



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

1932 Arthur Avenue, Room 403-A, Bronx, New York 10457

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Honorable Vanessa L. Gibson, Bronx Borough President

Honorable Oswald Feliz, New York City Council Member

MS. EVONNE CAPERS
Board Chairperson

MR. RAFAEL MOURE-PUNNETT
District Manager

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD #6

Meeting minutes of Wednesday, December 13, 2023

Members Present:

Cornell Brown, Brigette Brantley, Evonne Capers, Michael Caraballo, Nicole Carter, Sadija Cekovic, Sadonia Croom, Margarita Espinosa, Frank Franz, Maria Garcia, Melissa Guzman, Laura James, Maria Latimer, Magdamary Marcano, Jessii Parham, Lamont Parker, Reggie Powell, Samsondeen Raheem, Paul Ramirez, Renee Reed, Carmen Rivera, Kristine Rivera, Carol Robinson, Lisa Sanchez, Gil Simmons, Gladys Sotomayor, Monique Williams, and Annette Wright.

Members Absent:

Clarita Bailon, John Barczak (Leave of Absence), Isaac Bowen, Gail Irby, Francene Miller (Leave of Absence), Angel Nunez-Garcia, Rosa Peraza, Yamelith Rivera, Noorjahan Wells, and Angelina Zervos (Leave of Absence).

Elected Officials Present:

New York City Council Member Oswald Feliz

Elected Officials Representatives Present:

Leonardo Coello, representing New York City Mayor Eric Adams
Kenny Agosto, representing Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson
Santiago Baena, representing New York City Council Member Oswald Feliz
Freddy Perez, representing New York City Council Member Rafael Salamanca Jr.
Jasmine Torreblanca, representing New York State Senator Gustavo Rivera
Christian Cardus, representing New York State Senator Luis Sepulveda
Karime Vergara, representing New York State Assemblymember Karines Reyes
Stefano Perez, representing New York State Assemblymember George Alvarez
Ignacio Aracena, representing New York State Assemblymember George Alvarez
Raishiel Muniz, representing United States Congressman Ritchie Torres

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The December 13, 2023 meeting of Bronx Community Board #6 was held at the Fordham University located at 441 East Fordham Road, and was called to order at approximately 6:41 PM by Chairperson Evonne Capers.

II. INVOCATION

The meeting's invocation was delivered by Board Parliamentarian Gil Simmons.

III. COMMUNITY PERIOD

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

Melissa Guzman, representing SBH System Health

Ms. Guzman made an announcement about SBH Health System their available community resources. This includes fitness courses and gym membership for \$35.00 a month and healthy cooking classes for \$5.00 per session at the SBH Health System's Health and Wellness Center. She also informed us that SBH Health System will be hosting the 48th Police Precinct Community Council at their annual holiday toy drive on Wednesday, December 19, 2023 from 2:30 PM to 5:00 PM.

Maria Garcia, representing St. Thomas Aquinas Church

Ms. Garcia announced that St. Thomas Aquinas Church will be having a holiday gift distribution on Sunday, December 24, 2023 between 11:00 AM and 12:00 PM at the church's gymnasium located at 1909 Daly Avenue.

Jose A. Padilla Jr.

Mr. Padilla expressed his concern about the recent CitiBike station installations in the district. He informed us that he has observed that the CitiBike stations are not filled to capacity with bicycles and have taken valuable parking spaces. Mr. Padilla is requesting the assistance of the Transportation Committee with this matter.

District Manager Rafael Moure-Punnett and Transportation Committee Chairperson Lisa Sanchez invited Mr. Padilla to attend the upcoming Transportation Committee meeting.

Renee Reed, representing Renee and Friends

Ms. Reed thanked Bronx Community Board #6 for their support with their Thanksgiving Food and Distribution.

Liliana Candelario, Bronx River Art Center

Ms. Candelario announced that the Bronx River Art Center will be having a performance by Pianist Gabriel Chakarji who will be performing “Immigrant Tales” on Thursday, December 14, 2023 at 7:00 PM. Tickets for the performance are available at \$15 for adults, \$12 for seniors and students, and \$18 at the door. She also announced that enrollment for their Winter Art Classes are open.

