



**THE CITY OF NEW YORK
BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 6**

1932 Arthur Avenue, Room 403-A, Bronx, NY 10457

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Honorable Ruben Diaz Jr., Bronx Borough President

MS. EVONNE CAPERS
Board Chairperson

MR. JOHN SANCHEZ
District Manager

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD #6
Meeting minutes of Wednesday, February 10, 2021

Members Present:

Clarita Bailon, Cornell Brown, Evonne Capers, Nicole Carter, Sadija Cekovic, Nelson Chimilio, Diana Diaz, Margarita Espinosa, Frank Franz, Lanell Gardenhire, Laura James, Matthew Martinez, Francine Miller, Jorge Ortiz, Rosa Peraza, Paul Ramirez, Carmen Rivera, Kristine Rivera, Helga Robles, Maria Ruiz Gutierrez, Lisa Sanchez, Gil Simmons, Noorjahan Wells, and Jacquetta Whaley.

Members Absent:

Virginia Bird, Milagros Cancel, Maria Garcia, Julisa Hamilton, Audrey Harden, Maria Latimer, Assana Lloyd, Michael Nelson, Floretta O'Brien, Rev. Marilyn Oliver, Reggie Powell, Rev. Hiriam Ratliff, Wendy Rodriguez, Divine Sikanku, and Lillie Steed.

Elected Officials Present:

New York State Assemblymember Nathalia Fernandez
New York State Senator Luis Sepulveda

Elected Officials Representatives Present:

Alexis Ruiz, representing Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.
Elanor Werner, representing New York City Council Speaker Corey Johnson and the 15th Council District
Nick Peters, representing New York State Assemblymember Victor Pichardo
Francisco Aquino Ramirez, representing New York State Senator Gustavo Rivera
Hennessey Reyes, representing New York State Senator Luis Sepulveda
Nanette Alvarado, representing United States Congressman Ritchie Torres
Justin Westbrook-Lowery, representing New York State Assemblymember Karines Reyes

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The February 10, 2021 meeting of Bronx Community Board #6 was held via Zoom Audio and Video Conference meeting ID 965 9831 5738 and via Zoom Video at <https://zoom.us/j/96598315738> and was called to order at approximately by 6:40 PM by Chairperson Evonne Capers.

II. INVOCATION

The meeting's invocation was delivered by Board Member Noorjahan Wells.

III. COMMUNITY PERIOD

Individuals who asked to address the community board as part of the meeting's Community Period included:

Steven Williams, representing Medical Transportation Management

Mr. Williams informed us about the accessible dispatch programs for wheelchair accessible taxis. The fare of these services are the same as regular taxis and individuals have the option of on demand services or booking trips in advance. This program is making New York accessible for everyone and to prevent people with disabilities or elderly to feel that they are stranded. Individuals can download the app, go on their website, call (646) 599 - 9999 or email accessibledispatch@mtm.net to access their services.

Dianne Hebert, representing Bronx River Art Center

Ms. Hebert announced that as *Beyond the "Encuentro"* comes to an end, there will be an evening of artists in conversation in response to the exhibition. This talk will be moderated by renowned New York printmaker, Luanda Lozano, and will occur on Saturday, February 20th, over zoom at 6:30 PM and the gallery will be open at limited capacity. Ms. Hebert also announced that the Bronx River Art Center is open from 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM on Tuesdays to Fridays and from 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM on Saturdays. There will be upcoming events in the Spring and the center will send out email announcements with more information. If individuals want to know more information about upcoming programming or interested in visiting the gallery space, they can email Ms. Hebert at dhebert@bronxriverart.org.

IV. BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr's report was presented by his Community Board Liaison, Ms. Alexis Ruiz. The report included, but was not limited to, the following information:

- Ms. Ruiz reminded the individuals who have not submitted their Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Agreement to do so at their earliest convenience via email and postal mail.
- Ms. Ruiz also reminded the individuals who submitted their Community Board Membership applications to submit their Community Board Meeting Attendance form.

