Heredia asked whether trucking and excavation work at the Wolff-Alport Superfund site had affected the business. Mr. Solan responded that the venue had addressed those concerns at the outset in 2013–2014, that EPA testing at that time showed radiation levels comparable to other streets in the borough, and that recent excavation appeared to be wrapping up, with the site likely to be developed for a non-residential or manufacturing use.

Kyle Beauchamp, a resident, requested that the lights at Frank Principe Park (also known as Maurice Park) be reprogrammed to stay on until at least 10:00 p.m. for pickleball, basketball, and soccer players. He stated that the basketball court lights currently go off at 8:35 p.m. and that keeping the lights on later, together with positive activity in the evening, would make the park feel safer and align with the park's posted closing time of 10:00 p.m. Parks Committee Chairperson Steve Fiedler noted that the basketball court lights turn off at 8:35 p.m., the pickleball court lights turn on and off later, and that the tennis and soccer areas do not have lights, and recommended the matter be referred to the Parks Committee.

Duncan Ballantine, representing Ridgewood Rides at 284 Onderdonk Avenue, provided cycling and advocacy updates. He described Ridgewood Rides as a neighborhood cycling group that hosts community rides and advocates for bike infrastructure and pedestrian and bike safety. He announced a community ride on Saturday, May 16, meeting at Rosemary's Playground at 10:00 a.m. and traveling to the Brooklyn Bike Jumble; a 4.3-mile neighborhood ride with the PS 290Q PTA on Saturday, May 30, with a bike wash and light tune-up at Grover Cleveland; a community bike-based scavenger hunt on June 6 in partnership with Ridgewood Commons, with prizes contributed by Joy Ride Bikes; and a helmet giveaway on June 27 at Juniper Valley Park in partnership with Council Member Phil Wong and DOT, with bike washing and maintenance for children. He also reported on business outreach near Korean Square along Forest Avenue, Grandview Avenue, and Palmetto Street regarding a potential pedestrianized plaza, noting that eight businesses had expressed support.

Charlene Mitchell, Executive Director of the Birth by Queens Foundation, presented on the development of the first birth center in Queens. She explained that a birth center is a place to give birth focused on the midwifery care model, offering greater attention and continuity of care than a typical short appointment. She noted that this is particularly important for families in Middle Village and across Queens, where many families are foreign-born and midwifery is the standard of care in many of their home countries. She emphasized that the model is cost-effective and safe and serves low-intervention, low-risk patients, noting that approximately 90% of pregnancies are low-risk while the roughly 10% considered high-risk should be in a hospital setting.

Ms. Mitchell described the Foundation as a conception-to-college model that offers programs including prenatal education and childbirth education, as well as a grandparents program and a partners program in development. She stated that the organization is a 501(c)(3) that received its status in December, that opening a center is estimated to cost between \$5 million and \$8 million, and that the center would accept insurance and Medicaid. In response to questions, she clarified that the organization is still in a development phase and must be located within 60 minutes of a hospital, and she distinguished the clinical midwifery model—in which a midwife delivers the baby—from a doula program such as the one at Wyckoff Heights Medical Center, in which doulas provide non-clinical support, education, and guidance. She requested a letter of support from the Board.

Jonathan Rinaldi, a Middle Village resident who had signed up to speak on land use, instead addressed civic engagement. He observed that the district has contested primaries in Congress, the State Senate, and the Assembly, but that there were zero debates scheduled. He urged the Board and community members to contact local elected officials and demand debates, characterizing it as a civic responsibility, and referenced an earlier coalition formed around a battery plant.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Walter Sanchez

Minutes

Chairperson Walter Sanchez asked the Board to review the minutes of the April 8th meeting. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Kathy Masi and seconded by Walter Clayton. Members of the Board adopted the minutes as presented.

The Chairperson then read the applications for the sale of alcoholic beverages, the Cannabis Dispensary Notices, and the building demolition and construction notices.

Building Demolition and Construction Notifications

Demolition: Demolition of a Residential Garage at 61-11 Maspeth Avenue (Rear), Maspeth, NY 11378 (Block 2711, Lot 29).