IV. BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Bronx Borough Vanessa L. Gibson’s report was presented by her Community Liaison of Community Boards, Mr. Kenny Agosto. The report included, but was not limited to, the following information:

- Mr. Agosto reported that emergency responders went through the rubble of the recently collapsed residential building painstakingly and found no injured individuals. He also informed us that the building was built in 1927 and had three open violations, but none of them were structural. At this time, Borough President Gibson’s office is providing support to those who were impacted.
- Mr. Agosto also announced that the Tree Lighting Extravaganza and Winter Wonderland was held on Wednesday, December 6, 2023 and it was a success.
- Mr. Agosto also informed us about the Borough President Gibson’s Advisory Council — HIV Roundtable recent conversations to work closely with the LGBTQIA+ Task Force, which sponsored conferences in October and November. As a result, there will be a conference to address HIV stigma.
- Mr. Agosto also informed us that the Office of Management and Budget met to discuss the Community Boards’ budget and invited District Managers to attend.
- Mr. Agosto can be reached by telephone at (347) 213-4375 to assist individuals with any questions they may have.

V. ELECTED OFFICIALS’ REPORTS

Leonardo Coello, representing New York City Mayor Eric Adams

Mr. Coello informed us of the Mayor’s lobbying efforts in Washington DC and encouraged individuals to reach out to their elected representatives at the federal level, advocating for funding to support the influx of migrants in New York City. The city is imposing 5% budget cuts over three phases, totaling 15% in budget cuts to offset the \$7 billion dollar deficit. Examples of budget cuts implemented by agencies include the firehouses losing one fireman, no new officers for a total two graduating classes, and libraries closed on Sundays. In comparison with other cities, like Chicago and Los Angeles, New York City is the model for handling the migrant situation. He also informed us that a balanced budget was passed, but funding is impacted by the immigration situation in the City. Mayor Adams has devoted record funding to youth services and hosts town halls to hear directly from students regarding their concerns.

New York City Council Member Feliz

Council Member Feliz provided us with updates including the progress on finishing the renovations at the Crotona Park Malls in which \$2 million dollars were allocated for this project. He also informed us that \$6 million dollars is dedicated to capital improvements in parks and sports fields construction

that at M.S. 45 will begin next year. In the upcoming legislative session Council Member Feliz will aim to bring the necessary funds to complete renovations for Bathgate Park, which needs \$13 million dollars. Last year the council member successfully passed legislation to regulate the sale of e-bike batteries. There are over 60,000 uncertified e-bike batteries, which will be a priority in the upcoming legislative session. He is working on a program with GrubHub, Uber Eats, and other food delivery companies that allow delivery workers to trade unsafe batteries for a certified battery. Council Member Feliz also announced that he will be having a holiday toy giveaway on December 13, 2023 at 4:00 PM at Fordham University's McShane Center.

Freddy Perez Jr., representing New York City Council Member Rafael Salamanca Jr.

Mr. Perez informed us of the bills sponsored by Council Member Salamanca. In response to New Yorkers who expressed criticisms over the summons process, Councilmember Salamanca sponsored Int 0743 to require city employees who issue summons to have preprinted or handwritten business cards. Councilmember Salamanca helped 16 illegal car washes get their license and has sponsored Int 1131 to expand the Department of Sanitation's enforcement capabilities over unlicensed car washes. Additionally, Councilmember Salamanca sponsored Int 0198 to require DOE buildings to stock opioid antagonist, such as NARCAN sprays, for emergencies. The office is located at 1070 Southern Boulevard, Bronx, New York 10459 and is open from 9am to 5pm for constituent services. Immigration assistance is by appointment only on Mondays and Tuesday. The Christmas party will take place at Maestros Catering tomorrow, from 7 pm to 12 am. All are welcome to attend as guests on a first-come first-serve basis and about 500 people are anticipated.

Christian Cardus, representing New York Senator Luis Sepulveda

Mr. Cardus provided legislative updates. Senator Sepulveda is advocating for Bill S5158, which requires a license to operate mopeds or electric scooters. Other sponsored legislation includes S5981 to require child resistant packaging for cannabis products, S7657 to grant temporary work permits and offset the budgetary demands created by the influx of migrants by enacting the "New York emergency expedited temporary work permit act", and S7733 to impose an excise tax on firearms purchased in the state that will fund anti-gun violence organizations. Last month, 100 to 200 turkeys were provided to families at each of the five sponsored turkey giveaways. Mr. Cardus updated us regarding the partnership with Bridge Builders to help constituents with SNAP applications and recertifications, which took place at their office located at 900 Rogers Place, Bronx, New York 10459. Future dates for assistance from Bridge Builders are forth coming. The office location will change around the end of January or beginning of February, but the phone number will remain the same. For questions, contact the office at (718) 991-3161. Follow Senator Sepulveda on social media for updates using the handle @NYSenSepulveda.

Karime Vergara, New York State Assembly Member Karina Reyes

Ms. Vergara informed us that Assembly Member Karina Reyes is sponsoring the 6th Annual Three Kings celebration on January 6th from 1 pm to 4 pm at Holy Family Church, located at 2158 Watson Avenue, Bronx, New York 10472. The office is open to constituents and is located at 1973 Westchester Avenue, Bronx, NY 10462. To reach the office by phone, call 718-931-2620.

Jasmine Torreblanca, representing New York State Senator Gustavo Rivera

Ms. Torreblanca informed us that their office will be closed from December 18 to January 7. To reach staff, call (718) 933-2034 and leave a voicemail. Operations will resume on January 8.

Raishiel Muniz, United States Congressman Ritchie Torres

Ms. Muniz informed us that Representative Ritchie Torres will be hosting a toy giveaway on December 22 at the Bronx Zoo from 3 pm to 5 pm. Ms. Muniz also informed us that the office is available to assist constituents with matters involving federal agencies. Although the recent building collapse is outside the district, individuals can contact the office and a staff member will direct them according to the issue. To contact the office, call (718) 503-9610.

Stefano Perez and Ignacio Aracena, Assemblymember George Alvarez

Mr. Perez thanked board members and District Manager Rafael Moure-Punnett for their work in the district. Assemblymember Alvarez is working with partners in government to address food insecurity. The legislative session begins on January 3 and Mr. Perez discussed the legislative priorities for Assemblymember Alvarez, including housing, public safety, substance abuse and opioid use prevention, environmental conservation, higher education scholarships, and economic opportunity. To support small businesses, Assemblymember Alvarez will continue pushing for the ‘right to counsel’ to provide representation for commercial evictions. The office is located at 2633 Webster Avenue, Bronx, New York 10458.

VI. CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT

Ms. Evonne Capers chairperson’s report included the following information:

- Ms. Capers reported that the Executive Committee discussed the Disciplinary Committee Rules on Conduct and Attendance Removal Procedures.
- Ms. Capers also reported that the Executive Committee discussed the committee’s concerns of the current Leave of Absences request process. As a result, Board Members wishing to take a leave of absence can fill out the new leave of absence form and send it to her and the Board’s office. Once she has signed and dated the form, the Board’s office will return the form to the Board Member and the leave of absence is authorized.

VII. DISTRICT MANAGER

Mr. Moure-Punnett’s district manager’s report included the following information:

- Mr. Moure-Punnett informed us that Bronx Community Board #6 co-sponsored a visioning session with the Fordham Business Improvement District to discuss the future of Fordham Plaza this month. They collected ideas and feedback from residents, students, and street vendors about how the plaza is currently being used and should be used in the future.

- **Mr. Moure-Punnett also informed is that the By-Laws Ad-Hoc Committee met this month and revised Bronx Community Board #6's By-Laws. When the By-Laws Ad-Hoc Committee meets this month, they will elect a new Chairperson and likely present By-Laws Amendment to the Community Board.**
- **Mr. Moure-Punnett also reported on some of the items that will be discussed at the December Committee meetings.**

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Lamont Parker, Disciplinary Committee Chairperson

Mr. Parker reported that the Disciplinary Committee discussed the committee's Rules on Conduct and Attendance Removal Procedures. They also discussed the current Leave of Absences request process and suggested that a formal procedure be established. They also discussed the letters that were to Board Members regarding attendance.

Ms. Nicole Carter, Economic Development Committee Chairperson

Ms. Carter reported that the Economic Development Committee was informed about the City of Yes Economic Opportunity Zoning Text Amendment from the New York City Department of City Planning. The City of Yes for Economic Opportunity would support businesses and job growth by ensuring a wider range of businesses can use existing commercial space. The New York City Department of City Planning began formal public review on the City of Yes for Economic Opportunity on October 30, 2023. Local Community Boards, Borough Presidents, and City Council Members will all have the opportunity to review. Therefore, the Economic Development will be continuing the reviewing process at the next committee meeting. Ms. Carter also reported that the Economic Development Committee discussed the schedule of workshops with Banco Popular. Banco Popular is prepared to deliver three modules as part of their financial empowerment education. The Economic Development Committee decided that the tentative schedule to launch the financial empowerment series is set to begin in 2024. Ms. Carter also reported that the Economic Development Committee was informed about the East Tremont Avenue Merchant Meetings. The Economic Development Committee discussed the Fordham Plaza Community Workshop Planning Session with Fordham Forward.

Ms. Margarita Espinosa, Environment and Parks Committee Chairperson

Ms. Espinosa reported that the Environment and Parks Committee was informed by the New York City Department of Design and Construction on the design for the Walter Gladwin Park Recreation Center. The Environment and Parks Committee was informed that the design for the Walter Gladwin Recreation Center integrates the natural environment of the park and urban landscape. The center will have a media lab, dance room, cardio room, facilities for strength and cardio training, classrooms, as well as communal lobbies on each floor. The construction for the Walter Gladwin Recreation Center is anticipated to begin in March 2025 and completed in 2027. She also stated that the New York City Department of Design and Construction is seeking the Community Board's support for this project. Ms. Espinosa also reported that the Environment and Parks Committee was informed that the New York State and New York City Department of Transportation and the New York City Department of City Planning presented at the Executive Committee meeting about the current phase of the Reimagine the Cross Bronx Expressway study.

Ms. Kristine Rivera, Health and Human Service Committee Chairperson

Ms. Rivera reported that the Health and Human Services Committee discussed the logistics for hosting the Certified Recovery Peer Advocate (CRPA) and Certified Addiction Recovery Coach (CARC) Trainings with Keep It Simple and Safe (KISS). Ms. Rivera also reported that the Health and Human Services Committee was informed that she hosted a presentation for a faith-based organization, the United Grove Methodist Baptist Church, during their Wellness Wednesday program. She also reported that the Health and Human Services Committee voted in favor of appointing Board Member Melissa Guzman as the Health and Human Services Committee Vice-Chairperson.

Mr. Frank Franz, Housing and Land-Use Committee Chairperson

Mr. Franz reported that the Housing and Land-Use Committee was informed about District Manager Rafael Moure-Punnett's efforts to partner with New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG) to provide trainings for constituents with housing issues in our district.

Ms. Carmen Rivera, Public Safety Committee Chairperson

Ms. Rivera reported that the Public Safety Committee reviewed and discussed the Adult-Use Retail Dispensary License Application for 2375 Arthur Avenue. After reviewing and discussing the application, the Public Safety Committee did not issue a recommendation and instead explained the proximity concerns with the other applicants to the New York Office of Cannabis Management. The Public Safety Committee also discussed the All Night Permit Notice for Roy's Restaurant located at 880 East Tremont Avenue. After reviewing and discussing this notice, the Public Safety Committee issued a favorable recommendation to the New York City Police Department and New York State Liquor Authority. Ms. Rivera also reported that the Public Safety Committee was informed by District Manager Rafael Moure-Punnett that a FOIL request was submitted to the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development on behalf of the Community Board.

Maria Latimer, Sanitation Committee Chairperson

Ms. Latimer reported that she met with the Bronx District 6 Superintendent of the New York City Department of Sanitation to discuss the district's sanitation concerns. She also reported that the Sanitation Committee was informed that there are dirty sidewalk conditions Bronx Park Avenue between East 180th Street and Lebanon Street and Cross Bronx Expressway Service Road between Webster Avenue and Park Avenue.

Ms. Lisa Sanchez, Transportation Committee Chairperson

Ms. Sanchez reported that the Transportation Committee continued discussion for the proposed traffic control for East 191st Street between Bathgate Avenue and Hughes Avenue. Board Member Frank Franz proposed that the northern side of East 191st Street between Bathgate Avenue and Hughes Avenue's street parking regulations be changed to "No Standing Anytime". The Transportation Committee determined that this proposal would improve the traffic congestion and accessibility on East 191st Street between Bathgate Avenue and Hughes Avenue. Therefore, a request will be sent to the New York City Department of Transportation. The Transportation Committee also discussed the letter sent to New York City Department of Transportation regarding the Southern Boulevard between East 182nd Street and Fordham Road Safety Improvement Project. At this time, Bronx Community Board #6 has not received a response from the New York City Department of

Transportation. Ms. Sanchez also reported that the Transportation Committee discussed the Fordham Plaza Community Workshop Planning Session with Fordham Forward and other transportation related issues.