V. ELECTED OFFICIALS' REPORTS

New York State Assemblymember Nathalia Fernandez

Assemblymember Fernandez informed the community that restaurants are allowed to open at 25% capacity for indoor dining starting on Friday and middle schools are also open as they are preparing

for in-person learning. She also informed us that to increase voter access, the state legislature has passed a bill allowing for automatic voter registration if individuals sign up for driver's license or completes any application with any state agency. They also passed legislation that will allow restaurants owners that have built an outdoor dining apparatus can get back up to \$5,000. She also informed us that the COVID Renters' Relief Grant is still continuing and the application is available online and on her website. Assemblymember Fernandez also encouraged individuals who are eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine to receive it. There was a recent town hall meeting regarding myths and fears about the COVID-19 vaccines by doctors from NYC Health + Hospitals. The town hall meeting is pre-recorded and is available on her Facebook page for those individuals who are interested in learning more about the vaccine. She also informed us that she held a forum about rank choice voting, which will be used for the Primary and Special Elections. She believes that this system gives value to every vote. She also encouraged individuals to do their research and find out who their candidates are. Her office can be reached at (718) 409-0109 or via email at fernandezn@nyassembly.com for more information or assistance.

New York State Senator Luis Sepulveda

Senator Sepulveda informed the community that his office was still continuing housing and health work. Bills regarding housing discrimination passed in a package of fair housing laws. Implicit bias training will be required as part of real estate license renewal testing. There will also be increased penalties and broader accountabilities to ensure that all prospective buyers and renters are treated equally. He encourages individuals to reach out to the office if they feel discriminated against. Senator Sepulveda informed the community that Albany will take significant steps in ensuring that veterans get college access and programs necessary to ensure easy college graduation will be available for veterans. His office also seeks to protect immigrant student bodies from being deported by universities and relieve New York students' financial burdens. He is proud to announce that he helped pass two bills, one of which allows medical and psychiatric records of deceased inmates to be accessed by the New York State Board of Corrections, an entity that are eyes and ears for correctional facilities throughout the state that works for families who have friends or relatives in correctional facilities. He also helped pass legislation permitting the Board of Correction access to visit correctional facilities with less notice. His office is continuing to press hard for the vaccination program to be brought to the Bronx. Individuals can call (833) - SOMOS - NY to make an appointment if they are eligible for the vaccine. Yankee Stadium will restart accepting applications for the COVID vaccine. Individuals can also call SNHealth, who is working with his office closely to provide vaccines especially to seniors. On February 15, 2021, eligibility will be expanded to include people with prior health conditions, like diabetes or hypertension. Individuals must provide a doctor's note that indicates their health conditions. Senator Sepulveda informed the community that indoor dining starts February 12, 2021 instead of February 14, 2021. Alternate side parking is suspended until February 13, 2021. He told the community members that his office fought to make sure our community is next in line to get vaccines because we suffered more deaths than any other community in the city. They helped 650 people with unemployment, with landlord tenant eviction and SNAP benefits. The office is closed but the staff is working remotely. So, he encourages individuals to call the office if they feel discriminated against, need help to get vaccinated and other matters regarding housing, unemployment and SNAP benefits. His office can be reached at (718) 991 - 3161 or via email at team@senatorsepulveda.com.

Nick Peters, representing New York State Assemblymember Victor Pichardo

Mr. Peters informed the community that Assembly sessions are ongoing. They take place live every day and links are available on the website. The office puts up links every Monday and Thursday for the sessions of the week. He also announced that Assemblyman Pichardo is the Chair of the Standing Committee on Banks. Assemblyman Pichardo hosted a town hall on public banking about two weeks ago. The legislature recently passed an Amendment on clean air, repealed the walking while trans ban and is currently trying to pass a possible legislation to support small businesses including a bill to revamp the current system used to determine eligibility for partial employment insurance benefits and a bill to exclude unemployment charges due to COVID19 for being used to calculate an employer's experience rating. The legislature also passed the COVID19 Emergency Protect a Small Business Act, which extends critical evictions and foreclosure protections for small businesses until May 1st. The office compiled a list of free tax resources, especially because Tax Day is February 12, 2021, which is the first day that we can start doing taxes. If individuals require assistance from his office, he can be contacted by telephone at (718) 933-6909 or by email by contacting Nick Peters at petersng@nyassembly.gov. Their office is operating remotely from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM from Monday to Friday. Individuals can also follow Assemblymember Pichardo on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram at [vpichardo86](#). You can also obtain weekly updates on what's happening in Albany on his social media platforms on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Nanette Alvarado, representing Congressman Ritchie Torres

