



# Community Board No. 5

Borough of Queens  
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Vincent Arcuri, Jr.  
*Chairperson*

Gary Giordano  
*District Manager*

## Minutes of Remote Community Board 5 Public Meeting July 8, 2020

### Board Members Present

Bhubaneshor Adhikari; Vincent Arcuri, Jr; Antonetta Binanti; Eric Butkiewicz; Robert Cermeli; Walter E. Clayton, Jr.; Patricia Crowley; Dmytro Fedkowskyj; Shawn Fisch; Dr. Sukh Gurung; Fred T. Haller; Fred Hoeflerle; Richard Huber; Kinga Kurzyna; Paul A. Kerzner; Maryann Lattanzio; John Maier; Patricia Maltezos; Edgar Mantel; Katherine Masi; Margaret O’Kane; Michael O’Kane; Donald Passantino; Michael Porcelli; Kenneth Rehberger; Theodore Renz; Luis Rodriguez; Lee S. Rottenberg; Walter H. Sanchez; Dennis Stephan; Catherine Sumsky; Gyanal Thapa; Barbara Toscano; Patrick J. Trinchese; Crystal Wolfe

### Board Members Absent

Brian Dooley; Jerome Drake; Steven Fiedler; Edward Lettau; Mike Liendo; Eileen Moloney; Kelvin Rodriguez; Carmen Santana; Megan Tadio; Michaeline Von Drathen; Maryanna Zero; Nan Zhang

### Elected Officials

Joseph Nocerino – Acting Queens Borough President Sharon Lee

### GUESTS

Chae No, Queens Community Liaison – NYC Dept. of Health & Mental Hygiene  
Hannah Mastrogiacomo – Adolescent Health Educator, Wyckoff Heights Medical Center’s Adolescent Health Services Clinic, 1411 Myrtle Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11237

### STAFF

Gary Giordano, District Manager  
Laura Mulvihill, Community Associate

Following the Salute to the Flag that was led by Donald Passantino, the Board Chairperson Vincent Arcuri welcomed everyone to attend this remote Board Meeting that is being conducted and livestreamed in real time to the public tonight. He said that due to current constraints during this health emergency, all public meetings and committee meetings of the Board will be conducted remotely until further notice. He announced the first item on the Board Agenda as:

### PRESENTATION Re: Update on the Coronavirus (COVID-19)

#### By Chae No, NYC Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene

Chae No began his presentation by giving a brief update on recent health statistics regarding the COVID-19 Pandemic and how it has impacted our city, state and country, and the world. Since the first COVID-

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19 case was detected in New York City in early March, the number of cases, and hospitalizations has been steadily increasing, but the rate of spread has slowed to less than 2% now, he said.

As of today, Mr. No said that 11.8 Million confirmed cases of the COVID-19 disease have been diagnosed worldwide. He said that in the United States to-date, there have been over 3 Million confirmed cases of COVID-19, with over 80,000 deaths attributed to this highly contagious disease. In NY State, he said that there have been 181,852 confirmed cases of COVID-19 outside of NYC since the first case was originally diagnosed in March, with another 214,570 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in NYC, leading to over 18,000 deaths attributed to confirmed cases of COVID-19, and 4,606 deaths attributed to probable cases of this disease, since March 1<sup>st</sup>. He also pointed out that in Queens, there have been 65,428 confirmed cases of COVID-19, that resulted in 17,037 hospitalizations and 5,868 deaths, since March.

Mr. No also informed everyone that in NYC, there are currently 55 cases of Multi-Symptom Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C), which is related to COVID-19.

Mr. No announced that on Monday, July 6<sup>th</sup>, New York City entered Phase 3 of the reopening process, which will permit personal care services and food services, except for indoor dining and catering facilities, to open for business under the new guidelines. He explained that personal care services include tattoo and piercing facilities, appearance enhancement practitioners, massage therapy, spas, cosmetology, nail specialty, ultraviolet (UV) and non-UV tanning or waxing.