New Building Notifications:

- 1) 56-42 64 Street, Maspeth, NY 11378 – Proposed 3-story, 3-family residence – New Building.
- 2) 71-20 Grand Avenue, Maspeth, NY 11378 – Filed for conversion of existing commercial space to laundromat use and to obtain a new Certificate of Occupancy.
- 3) 71-78 71 Place, Glendale, NY 11385 – Proposed 3-story and cellar building.

Alcoholic Beverage License Applications and Renewals

New Liquor Licenses

- 1) Flag Grill Corp. d/b/a NYC Checker Flag Grill; 70-11 Grand Ave, Maspeth, NY 11378 [R] * & **
- 2) Lechneria New York I Corp.; 71-04 Grand Ave, Maspeth, NY 11378 [R] *

Liquor License Renewals

- 1) Cozy Corner Corp. d/b/a Cozy Corner; 60-01 70 Ave., Ridgewood, NY 11385 (R)

New Wine, Beer & Cider

- 1) Simple Peruvian Inc.; 58-08 Myrtle Ave, Ridgewood, NY 11385 [R] *

Wine, Beer & Cider Renewals

- 1) XOXO Kitchen & Bakery Inc.; 883 Cypress Ave, Ridgewood, NY 11385 [R]
- 2) Sale Fresh Inc.; 68-10 Fresh Pond Rd., Ridgewood, NY 11385 [R]

Other Notifications

None

[CA] = Catering, [CL] = Club, [F&B] = Food & Beverage Business, [R] = Restaurant

There were no concerns raised regarding the locations, and the District Manager confirmed that he knows of no complaints against any of the establishments.

Cannabis License Applications and Renewals

Glendale

None

Maspeth

69-13 Grand Avenue – Application Withdrawn (Vincent Pezzulo)
60-75 Eliot Avenue – Alka Life LLC (Vincent Pezzulo)

Middle Village

None

Ridgewood

None Reported

Announcements

The Chairperson reminded members of summer events and encouraged participation in the upcoming Memorial Day parades, noting that the Maspeth parade would be held on Sunday and the Ridgewood-Glendale parade on Monday. He announced that the Executive Committee had approved t-shirts for board members, which would be available at the board office the following Thursday or brought to the events.

Mr. Sanchez also announced that Community Board 5 would host an information table at every street fair, complete with a table cover, the board's telephone number, and giveaways. He explained that the table would support community outreach efforts, including questionnaires designed to gather residents' input ahead of the board's budget process in September and October. Betsy Chen reported that she had

prepared a sign-up sheet and a QR code with available dates and would email the information to members. The tentative street fair dates discussed were July 19th and September 10th, 11th, 12th, and 13th. Members were encouraged to volunteer for an hour or two at the events, and the board planned to order giveaway bags for residents who complete the survey.

STAFF OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

James Mongeluzo, Queens Borough Director for the Office of New York City Comptroller Mark Levine, provided updates on several reports issued by the office. He discussed the office's analysis of the Mayor's budget, noting positives such as the absence of a property tax increase that had potentially been on the table. He reported on the office's analysis of the pied-à-terre tax, stating that the city might not realize as much revenue as reported depending on whether certain loopholes are closed and how the law is written. He also raised concerns that some funds being used are one-time sources unavailable in future years, expressed support for the Mayor not drawing from the rainy day fund, and referenced a report on expanding the rainy day fund as well as a forthcoming report on the potential impacts of AI on New York City's economy. He provided his direct contact number, 646-689-6509.

Clare Collins, representing Queens Borough President Donovan Richards, announced several upcoming events: a youth resource and preparedness fair on Saturday, May 16, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Health, Arts, Robotics, and Technology High School in Cambria Heights; an annual Jewish Heritage celebration on Monday, May 18, at 12:00 p.m. at Borough Hall; a Haitian Flag Day celebration on May 19 at 6:00 p.m. at Borough Hall; an annual Memorial Day observance ceremony on Wednesday, May 20, at 12:00 p.m. at Borough Hall; an AAPI celebration on Thursday, May 28, at 6:00 p.m. at Borough Hall; and a Pride Month flag raising on June 3 at 1:00 p.m. at Borough Hall. She noted that all events are listed on the office website, queensbp.nyc.gov.

Kate Boehme, representing Queens County District Attorney Melinda Katz, announced that DA Katz had reported the sentencing of Guy Rivera to 115 years to life in prison, after his conviction by a jury for aggravated manslaughter in the first degree and attempted murder in the first degree, for fatally shooting NYPD Detective Jonathan Diller and attempting to murder NYPD Sergeant Sasha Rosen in Far Rockaway on March 25, 2024. She conveyed the District Attorney's statement emphasizing the seriousness of the offense and the office's continued commitment to public safety.

Muhammad Hodzik, representing New York City Council Member Phil Wong, reported that the Council Member passed two bills regarding environmental conservation: Intro 806, which creates a citywide wildlife management plan, and Intro 805, which requires the Parks Department to create a cool pavement pilot program in parks across the city. He noted that the Council Member had also recently introduced six bills focused on quality-of-life issues. He announced a pet food giveaway on May 21 at 6:00 p.m., while supplies last, at the office on 69th Street; the start of summer concerts at Juniper Park on May 28 at 7:00 p.m., on rotation every Thursday until mid-June; and movie nights beginning June 3 every Wednesday from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. He reminded residents to first file a 311 service request, then contact the office with the service request number for proper follow-through.

Kimberly Vega, representing Council Member Jennifer Gutierrez, announced a virtual workshop on preserving credit during rent strikes on Monday, May 18, at 6:00 p.m., in partnership with TakeRoot Justice; a giveaway of countertop composting kitchen containers on Wednesday, May 20, in partnership with Big Reuse, at the district office at 244 Union Avenue from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.; and free yoga at Grover, with remaining sessions on May 16, May 30, and June 6 at the volleyball court at 10:00 a.m., with free mats for the first 150 participants. She also announced a street tree care event on Saturday, June 13, in

partnership with Big Reuse and the Myrtle Avenue BID, meeting at the Myrtle BID office at 5808 Myrtle Avenue from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

John D'Angelo, representing State Senator Joseph Addabbo, noted that the state budget had not yet passed, which was holding up legislation. He highlighted upcoming appointment-based legal assistance sessions with the New York Legal Assistance Group, covering subjects such as identity theft, consumer credit, domestic violence, employment, foreclosure, public benefits, debt management, divorce, and child support, and announced a pet food drive running through the end of May with donations accepted at the Middle Village office. He also noted that the Middle Village sidewalk fair would be held on Saturday along Metropolitan Avenue from 73rd Place to 80 Street.

Irene Stathatos, representing State Senator Michael Gianaris, noted that the Senator is not running for reelection this year and that the state budget had not yet passed. She reported that the Senator passed a bill aimed at cracking down on ghost job postings, which would impose a \$2,500 fee for violators. She announced a groundbreaking of the Mount Sinai of Queens Hospital ICU facility, which is expected to open in about 15 months, and a Mount Sinai health fair on June 6 with a civic organization on Newtown Avenue. She also noted that the office is working with the Juniper Park Civic Association regarding a triangle that is New York State DOT property near 59th Street and was seeking additional information from the State DOT about beautifying the site.

Miles Ashton, representing Assembly Member Steven Raga, reported that students from IS-73 visited Albany at the end of April. He announced a community policy fellowship program with a start date of May 30, a four-week program for students in 8th grade through high school seniors who will design, debate, and present their own bills, meeting Saturdays from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., and asked for help connecting students to the office at 718-651-3185 to apply. He noted that the state budget was still being negotiated and that the office recently introduced the Commercial Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (A11252), which would give small business tenants the first right to purchase the properties they occupy before an outside sale, modeled after residential tenant opportunity to purchase legislation. A board member suggested the office coordinate with the Community Education Council, which meets the fourth Tuesday of each month, to assist with student outreach.

Carlos Munoz, representing Assembly Member Claire Valdez, announced a Ridgewood pop-up office on May 29 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. at the Ridgewood Library and a first Maspeth pop-up office on June 9 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at Maspeth Federal Bank. He also noted a fire the previous night on 53rd Street in Maspeth and asked anyone aware of victims to call the office at 718-784-3194.