Ms. Alvarado informed the community that the staff has been working from the office since January 23, 2021. Since taking office, Congressman Ritchie Torres requested federal intervention in the Hunts Point market strike. He was also successful in stopping the deportation of Javier Castillo, who is in Louisiana while waiting for the review of his case. Congressman Ritchie Torres is appointed as the vice-chair of the House Committee of Homeland Security. Ms. Alvarado also informed the community that the Congressman called to abolish the death penalty. He re-introduced a bill to cancel student debt with Senator Chuck Schumer, Elizabeth Warren and representative Diana Presley, amongst others. He helped pass the amendment to the National Apprenticeship Act to promote apprenticeship to English language learners. He also participated in the first committee hearings. The office is currently not accepting walk-ins but appointments will be scheduled if individuals call in advance. The office can be reached at (718) 503 - 9610 or via email at nanette.alvarado@mail.house.gov.

Eleanor Werner, representing Speaker Corey Johnson

Ms. Warner informed the community that the office is still open Monday to Friday from 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM. They are still accepting constituents. They can be reached at (718) 842 - 8100 or via email at district15@council.nyc.gov.

Justin Westbrook-Lowery, representing New York State Assemblymember Karines Reyes

Mr. Westbrook-Lowery informed the community that Assemblymember Karines Reyes participated in the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Change for Kids Youth Engagement Center in West Farms earlier in the month. He also told individuals that this is one of the learning bridges sites for our area, which will be providing childcare for those who are participating in school remotely. There are some after school programs, including robotics, creative arts and more. He said programming is important

for kids in our communities since many people in the community are essential workers. He also informed the community that Assemblywoman Karines Reyes helped get the program private funding. The program is free to all children who enroll and is located at 1909 Daly Avenue. It is open from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM from Monday to Friday. The office will be sure to share the flyer soon. He also announced that the Assemblywoman is working on a new deal for the City University of New York. This plan would provide more capital funding and funding for academic staff and guidance counselors. The funding will also go to the City University of New York programs, like childcare centers and CUNY ASAP. The assemblywoman is trying to make CUNY free for all New York City residents. She is also helping to pass the New York Hero Act to protect workers during health crises. She is working with colleagues to come up with standards to protect workers across different industries. Mr. Westbrook-Lowery informed the community that she is the appointed Chair of the Assembly's Subcommittee of Workplace Safety so that she can advocate for different essential workers. The office is currently working remotely and can be reached at (718) 931-2621 or via email at westbrookloweryj@nyassembly.gov.

Francisco Ramirez, representing New York State Senator Gustavo Rivera

Mr. Ramirez announced that Senate bill 2061 passed, which highlights reporting standards for communicable disease and is designed to bring transparency during public health crises. He also informed the community that Senate Bill 8866 relates to notice on health consumer assistance, which will require contact information for two different consumer assistance programs on all Medicaid adversaries, determinations, grievances and appeal notices. In December 2020, the Senate passed the COVID19 Emergency Eviction and Foreclosure Prevention Act, which ensures that any pending eviction proceedings that commenced within 30 days of legislation will be saved for at least 60 days. If individuals suffered from financial hardship due to COVID, they may take 60 days to submit a hardship declaration form and the office recommends to seek legal counsel to fill out the form. If individuals need legal counsel, then they can reach out to the office. The form is supposed to be submitted to landlords and to the court to halt eviction proceedings until May 1, 2021. The governor expanded eligibility for vaccinations to adults over 65. As of February 15, 2021, adult New Yorkers with certain pre-existing conditions are eligible to get the vaccine. To find out more about the list of eligible pre-existing conditions, individuals can reach out to the office to get the link. On February 5, 2021, the Yankee Stadium opened up as a mass vaccination hub for Bronx residents. If individuals are eligible for the vaccine, then they can call (833) SOMOS - NY to make an appointment. They will require you to prove that you are a Bronx resident, which can be done by bringing state id. Passports do not count, but individuals can bring their lease or mortgage records. The assemblyman hosted a webinar for the vaccine, where experts were able to explain the science behind the vaccine. The webinar is available on his Facebook Page. Additionally, every Tuesday from 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM, the tenant specialist services are still continuing, so individuals can call to make an appointment. The office is physically closed and the staff is still working remotely. The office can be reached at (718) 933-2034, or via email at grivera@nysenate.gov or aquino@nysenate.gov.