Mr. No said that outdoor restaurants and beaches are permitted to reopen under the following new guidelines: Everyone must practice physical distancing, which means staying at least 6 feet away from each other; Wear a face covering when you're near other people, because you can be contagious without symptoms and spread the disease when you cough, sneeze or talk; and Wash your hands often with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available; and clean frequently touched surfaces regularly. He said that as part of the City's Open Streets program, restaurants will be permitted to expand their restaurant seating at curbside in front of their businesses, on the sidewalks, in backyards and in parking lanes.

Mr. No reported that next Monday, on July 13<sup>th</sup>, child care centers will be permitted to reopen under a new set of guidelines. He said that no more than 15 children per classroom will be permitted, all employees and children must wear face coverings, and the entire site must be disinfected daily.

Mr. No announced that today is the City's Get Tested Day of Action, and the Test and Trace Corps has set a goal of testing 175,000 people every week until next year. He advised all New Yorkers to get tested for COVID-19, whether you have symptoms or not. For more information on where to find testing sites near you, he said to go to [www.TestandTrace.nyc](http://www.TestandTrace.nyc) or [www.nyc.gov/COVIDtest](http://www.nyc.gov/COVIDtest).

Mr. No also announced that the states of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut have agreed to impose a 14 day quarantine on any visitors from most other states in the country, due to the fact that the rate of spread has increased steadily in those states. He said that while New York has seen a few spikes in the number of new cases of COVID-19 this Summer, the rate of spread has since subsided to less than 1% statewide.

For more information about the Coronavirus, Mr. No said to visit the NYC Dept. of Health's webpage at [www.nyc.gov/health/coronavirus](http://www.nyc.gov/health/coronavirus) for the latest updates on where to get tested, COVID-19 case counts, etc. In the meantime, he said that the best way to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and protect employees is to continue working from home as much as possible.

Richard Huber, a Board member, asked about the rate of false positive and false negative results in the testing process. Mr. No replied that the nasal and pharyngeal swab tests for the presence of infections with COVID-19 are very reliable, but the results from the antibody tests are not as precise.

Ken Rehberger, a Board member, informed everyone that due to the recent heat wave in the New York area, drivers are being warned not to leave bottles of hand-sanitizer in their cars for any length of time

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because they can explode. The Board Chairperson replied that hand-sanitizer is 90% alcohol, which explains why it should never be exposed to high heat.

Paul Kerzner, a Board member, asked what agency enforces the quarantine measures that are currently in effect. Mr. No replied that it's been imposed by the State, and he's not aware of how it will be enforced. The Board Chairperson replied that during the Governor's Press Conference about issuing the state of quarantine, the phone number to report anyone violating the quarantine was posted online.

Maryann Lattanzio, a Board member, asked if the statement that cold water in the ocean kills the virus is true. Mr. No replied that it's not true, it's a myth. He pointed out that since Florida and other Southern states relaxed the shutdown in their states before Memorial Day weekend, they've seen a large increase in the spread of the Coronavirus that hasn't subsided yet. He thanked New Yorkers for following the guidelines and staying safe in order to curb the spread of the Coronavirus.

Sukh Gurung, a Board member, asked about the size of classrooms that could be used to accommodate 15 children in child care. The Board Chairperson replied that it's 50% of its full legal occupancy, provided there's 6 feet physical distancing between desks. Mr. No said that he'd look into it.

The Board Chairperson thanked Mr. No for his presentation.

**PRESENTATION re: Wyckoff Heights Medical Center's Adolescent Health Services Clinic at 1411 Myrtle Avenue, near Knickerbocker Avenue, Brooklyn**

Hannah Mastrogiacomio, Outreach Coordinator for Wyckoff Heights Pediatrics Division, gave a brief outline of the services that this new Adolescent Health Services Clinic provides to 13 to 20 year olds in their catchment area, which includes North Brooklyn and Western Queens. She said that their staff provides routine check-ups and physical exams, as well as adolescent sexual reproductive services to prevent the spread of HIV and sexually transmitted diseases. She said that their clinic provides condoms and medication to prevent HIV infections.

When they first opened earlier this year, she said that she visited local high schools and libraries in Brooklyn to distribute flyers and talk with local counselors about their services. However, since the State of Emergency went into effect in NY, she said that she's been relying on social media, skype, and word of mouth to advertise their new services.

Ms. Mastrogiacomio explained that the hospital was awarded a grant that affords them the ability to reach out to immigrant youth, who may not have health coverage.

Robert Cermeli, Health and Human Services Committee Chairperson, asked how many people know that this new clinic has opened. She replied that they've distributed thousands of flyers in local high schools, the hospital's clinics and central lobby area. The Board Chairperson asked if their outreach includes any sites in Queens. She replied that they're planning to do a lot more outreach to local schools and libraries in Queens soon.

Ken Rehberger asked if they'd be allowed to advertise their services in local medical clinics, such as, CityMed and CityMD. The Board Chairperson replied that he didn't think the hospital has any affiliation with those local medical clinics, as yet. Ms. Mastrogiacomio said that she would look into it. At present, she said that all of their outreach is being done virtually.

**Report by Police Officer Michael Berish, 104<sup>th</sup> Precinct Community Affairs Unit**

The District Manager read aloud the report about crime statistics for the past 28 days, as submitted by Police Officer Michael Berish, Community Affairs Unit in the 104th Precinct. He said that the incidence of Rape is up by 1 incident, and a person of interest has been identified in this case. Robberies are down by 14 incidents; Felony Assaults are up 4; Burglaries are down by 5; Grand Larcenies are down by 8; Grand Larceny Autos are down by 10. He said that Felony Assaults are up, and the majority of these cases are domestic violence cases, which have been closed out with an arrest.

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He hopes that everyone is doing well, and hopes to see everyone soon. If anyone needs anything or any other information please feel free to write or call him at the precinct.

Cathie Sumsky, a Board Member, asked if there were any statistics about crimes that have occurred at the homeless shelter on Cooper Avenue. The Board Chairperson said that there have been lots of rumors circulating lately, and asked Kathy Masi if she had any new information about the status of the shelter.

Ms. Masi replied that she just met over the phone for an hour with 21 members of the Community Advisory Board for the Cooper Avenue Shelter. She said that lots of questions were raised, but their common refrain was that due to COVID-19, they're not able to provide services, such as, job training or group counseling sessions. She said that there are 100 male adults currently living in this facility. The Board Chairperson asked that she give further details in a report at the end of the meeting.

## PUBLIC FORUM

The District Manager Gary Giordano read the following statement from Sayaka Prestia, a Partnership Specialist for the US Census 2020, regarding operational updates on the current response rates to this year's Census count.

He said that based on the current self-response rate of 61%, the U.S. Census Bureau estimates it will need to visit approximately 56 million addresses across the country to collect responses in person. "Census takers will begin the Nonresponse Follow-up Operation starting July 16th in some parts of the country, and in NYC boroughs, it will begin on August 13th and conclude no later than October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020.

Census takers will follow local public health guidelines when they visit.

Households can still respond now by completing and mailing back the paper questionnaire that they received or by responding online at [my2020census.gov](https://my2020census.gov), or by phone at **844-330-2020**.

Census takers will NOT visit households that complete the Census.

The District Manager reported that as of July 7<sup>th</sup>, there's been a 61.9% response rate to the Census count nationwide, a 57.46% response rate in New York State, and a 53% response rate in Queens. He said that the average response rate in the CB5 Board area is 50.14%, with a response rate of 48.15% in Ridgewood; 52.74% in Maspeth; 51.49% in Middle Village; and 48.2% in Glendale.

He asked everyone to please continuously encourage everyone to respond to the Census before door-knocking starts on Thursday, August 13th. Stay safe and be counted in 2020 Census."

The Board Members' Attendance was recorded by Laura Mulvihill, Community Associate – CB5Q

## Chairperson's Report Vincent Arcuri

### MINUTES

Katherine Masi made a motion to accept the minutes as written, seconded by Antonetta Binanti, which was adopted by acclamation.

### LIQUOR, WINE and BEER LICENSE APPLICATIONS and RENEWALS

The Board Chairperson read aloud the list of liquor license applications and renewals, as follows:

#### New Liquor License Applications

- 1) La Isla Lounge Corp. d/b/a *El Coqui* 54-19 Myrtle Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 2) *Café Rum Ltd.* 1050 Wyckoff Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385

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### **Liquor License Renewal Applications**

- 1) **Brisas del Mar Restaurant NY Corp.** 675 Woodward Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 2) **The Celi House Inc.** 69-58 Grand Avenue, Maspeth, NY 11378
- 3) **Harbor Inn Sports Bar** 64-63 Dry Harbor Road, Middle Village, NY 11379
- 4) **Cozy Corner Corp.** 60-01 70 Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 5) **Villa Erasmo** 69-61 Juniper Boulevard South, Middle Village, NY 11379

### **New Wine and/or Beer License Application**

- 1) **La Cafeteria del Burro Corp.** 64-02 Myrtle Avenue, Glendale, NY 11385

### **Wine and/or Beer License Renewal Applications**

- 1) **Mr. Pancho Corp.** 46-63 Metropolitan Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 2) ARD Group LLC d/b/a **SLIDE Bar-B-Que** 52-75 65 Place, Maspeth, NY 11378

### **Other Notifications**

- 1) **\*Rogner LLC**, 63-59 Forest Avenue, Ridgewood, has notified us that they will be submitting a Corporate Change application to the NYS Liquor Authority, as the current owner is selling his business to Dave Goberdhan. They informed us that the Method of Operation would remain the same.
- 2) Fatima Restaurant Corp. d/b/a **New Estrella del Mar Restaurant**, 552 Seneca Avenue, Ridgewood, has notified us that they intend to submit a "Class Change" application to the NYS Liquor Authority to change their existing Restaurant Wine License #1323432 to an On-Premises Liquor Wine Beer & Cider License.

*\*Indicates Outdoor Area*

### **Demolition and Excavation Notices**

The Board Chairperson announced that the Board received the following demolition and excavation notices since last month's Board Meeting:

#### **Glendale**

75-41 61<sup>st</sup> Street - Garage

#### **Maspeth**

52-35 74<sup>th</sup> Street - Excavation

#### **Middle Village**

82-55 61<sup>st</sup> Drive – Alteration Type 1

69-20 Juniper Valley Road (Garage)

#### **Ridgewood**

446 Grandview Avenue – Partial Demolition

The Board Chairperson urged Board Members to be extra vigilant and report any questionable construction activities.

The Board Chairperson reported that the Dept. of Citywide Administrative Services and the Mayor's Office provided the Board with a list of requirements regarding what has to be done in order to restore full-time or part-time employment in the Board office. He said two clean-ups of the office were done, with ultra-violet lighting for 7 hours; carpet cleaned and walls washed down; landlord changed the filters on the A/C system; a new toilet seat was installed; and the desks are sufficiently separated. He said that the office is basically closed to the public now, for person to person visits.

### **Joseph Nocerino – on behalf of Queens Borough President Sharon Lee**

In response to the Board Chairperson's question about when staff is expected to return to work in Queens Borough Hall, Mr. Nocerino said he had no update to report on that topic.

He reported that the Queens Borough President's staff is working remotely to assist the Queens Complete Census Count Committee during Friday afternoon's phone bank outreach to Queens residents. He announced that on Wednesday, July 15<sup>th</sup>, a Virtual Job Recruitment Fair is scheduled to begin at 2pm, sponsored by the Queens Borough President.

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He also announced that a Remote Joint-Meeting of both the Queens Borough Board and Borough Service Cabinet is scheduled for 5:30pm on Monday, July 20<sup>th</sup>.

Walter Sanchez asked about the status of Amazon's plans to move into the Metro Mall, located at 66-26 Metropolitan Avenue.

Mr. Nocerino reported that Amazon plans to move into two new locations in the Board 5 area: 1) a fully renovated site on the Ground Floor of the Metro Mall, at 66-26 Metropolitan Avenue, in Middle Village; and 2) the other site is located at 55-15 Grand Avenue, in Maspeth.

Laura Mulvihill read aloud the following statement Council Member Holden's Office, as follows.

### **Statement from City Council Member Robert Holden, Council District 30**

"Hello neighbors, Community Board 5 members, and fellow elected officials. I hope that you are all staying safe and healthy, and I thank you for your continued work and volunteerism as we navigate this challenging year together. Our city is now beginning to reopen businesses as the spread of COVID-19 has slowed dramatically, and that is thanks to all of our collective efforts to practice social distancing, wear masks and practice good hygiene.

My office in Middle Village has remained closed since March 17th, but my staff and I gladly continue to serve our constituents every day while working from home. Please do not hesitate to call 718-366-3900, or email [district30@council.nyc.gov](mailto:district30@council.nyc.gov) to contact my office any time when you need assistance.

As you are probably aware, the City Council in June voted in favor of the proposed fiscal year 2021 budget after much debate. I voted 'No' to the proposed budget due to the fact that it included \$1 billion in cuts and reallocated funding from the NYPD. These cuts will result in the school safety division being moved under the authority of the Department of Education, overtime hours being cut, and the cancellation of at least one Police Academy class. I believe these cuts will be damaging not only to the morale of our police, but to the overall public safety of our city, which is why I could not vote in favor. Now that the budget has been passed, the City Council will slow down for the month of July. In the coming weeks, my office is hosting a COVID-19 antibody testing event on July 15 at Juniper Boulevard South and 78<sup>th</sup> Street from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Please contact my office for information on how to register in advance. We are also working to bring a long-term COVID testing site to the district soon.

Thank you again for your continued dedication to our communities, and I hope to see all of you in the near future."

District Manager Gary Giordano read into the record the following statements from local elected officials, as follows:

### **Announcements from the Mayor's Office submitted by Jessica Schabowski, Queens Borough Director of the Mayor's Office of Community Affairs**

The annual tax lien sale is postponed until September 2020, as the city continues its recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Property owners who are facing hardships making their property tax payments can take advantage of several existing Department of Finance programs. These include exemption programs to lower the amount of taxes owed, standard payment plans, or a new Property Tax and Interest Deferral (PT AID) program, for those who qualify. More information on those programs can be found on the agency's website: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/finance/index.page>.

The Mayor and City Council reached an agreement for an on-time and balanced \$88.19 billion budget for Fiscal Year 2021. The budget is balanced despite the lack of borrowing authority from Albany or a Federal stimulus. To ensure the budget can continue to fund critical services for vulnerable New Yorkers, the Administration will continue to advocate for support for borrowing authority from Albany and a stimulus from Washington. Most notably, the budget includes \$1 billion in cuts and cost shifts for the NYPD while maintaining patrol strength to protect the safety of all communities.

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On June 23rd, the Mayor established a multi-agency task force to crack down on illegal fireworks sales. The task force targets suppliers, distributors, and possessors of large quantities of illegal fireworks by conducting investigations and sting operations within and outside of New York City to disrupt supply chains. The task force consists of 10 officers from NYPD Intelligence Bureau, 12 FDNY Fire Marshals, and 20 members of the Sheriff's Bureau of Criminal Investigation. The FDNY has also launched a public safety campaign, including public service announcements and social media, to illustrate the dangers of illegal fireworks. As of July 3rd, FDNY Fire Marshals had confiscated nearly \$400,000 worth of fireworks from around the city and they have arrested 17 people.

Phase 3 in New York City began on Monday, July 6<sup>th</sup>, which includes the re-opening of dog runs; tattoo and massage parlors; nail and tanning salons; basketball, handball, tennis, bocce, and volleyball courts; and soccer fields.

Today is our Get Tested Day of Action, during which we are encouraging all New Yorkers to get tested for COVID-19, even if they do not have symptoms. Testing is free, safe, and confidential. For an interactive map that shows all known testing sites, please go to [nyc.gov/covidtesting](https://nyc.gov/covidtesting) or call 311.

### **Statement from State Senator Joseph P. Addabbo**

“Good evening to the members of Community Board 5. As always, I appreciate your efforts, especially during these trying times throughout the Coronavirus pandemic. On Monday, June 29th, my Middle Village office returned to its full-time status, Monday through Friday, 9am to 5pm, with its full complement of team members returning to work. I am thankful that my team worked at keeping the office open throughout the pandemic, so that we were able to address virus related issues, such as unemployment claims, food availability and assistance for our local small businesses. We continue to handle these COVID-19 issues, as well as any other community issue that comes our way. The Middle Village office will continue to have the 24/7 live operator service to answer the needs of my constituents after office hours. The Senate is expected to return to its legislative session remotely via Zoom later this month. If my team or I can be of any assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact us at 718-497-1630. Thanks again and have an enjoyable, safe summer.”

### **Statement from State Assembly Member Brian Barnwell, 30<sup>th</sup> AD**

“Good evening, everyone. We hope that everyone is doing well and staying healthy. We have a few announcements that we would like to share with the public this evening.

Our office has created a COVID-19 Community Resource Guide, which includes information and resources for individuals impacted by COVID-19 that are offered by the city, state, and federal government, as well as non-profits. We've shared the resource guide with CB5 and will continue to share the guide with the public.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call our office; we are continuing to work remotely and are more than happy to help. We can be reached at (718) 651-3185. If you are not able to get through to us, please leave your name, number, and a brief message describing your issue. We will call you right back. Thank you, and be well.”

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Regarding the vote to elect Officers of our Community Board which was taken during last month's Remote Board Meeting, the Board Chairperson informed the Board that since there were no provisions in the Board's By-Laws for voting remotely, the Board has been directed to conduct a poll of the Board members to accept the voting results to elect the Officers of Community Board 5, Queens. He asked the District Manager Gary Giordano to read the results of last month's election of officers.

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The District Manager reminded everyone that at last month's Remote Board Meeting, the Board Chairperson Vincent Arcuri, the First Vice-Chairperson Walter Sanchez; the Second Vice-Chairperson Dmytro Fedkowskyj; the Treasurer Katherine Masi; and the Secretary Margaret O'Kane were all elected unanimously.

In addition, he said that once the ballot results were tallied, the four Members-at-Large receiving the most votes were as follows: Theodore Renz with 29 votes; Fred Haller with 26 votes; Paul Kerzner with 23 votes; and John Maier with 21 votes.

Richard Huber made a motion to accept the ballot results as read, and Margaret O'Kane seconded his motion.

On a point of clarification, Cathie Sumsky asked how the newly adopted Term Limits on Board Membership would affect this year's election of officers.

John Maier replied that anyone who was appointed this year is limited to 5 two-year terms, starting this year, and anyone appointed prior to this year is limited to 4 more two-year terms. So, it won't affect Board elections for some years to come, he said.

As there were no more questions or comments on the Board election, the Board Chairperson requested that the District Manager call the roll on the motion to accept the results of last month's election of officers, as read. The motion on the floor was unanimously approved by a vote of -35- in favor; -0- abstentions, -0- not voting, and -0- not voting.

## **District Manager's Report**

**Gary Giordano**

The District Manager reported that over the past month, packages of gloves, masks and hand sanitizers with the Board 5 logo on them were distributed to Board members and local Senior Centers in our Board area by Laura Mulvihill.

He said that he was grateful to all New Yorkers who have been taking the health warnings about the Coronavirus seriously, and wore their face masks and stayed 6 feet away from other people over the Summer months. He said that explains why our state is not suffering through another upsurge in the rate of spread of the Coronavirus, as so many other states are.

Regarding the increase in the incidence of violent crimes throughout the City this past month, he said that it's got to stop. The Public Safety Committee Report will provide more details about this situation, he said.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Public Safety Services Committee**

**Maryann Lattanzio**

Maryann Lattanzio gave the following Committee report:

The Public Safety Committee conducted a remote meeting on Thursday, June 25, 2020.

The first order of business was to congratulate Deputy Inspector Victoria Perry on her well-deserved promotion. The committee also thanked all the officers of the 104<sup>th</sup> Precinct for keeping our community safe during this difficult time.

When the committee inquired about the effects of the COVID19 on the 104 Precinct, Police Officer Berish stated that 25 to 30 officers tested positive for the disease, and some officers lost up to a month of time while recovering from the virus.



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The committee also discussed the recent protests in the 104 Precinct with P.O. Berish, who stated that all of the protests in the Precinct were peaceful and orderly. There have been approximately 10 protests in this Precinct, according to Officer Berish.

The committee discussed the use of excessive force as a big issue regarding proper policing and agreed what happened to George Floyd, who died in police custody in Minneapolis this year, was horrible. The committee recognizes that, at times, police officers need to deal with very difficult situations by making split second decisions, but the proper use of force is a big issue which needs to be addressed.

The committee discussed concerns about disbanding the Police Department. It was stated and agreed that no officer knows how they are going to react to a difficult situation, and at times a split-second decision needs to be made, so situational training for police officers is imperative.

As a result, the committee voted unanimously to send a letter to both Mayor Bill De Blasio and the Speaker of the City Council Corey Johnson, explaining why we are against defunding the Police Department and instead recommend better training of police officers with respect to de-escalating volatile situations.

The committee reviewed the number of police officers assigned to each tour in the 104 Precinct.

PO Berish said that typical staffing of patrols on Day Tours is 10 -12 officers (4-5 patrol cars); on the 4-12 Midnight Shift, there are 12-15 officers (5-6 police cars); and, on the 12 Midnight-8am Shift, there are 10-12 officers (4-5 police cars).

However, in the past few months, officers have been reassigned to work 12-hour shifts in other precincts of the city to patrol mass protests. Officer Berish stated that a class of cadets will graduate from the Police Academy this month, and after the committee meeting ended, members learned that 7 new police officers were assigned to the 104<sup>th</sup> Precinct from the Police Academy.

Regarding the 104<sup>th</sup> Precinct's crime statistics, Ms. Lattanzio reported that overall crime statistics are up by 28% in the past 2 years in this Precinct. She said that the number of overall crimes reported in the 104<sup>th</sup> Precinct is up by 17% year-to-date (YTD), as compared to the same period last year, with Felony Assaults up 66% YTD, Burglaries are up 83% YTD, and Robberies are up 22% YTD, when compared to the same period in 2019. She said that Officer Berish explained that the number of Burglaries spiked up in this Precinct during the Pandemic, when so many local businesses and storefronts were completely closed for several months at a time.

The committee also discussed the increase in graffiti vandalism in the Board 5 area this year. Officer Berish stated that we no longer have a graffiti officer at the 104 Precinct and, as a result, few graffiti arrests have been made. He said that the NYPD is more concerned with cleaning up graffiti, than apprehending graffiti vandals.

Regarding summoning in the 104<sup>th</sup> Precinct, Ms. Lattanzio reported that over the past 28 days, there have been 387 parking violations, and 337 moving violations issued, while year-to-date, 2568 parking violations, and 4490 summonses for moving violations were issued.

The committee also discussed fireworks being out of control this year, both in the 104 Pct and citywide. PO Berish said that this problem is citywide, not just in the 104<sup>th</sup> Precinct. He asked that if anyone knows of a location where people are shooting off fireworks, please report it to 311 or 911.

PO Berish stated Deputy Inspector Perry is aware of the problem and Officers were instructed to hand out summons for possession of illegal fireworks. A question was raised about a unit specifically handling fireworks. Officer Berish replied that our Precinct does not have a unit for fireworks currently.

Regarding the Homeless Shelter Residence at 78-16 Cooper Avenue, Officer Berish reported that Police Officers have responded to calls at the shelter more often lately, but many of the complaints are unfounded and/or the problem is usually an assault on each other. He stated that, to his knowledge, there are approximately 100- 130 men currently residing at the shelter.

The committee spoke about various situations on Cooper Avenue, near the shelter site. We are now starting to see the effects of this year's bail reform law, she said. Officer Berish warned that there are a

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lot of criminals who know they are going to get a slap on the wrist, instead of being arrested and put in jail, for committing nonviolent crimes.

Ms. Lattanzio reported that the committee briefly discussed bicycle safety and pedestrian safety issues, noting the increase in the number of pedestrian fatalities citywide, up from 50 pedestrians who were struck and killed in 2018 to 70 pedestrians in 2019. She said that they discussed the need for cyclists to wear helmets and the fact that many bicyclists are not following the rules of the road, which causes dangerous situations for themselves and others. The city is promoting the use of bicycles but not advocating for bicyclists behaving responsibly for their own safety and the safety of others. She said that they plan to discuss bicycle safety issues at the next public safety meeting.

## **Homeless Services**

### **Katherine Masi**

Katherine Masi, a member of the Homeless Services Committee, reported that earlier tonight she met by phone with 21 other people for the second remote Community Advisory Board (CAB) Meeting for the Cooper Avenue Homeless Residence at 78-16 Cooper Avenue. She said that they were informed that 100 adult men are living at the shelter now, who are unemployed, and there are no job training programs in place yet, due to COVID-19.

Ms. Masi said that the CAB was formed months ago, and this is only their second meeting. She said that they were informed tonight that both Level 1 and Level 2 sex offenders are being accepted into this shelter. She reported that there have been several 911 calls regarding incidents at the shelter, ending in several arrests for assault there. In addition, there have been allegations that shelter residents have been shooting heroin in the Cooper Avenue stairwell, she said.

Ms. Masi said that whenever she's tried to contact the management of this shelter about any of these issues, she's been unsuccessful. She said that she requested another meeting of the CAB in the coming month, before school starts, because there are 4 local schools in the area.

Richard Huber pointed out that shelter residents hang out in front of local businesses in the community. The Board Chairperson said that he sees about a half-dozen shelter residents at the Glendale Memorial plaza during the day.

Cathie Sumsky asked if the Mayor's policy to remove residents from congregate shelters and put them into hotel rooms is still in effect. She said every time she drives by the shelter, no one is wearing masks. The Board Chairperson commented that, to his knowledge, there is no signed contract between the service provider and the City, as yet. Ms. Masi replied that there is a signed contract, but their contract has not been registered yet. She said that she was told that they would move all of the shelter residents into hotel rooms, but apparently, there was a change in plans and no one was notified.

Ms. Masi said that she has requested another meeting of the CAB in the coming month, before school starts, because there are 4 local schools in the area and parents are concerned for their child's safety.

## **Transportation and Public Transit Services Committee**

### **John Maier**

John Maier reported that the Committee held a remote Committee Meeting at 7:30pm on June 23<sup>rd</sup> to review the status of the Wyckoff Avenue Reconstruction Project. He said that apparently, the project's been put on hold. The District Manager explained that he has to organize a joint-meeting with representatives of both the Dept. of Environmental Protection and the Dept. of Transportation in order to resolve the question of when and where this project could proceed.

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The Board Chairperson commented that since the Wolff-Alport site on the Brooklyn/Queens border, in the vicinity of the intersection of Wyckoff and Cooper Avenues, was found to have been contaminated with atomic energy waste dumped into the sewer at the end of World War II, the Dept. of Environmental Protection is required to assess whether the contamination spread into the sewer system on Wyckoff Avenue and adjoining streets, prior to issuing a contract. He said that it's possible to complete this project in two phases, the first one could be the section of Wyckoff Avenue between Flushing Avenue and Myrtle Avenue in Brooklyn, and the second phase could be the section of Wyckoff Avenue from Myrtle Avenue to Cooper Avenue, in Queens and Brooklyn.

Mr. Maier reported that MTA ridership is down 75% since the COVID-19 shutdown began, including commuters on trains, buses and commuter rail service. He said that the MTA is facing a serious budget gap now and must find ways to recoup their losses.

Regarding the M Train elevated structure painting project, he said that this project has also been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Maier reported that the Committee reviews many traffic safety requests to deter speeding on local streets each month. He said that the Committee recommends the installation of All-Way Stops and speed reducers on a continuing basis all year long.

He said that the Committee also discussed the City's plan to permit restaurants to install additional outdoor seating on sidewalks and curbside in front of their business.

He said that Edgar Mantel gave the Committee an update on the expansion of LaGuardia Airport that's currently underway.

Ken Rehberger described a traffic accident involving a driver who was speeding on 80 Avenue and went airborne when the car hit a Speed Bump at 62 Street. He said the car slammed into 3 parked cars before it finally stopped there.

Lee Rottenberg commented that SUVs are being built larger and larger now, and they shouldn't be classified as passenger cars anymore.

Mr. Rehberger pointed out that lots of car commercials feature drivers speeding through City streets. He said that shouldn't be permitted.

Kathy Masi pointed out that the NYPD's ability to apprehend speeders is really hampered by the recent push to eliminate the use of unmarked vehicles.

John Maier said that these issues should be addressed by the Public Safety Committee instead.

The Board Chairperson announced that there won't be any Board Meeting in August, unless absolutely necessary.

As there was no further business to come before the Board, the Board Chairperson adjourned the public meeting of Community Board 5 on a motion from the floor at 9:24pm.