Rohanee Gocool, representing Assembly Member Jenifer Rajkumar, described the Assemblywoman's latest bill, the Fee Relief Act, which would cap interest on fines at the rate of inflation. She noted that the Assemblywoman had introduced a package of six ethics reform bills addressing no-bid contracts, conflicts of interest, large donations, and lobbyist disclosures, and continues to champion two quality-of-life bills: Priscilla's Law, requiring license plates on certain e-bikes, and Penny's Law, establishing the crime of allowing a dog to attack cats and dogs.

DISTRICT MANAGER'S REPORT

Gary Giordano

District Manager Gary Giordano encouraged board members to join the Memorial Day parades. He shared that his assistant, John Maier, was in the hospital with heart trouble and would likely require surgery, noting that the news was shocking given that Mr. Maier had recently participated in the citywide bike tour. He reported that Mr. Maier had felt unwell, taken a cab to Wyckoff Heights Medical Center, and was currently at Lenox Hill Hospital in Manhattan, and he asked the Board to keep him in their prayers.

Mr. Giordano spoke about the workload of the board office and the importance of patience, noting that the office phone has been answered consistently throughout his 37 years as District Manager. He praised Mr. Maier as a great addition to the staff and recalled former staff member Laura Mulahill. He also discussed budgetary and hiring difficulties, explaining that although the office has unspent funds, it has had difficulty obtaining approval from the Office of Management and Budget to hire a part-time staff member and would need to move approximately \$7,000 from OTPS to PS.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee – Walter Sanchez

Walter Sanchez reported on three items. He reminded members of the committee email list and asked that anyone wishing to attend committee meetings send their email address to Gary Giordano and/or John Maier to be added. He reported that, at the Borough Board meeting, Resorts World discussed its expansion and the creation of approximately 2,500 jobs and indicated a willingness to sponsor or get involved with local nonprofits. He also reminded members that the Forest Park Trust gala would be held the following night, at approximately \$50 per ticket, at the Oak Ridge building on Forest Park Drive, with tickets available through the Forest Park Trust website.

Education Committee – Rachel Caracci

The Education Committee met on Tuesday, May 5, with the chairperson of the Community Education Council (CEC) for School District 24 to review a number of resolutions. The committee brought forward two resolutions for the Board's support: Resolution 201 and Resolution 200.

Resolution 201 requests that the New York State Department of Health add epinephrine inhalants to the state policy, consistent with keeping medication on hand to prevent anaphylactic shock. On a motion for a voice vote, the Board voted to support Resolution 201, with none opposed, and a letter of support will be prepared with the District Manager.

Resolution 200 urges the New York City Department of Education to implement universal screening and testing for gifted and talented programs beginning in second grade, using the MAP Growth assessment—already administered universally—as a Phase 1 diagnostic screen, with a Phase 2 standardized, minimally verbal cognitive ability assessment for students scoring at or above the 95th percentile. The presenter explained the background of the prior 2008–2021 admissions process, equity concerns, and provisions for dedicated G&T programs beginning in grade three, geographic equity, and accelerated academic pathways. After discussion, the Board declined to vote on Resolution 200 at this meeting and asked that the full five-page resolution and a condensed summary be circulated to members for consideration and a vote at a future meeting.

Sanitation Services Committee – Betsy Chen

The Sanitation Services Committee met on Wednesday, May 6, at the board office. Laura Seidel, Director of the Myrtle BID, discussed city bins to be introduced along Myrtle Avenue, consisting of four sets of four units to be installed within the next month or two. The bins are intended to store trash collected by the BID cleanup crew from the litter baskets, with locations at Myrtle Avenue and Putnam Avenue (on the sidewalk), Hancock Street (in the street), Forest Avenue across from the Ridgewood Savings Bank, and on the sidewalk by the Walgreens—two on the sidewalk and two in the street. The discussion also touched on residential sanitation needs and illegal dumping.

The committee then discussed sanitation needs and feedback and began brainstorming requests for the district needs statement and capital projects and expense budget for Fiscal Year 2028, including the possibility of cameras at certain locations. The committee plans to meet on Wednesday, June 3, and issued an open call for board members and the public to attend and share sanitation concerns. A member noted illegal dumping near community garbage receptacles along Metropolitan Avenue and under railroad trestles, and the committee asked for specific locations to support the district needs statement.

Housing Services Committee – Charles Ober

The Housing Services Committee met on Monday, May 11. Charles Ober requested a regular monthly meeting slot on the second Monday of each month, noting that uncertainty about meeting dates had contributed to the committee not having a quorum, with four members and one guest present. The committee discussed narrowing its focus to matters affecting CB5, including the new administration and City of Yes initiatives.

The committee received information from Greater Ridgewood Restoration Corp. regarding building violations and noted concern at the large number of open violations in the CB5 area. The committee discussed hosting a clinic where homeowners could resolve violations in a non-adversarial setting in coordination with the Department of Buildings, and also discussed reviewing the current administration's housing initiatives, accessing funding, and the need for senior housing.

Library Services Committee – Carol Benovic-Bradley

The Library Committee last met on Monday, April 13, at the CB5 office and addressed three agenda items: updates from local library branches, the Fiscal Year 2027 budget, and upcoming cultural events. The committee was joined by Alexis Burgess, Assistant Community Library Manager at Maspeth, and continued its discussion of the upcoming Ridgewood branch construction closure. Following the meeting, the committee finalized a letter to elected officials, school leaders, and QPL President and CEO Dennis Walcott, which the board office helped send.

On the Fiscal Year 2027 budget, the committee noted that potential library budget cuts appeared to be off the table and that the library budget had been baselined, while the committee planned to continue advocating for the overall library budget to be raised to 0.5% of the city's budget. On cultural events, the committee was joined by Michael Fineberg, who established the Ridgewood Jazz Festival, held at the end of April. He described the festival's goals of paying artists a living wage, supporting independent venues, and engaging the community, noting that nearly all participating artists were local and that 80% of this year's events were free, including one at Herman Hochberg Plaza. The committee committed to keeping in touch with Mr. Fineberg and is continuing to build a list of cultural organizations in the district. The next committee meeting is Monday, June 1, at 7:00 p.m. at the board office.

Before the next committee report, the Chairperson recognized Robert Cermeli, who had chaired the Health Committee for about 25 years and served on the Board for 35 to 40 years.

Transportation Services Committee – Eric Butkiewicz

The Transportation Services Committee received a presentation from DOT on the Grand Street Bridge, one of the oldest bridges in New York City, dating to the early 1900s. The project is a top priority and, because the bridge spans Newtown Creek, a navigable waterway, involves the Army Corps of Engineers in the design. There is also an adjacent EPA Superfund project. The plan calls for a lift bridge to accommodate navigation, along with a temporary bridge during construction, and the project is expected to take several years to complete.

Mr. Butkiewicz also reported that the committee is working on improvements to the Flushing Avenue underpass; that DOT has identified 28 locations in the district for a reduced speed limit of 15 miles per hour, which the committee will review and comment on at its next meeting; and that the committee is compiling a road resurfacing list and asked board members and the public to report bad streets to the office. He noted that the next meeting would be held on May 26 and explained the committee's process for one-way street conversions, in which residents are encouraged to come to the committee for support before pursuing petitions, given the rapport the committee has built with DOT.

Public Transit Services Committee – Brandon Zwagerman

The Public Transit Services Committee met jointly with the Transportation Services Committee on April 28. Mr. Zwagerman reported that the M train elevated structure repair and repainting project is continuing east into Ridgewood, with site work observed under the Forest Avenue M station, and that he had requested a schedule update from the MTA. He noted that the MTA has been hosting interactive public workshops on the Interborough Express (IBX) project, including one at Christ the King on May 2, with the next workshop in Ridgewood at PS 88, 60-85 Catalpa Avenue, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. on May 28. He also reported that the MTA launched a mobile app in March that provides real-time arrival information, the ability to book Access-A-Ride trips, and customer support. The committee's next meeting with the Transportation Committee is Tuesday, May 26, at 7:30 p.m. at the board office.

Environmental Services Committee – Diego Leclery

Mr. Leclery announced that the Environmental Services Committee would meet on Monday, May 18, at 7:00 p.m. at the board office, 61-23 Myrtle Avenue. The meeting will include a presentation from the technical consultants for the Newtown Creek Superfund, updates on major sewer projects, and an update on the cleanup at the Wolff-Alport site. He invited board members and the public to attend or contact the office with environmental concerns.

Motion – Letter of Support for Frank Principe Park Lights

A motion was made for the Board to issue a letter of support requesting that the lights at Frank Principe Park stay on until 10:00 p.m. across all three lighted areas, to be provided to the Parks Department, with Steve Fiedler to work on the issue with the District Manager. On a voice vote, the motion passed with none opposed.

NOMINATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE POSITIONS

Walter Sanchez

At 9:19 p.m., the Chairperson opened nominations for Executive Committee positions, explaining that nominations are taken this month and again next month, with the vote to be held at the June 10th meeting by open ballot. Carol Benovic-Bradley presented a slideshow describing the Executive Committee and the duties of each position, and the Chairperson noted that the committee meets approximately eight times a year, with a focus on developing leadership and succession in light of term limits. The Chairperson thanked Eric Butkiewicz for assisting with the descriptions used in the presentation.

Betsy Chen, Executive Committee Secretary, conducted the nominating process. Nominations were made as follows: For Chairperson, Walter Clayton, Jr. nominated Walter Sanchez, who accepted; Carol Benovic-Bradley was also nominated but declined. For First Vice Chairperson, Kathy Masi was nominated but was unable to accept or decline as she was not present, Dmytro Fedkowskyj was nominated and declined, and Daniel Heredia nominated Carol Benovic-Bradley, who accepted. For Second Vice Chairperson, Walter Sanchez nominated Dmytro Fedkowskyj, who accepted. For Treasurer, Eric Butkiewicz was nominated by Barbara Toscano and accepted. For Secretary, Mati Gonzalez nominated Betsy Chen, who accepted.

For the four Members at Large positions, the following were nominated and accepted: Kenneth Rehberger (nominated by Maryann Lattanzio), Edgar Mantel (nominated by Michael O’Kane), Daniel Heredia (nominated by Edgar Mantel), Fred Haller (nominated by Ted Renz), Rachel Caracci (nominated by Lily Scarabino), Diego Leclery (nominated by Walter Sanchez), and Patrick Trinchese (nominated by Dymtro Fedkowskyj). Walter Clayton was also nominated and declined.

For Parliamentarian, which is currently vacant, Brandon Zwagerman nominated Edgar Mantel, who declined, and Daniel Heredia nominated Brandon Zwagerman, who declined. It was noted that the Parliamentarian is not a member of the Executive Committee and that a member cannot serve as both a Member at Large and Parliamentarian. Daniel Heredia continues to serve as acting Parliamentarian until a new one is elected. The Chairperson then closed nominations for the session, noting that nominations would be reopened and the vote held at the June meeting.

OLD & NEW BUSINESS

The Chairperson reminded members of the Middle Village street fair on Saturday and the Forest Park Trust gala tomorrow night (\$50 per ticket), and noted that the American Cancer Society Relay for Life in Middle Village would be held on June 20 by the track in Juniper Valley Park.

Maryann Lattanzio raised, as old business, the matter she had brought before the Board the prior month regarding making it a Class E felony to assault an on-duty auxiliary police officer, noting that the matter had been referred to committee but that the committee had not met. She made a motion that the Board support making it a Class E felony to assault an on-duty auxiliary police officer, in support of Senate Bill S1190, introduced by Senator Addabbo. She noted that there are approximately 3,000 auxiliary police officers in the city and more than 30 in the 104th Precinct, that auxiliary officers are uniformed volunteers, and that an assault on an auxiliary officer is currently treated as a simple assault, whereas the proposed change would raise it one level, comparable to the protection afforded bus drivers. The motion was seconded by Kenneth Rehberger.

Following discussion, Diego Leclery made a motion to table the matter, seconded by Brandon Zwagerman. The tabling motion was put to a roll call vote and failed by a vote of -17- in favor, -18- opposed, -0- abstentions, and -0- not voting.

The Board then proceeded to a roll call vote on the original motion. The motion to issue a letter of support for Senate Bill S1190, making it a Class E felony to assault an on-duty auxiliary police officer, passed by a vote of -23- in favor, -12- opposed, -0- abstentions, and -0- not voting. Maryann Lattanzio will draft the letter with the District Manager.

As there was no further business to come before the Board, the Board Chairperson adjourned the public meeting of Queens Community Board 5 on a motion from the floor at 9:55pm.