Mr. Michael Caraballo, Youth and Education Committee Chairperson

Mr. Caraballo reported that the Youth and Education Committee discussed reviewed the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development list of funded programs in our district and discussed their interest in inviting youth services providers to the present at their monthly committee meetings. The Youth and Education Committee was also informed that the WomanHOOD Project is a Bronx-based non-profit organization with a mission to interrupt harmful portrayals and stereotypes of racialized female, trans and gender non-conforming (TGNC) youth in order to promote leadership, well-being, positive identity development and systemic change. Executive Director Dr. Sonia James-Wilson requested financial support from the Community Board to increase their general operating funds. The Youth and Education Committee expressed support for the much needed programming and mentorship for female youth that is offered by WomanHOOD. To help facilitate fundraising efforts, the Youth and Education Committee asked District Manager Rafael Moure-Punnett to write a letter introducing the nonprofit to our local elected officials. He also reported that the Youth and Education Committee was informed that the School Construction Authority has not replied to the letter sent regarding the promised school that was supposed to be built at Lambert Houses.

IX. ROLL CALL ATTENDANCE

A roll call attendance was taken confirming a quorum with the presence of twenty (27) members.

X. ADOPTION OF MOTIONS

- 1. A motion to adopt the minutes of Bronx Community Board #6's meeting of November 8, 2023 was made by Ms. Renee Reed, seconded Ms. Nicole Carter, and adopted by a vote of twenty-seven in favor, zero abstentions, and zero oppositions.**
- 2. A motion to issue a letter of support and introduction to the Local Elected Officials supporting and introducing the WomanHOOD Project was made by Mr. Michael Caraballo, seconded Reggie Powell, and adopted by a vote of twenty-seven in favor, zero abstentions, and zero oppositions.**
- 3. A motion to allocate \$500 towards the 48th Precinct Community Council's Holiday Toy Giveaway was made by Mr. Lamont Parker, seconded Ms. Kristine Rivera, and adopted by a vote of twenty-seven in favor, zero abstentions, and zero oppositions.**
- 4. A motion to motion to issue a letter of support to the New York City Department of Design and Construction for the Walter Gladwin Park Recreation Center was made by Ms. Margarita Espinosa, seconded Ms. Melissa Guzman, and adopted by a vote of twenty-seven in favor, zero abstentions, and zero oppositions.**

XI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business to discuss, the December 13, 2023 meeting of Bronx Community Board #6 was adjourned at approximately 8:24 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

**Carla Leon
Community Coordinator**

ATTENDANCE AND VOTING RECORDING FOR BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD #6 MEETING OF DECEMBER 13, 2023

NAME	ATTENDANCE	MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 8, 2023	LOS WOMENHOOD PROJECT	\$500 FOR PRECINCT COUNCIL TOY GIVEAWAY	LOS WALTER GLADWIN RECREATION CENTER	ADJOURNMENT		
Clarita Bailon	Absent							
John Barczak	Leave of Absense							
Isaac Bowen	Absent							
Cornell Brown	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Brigette Brantley	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Evonne Capers	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Michael Caraballo	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Nicole Carter	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Sadija Cekovic	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Sadonia Croom	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Margarita Espinosa	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Frank Franz	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Maria Garcia	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Melissa Guzman	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Gail Irby	Absent							
Laura James	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Maria Latimer	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Magdamary Marcano	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Francene Miller	Leave of Absense							
Angel Munez-Garcia	Absent							
Jessii Parham	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Lamont Parker	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Rosa Peraza	Absent							
Reggie Powell	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Samsondeen Raheem	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Paul Ramirez	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Renee Reed	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Carmen Rivera	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Kristine Rivera	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Yamelith Rivera	Absent							
Carol Robinson	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Lisa Sanchez	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Gil Simmons	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Gladys Sotomayor	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Noorjahan Wells	Absent							
Monique Williams	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Annette Wright	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Angelina Zervos	Leave of Absense							