VI. DISTRICT MANAGER'S REPORT

District Manager John Sanchez is on a leave of absence. The district manager was presented by Ms. Carla Leon. The report included the following information:

- **Ms. Leon announced that there will be a virtual Resume and Interview Workshops on February 18, 2021 and February 19, 2021 at 11:00 AM via RingCentral Meetings in partnership with Workforce 1.**

VII. ROLL CALL ATTENDANCE

A roll call attendance was taken confirming the presence of a quorum with the presence of twenty-four (24) members.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

The committee reports were sent by email and are available on Bronx Community Board #6's website. Chairperson Evonne Capers requested that we read the reports at our leisure.

IX. ADOPTION OF MOTIONS

- 1. A motion to adopt the minutes of Bronx Community Board #6's meeting of January 13, 2021 was made by Ms. Noorjahan Wells, seconded by Mr. Matthew Martinez, and adopted by a vote of twenty-three in favor, zero opposition and one abstention.**
- 2. A motion to approve Bronx Community Board #6's Letter of Comment for the Fiscal Year 2022 Preliminary Budget as submitted was made by Mr. Gil Simmons, seconded by Ms. Noorjahan Wells, and adopted by a vote of twenty-three in favor, zero opposition and one abstention.**

X. ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business to discuss, the February 10, 2021 meeting of Bronx Community Board #6 was adjourned at approximately 7:40 PM pursuant to a motion made by Mr. Gil Simmons, second by Ms. Noorjahan Wells and unanimously adopted by acclamation (twenty-four in favor, zero opposed and zero abstention).

Respectfully submitted:

**Sanzida Talukder
Community Associate**

**Carla Leon
Community Associate**

*Vacant,
City Council Member, 15th Council District*

*Honorable Rafael Salamanca Jr.,
City Council Member, 17th Council District*

ATTENDANCE AND VOTING RECORDING FOR BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD #6 MEETING OF FEBRUARY 10, 2021

NAME	ATTENDANCE	MINUTES OF JANUARY 13, 2021	LETTER OF COMMENT FY 2022	ADJOURNMENT						
Clarita Bailon	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes						
Virginia Bird										
Cornell Brown	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes						
Milagros Cancel										
Evonne Capers	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes						
Nicole Carter	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes						
Sadija Cekovic	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes						
Nelson Chimilio	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes						
Diana Diaz	Present	Yes	Abstain	Yes						
Margarita Espinosa	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes						
Frank Franz	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes						
Maria Garcia										
Lanell Gardenhire	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes						
Julisa Hamilton										
Audrey Harden										
Laura James	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes						
Maria Latimer										
Assana Lloyd										
Matthew Martinez	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes						
Francine Miller	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes						
Michael Nelson										
Floretta O'Brien										
Rev. Marilyn Oliver										
Jorge Ortiz	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes						
Rosa Peraza	Present	No	Yes	Yes						
Reggie Powell										
Paul Ramirez	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes						
Carmen Rivera	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes						
Kristine Rivera	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes						
Rev. Hiram Ratliff										
Helga Robles	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes						
Wendy Rodriguez										
Maria Ruiz Gutierrez	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes						
Lisa Sanchez	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes						
Divine Sikanku										
Gil Simmons	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes						
Lillie Steed										
Noorjahan Wells	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes						
Jacquetta Whaley	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes						