



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

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Honorable Ruben Diaz Jr., Bronx Borough President

MS. WENDY RODRIGUEZ
Board Chairperson

MR. JOHN SANCHEZ
District Manager

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD #6
Meeting minutes of Wednesday, April 12, 2017

Members present:

Jannie Armstrong, Virginia Bird, Evonne Capers, Claudette Coles, Sahre Davis, Diana Diaz, Margarita Espinosa, Maria Garcia, April Hurley, Octavia Lewis, Sara N. Mejia, Michael Nelson, Floretta A. O'Brien, Paul Ramirez, Wendy Rodriguez, Moussa Siby, and Carrie Taft

Members absent:

Virdjil Asanov, Tair Aziov, Alice Charles, Frank Franz, Jerry L. Jackson, Rosa Peraza and Gil Simmons

Elected Officials representatives present:

Thomas Lucania, representing Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.
Israel Sanchez, representing City Councilmember Ritchie Torres
Jay Baez, representing NYS Senator Gustavo Rivera
John Fitzsimmons, representing NYS Assemblyman Michael Blake
Charisse Suarez, representing NYS Assemblyman Jose Rivera
Evangelina Medellin, representing NYS Assemblyman Victor Pichardo
Waheera Mardah, representing Comptroller Scott M. Stringer

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The April 12, 2017 meeting of Bronx Community Board #6 was held at the Mount Carmel Neighborhood Senior Center, which is located at 2405 Southern Boulevard, Bronx, New York, and was called to order at approximately 6:30 p.m. by Chairperson Wendy Rodriguez.

II. INVOCATION

The meeting's invocation was delivered by Reverend Marilyn Oliver from Gethsemane Baptist Church.

*Honorable Ritchie Torres,
City Council Member, 15th Council District*

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

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III. COMMUNITY PERIOD

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

Araminta Rivera representing Mount Carmel Senior Center

Ms. Rivera introduced herself as the Director of the Mount Carmel Senior Center, and thanked the community for their time and presence. She extended an invite to seniors in the neighborhood and encouraged community members to tell seniors in their families about the center.

Jason Caraballo, representing Montefiore Health System

Mr. Caraballo invited the community to three events coordinated by Montefiore Health System. On Saturday, April 29, 2017, Montefiore is partnering with the Bronx Zoo and the Wildlife Conservation to host the Run for the Wild 5K fundraiser. The event is open to families and children, and will take place at the Bronx Zoo before the zoo is open to visitors. There will be activities for both children and adults following the 5K run. On Saturday, May 13, 2017, Montefiore is hosting a free cervical and breast cancer screening event. Women who participate will leave with screening results that same day. Other resources, such as free healthcare enrollment and screening information seminars, will occur at the event. Lastly, he announced that on Saturday, May 20, 2017, Montefiore will be hosting its annual Teddy Bear Hospital, where children are able to learn how emergency rooms operate with the use of stuffed animals and provided teddy bears.

Kasi Acevedo, constituent of Bronx Community Board #6

Ms. Acevedo is a full-time working mother living on 187th Street and Park Avenue. Ms. Acevedo is kindly requesting a play street on her block. She expressed safety concerns about the nearby park, as it is overrun by adults. She believes a play street would encourage healthy relationships among children and foster communication among parents.

Oscar Borrero, representing Toxic Free NYC

Mr. Borrero informed the community about Toxic Free NYC's mission to keep the city free of toxic mold that causes respiratory health complications and in some cases mortality. He brought a petition for the community to sign in support of Councilman Ritchie Torres' legislation requiring contractors working in our communities to have proper licensing.

Lena Reid, representing Crotona Homeowners Association

Ms. Reid expressed her concern about their neighborhood parking lot. She and her neighbors have parked their cars in this lot for over 20 years, and noticed a 'for sale' sign posted on their lot. After further research, it's been noted that the lot was sold in 2012.

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Rockelle Scott, representing Crotona Homeowners Association

Ms. Scott expressed her concern about the sanitation services in her community. She stated that she often get ticketed for garbage on the street because of individuals who go through her garbage for cans and other items. Additionally, she expressed her concern about individuals who do not clean up after their dogs.

Adrian Paling, representing West Farms Workforce 1 Career Center

Mr. Paling introduced himself as Community Partner Coordinator at West Farms Workforce 1 Career Center. He informed the community about STAGE NYC, a free Workforce 1 program that prepares young adults aged 18 to 24 for careers in the NYC restaurant industry. The program is 12 weeks long, and each participant who completes the program will receive a NYC food handler certificate and a job placement at a restaurant. The first cohort starts in May, but Workforce 1 is now recruiting for the second cohort. Mr. Paling also announced job openings at Duane Reade and Fresh Direct.

Mercedes De La Cruz, representing Independence Care System

Ms. De La Cruz informed the community about home healthcare and social services for seniors with chronic conditions offered by Independence Care System (ICS). ICS also offers assistance for those applying for Medicaid in addition to a wheelchair maintenance program.

Reverend Marilyn Oliver, representing Gethsemane Missionary Baptist Church

Reverend Marilyn Oliver expressed her concern about affordable housing and homelessness. She would like to assemble a group of individuals with similar concerns into an association.

Annette C. De Jesus, representing Captain A Fighting the War on Cancer

Ms. Dejesus informed the community about a health fair occurring at St. Barnabas on June 4, 2017. She also announced the 8th Annual Unity in the Community Health Fair occurring on Saturday, July 8, 2017 from 12:00 PM to 6:00 PM between Garden and Prospect by the Southern Boulevard area.

Mr. Reggie Powell, representing Crotona Homeowners Association

Mr. Powell expressed his concern about the increased concentration of homeless shelters in the neighborhood. He is mainly concerned about the safety of single mothers and children in the area. He questioned how he and others in the community can become more involved in decision-making process.

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Celenia Olmo, representing Unity Fellowship Church

Ms. Olmo informed the community about the services Unity Fellowship Church provides, including HIV testing, clothes donations, medical services. She also stated that the church serves as both a soup kitchen and a homeless shelter.

Paulette New, constituent of Bronx Community Board #6

Ms. New expressed her concern about the safety in her neighborhood. She also requested increased security outside buildings. She was also concerned about the current construction at Mapes Pool.

Mr. Sanchez informed Ms. New that the Mapes Pool is currently under construction under preparation for the summer season.

IV. BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Thomas Lucania, representing Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.

Mr. Lucania informed the community that the Borough President's office is reviewing applications for board members up for reappointment and will send letters out by the end of May. Mr. Lucania also announced that the development report for 2016 has been released, highlighting \$3.2 billion in development projects. Lastly, he invited the community to the Borough President's Cinco de Mayo celebration occurring on May 6, 2017 from 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM on Crescent Avenue.

V. ELECTED OFFICIALS' REPORTS

Israel Sanchez, representing Councilmember Ritchie Torres

Mr. Sanchez announced that Councilmember Torres is advocating for a bill that would require city agencies to formally take complaints through social media. Mr. Sanchez also mentioned the success of Councilman Torres's senior event at New York Botanical Gardens. Lastly, he invited undocumented immigrants to a citizen application assistance event occurring on May 20, 2017.

Jay Baez representing Senator Gustavo Rivera

Mr. Baez announced that Senator Rivera would be visiting multiple senior centers in the Bronx during spring recess. He also announced that Senator Rivera's office is hosting a Know Your Rights forum on immigration on April 19, 2017 from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM at Bronx Community College's Old Memorial Library Auditorium. Mr. Baez invited the community to receive free blood tests and hearing tests on Thursday, April 20, 2017. On May 3, 2017, Senator Rivera is partnering with Bronx EOC to host a job fair at 1666 Bathgate Avenue from 10:00 AM until 2:00 PM. Lastly, Mr. Baez reminded the community about the information sessions they conduct for tenants in their offices.

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Charisse Suarez, representing NYS Assemblyman Jose Rivera

Ms. Suarez informed the community that Assemblyman Rivera has been in Albany working to solidify the budget. Ms. Suarez announced that part of the budget would be allocated towards affordable housing. She also announced that after 12 years of working to pass “Raise the Age” legislation, it has finally passed. This legislation would prohibit 16 and 17-year-olds from being prosecuted as adults.

John Fitzsimmons, representing NYS Assemblyman Michael Blake

Mr. Fitzsimmons reported that the Assemblyman Blake’s office will hold ‘Tenant Tuesdays’ from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM for those needing assistance with housing issues. Additionally, he informed us that his office is assisting with health care enrollment every day between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM. Mr. Fitzsimmons also informed us about the success of including “Raise the Age” in the budget.

Evangelina Medellin, representing NYS Assemblyman Victor Pichardo

Ms. Medellin briefly informed us about immigration assistance and Know Your Rights information available at the Assemblyman’s office.

Waheera Mardah, representing Comptroller Scott M. Stringer

Ms. Mardah invited the community to sign up for the Comptroller’s newsletter highlighting upcoming events and information about the Community Action Center.

VI. PRESENTATIONS

Teresa Garcia, representing Department of Small Business Services

Ms. Garcia, Program Manager of the Storefront Improvement Program, presented on the Department of Small Business Services’ New York Main Street Program. The Department of Small Business Services works with community-based organizations to build vibrant neighborhoods where New Yorkers can shop, work, and live by overseeing NYC Business Improvement Districts, offering trainings and tools to these organizations, administering grant programs to strengthen and revitalize commercial districts, and working with community partners to identify local commercial district needs and plan targeted solutions. In response to our District Needs request, the Department of Small Business Services decide to work with us to apply for a New York Main Street grant that may allocate up to \$500,000 in funding towards a storefront improvement initiative on East Tremont Avenue. Currently, the Department of Small Business Services is in the development and outreach phase, talking to property and business owners to get the word out and gain support for the project. To move forward, the community board must provide a resolution to the Department of Small Business Services. Mr. Garcia announced that the final funding amount will be announced by the state in May, and applications are due in July. The Department of Small Business Services

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will submit the strongest application they have. Awards will be announced in December 2017. She stated that the project will ideally be up and running in spring and summer 2018. Ms. Garcia also stated that the Department of Small Business Services will continue to engage with participants, including helping with the application process and helping them understand everything that is required and needed.

The benefits of the New York Main Street program include: improve the public realm, enhance neighborhood livability (including fixing health and safety violations), and promote street safety. Benefits seen in additional cities with similar programs include in first-time customers, increase in total retail sales, and ripple effect on the corridor overall as other business and property owners upgrade their businesses as well.

Carmen Rivera, representing VIP Community Services

Ms. Rivera shared an update on the mural arts initiative with the Department of Health. The two sites have been selected. One of the murals will be at Community School 211 which have been designed with input from artists with mental health issues about how they feel in their community. The mural is expected to go up in June. A community painting day (including a tent in case of rain) will occur on Saturday, May 6, 2017. The school is adopting one of the murals as the design for the journal for their graduating class of 2017.

Armando Moritz-Chapelliquen, representing Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development

Mr. Moritz-Chapelliquen presented on the potential increased for industrial use in areas zoned for industrial business to bring better-paying jobs and improve affordability. He stated that people struggle to afford housing not only because housing is expensive, but because wages are low. Mr. Moritz-Chapelliquen compared wages in retail and hospitality industries to wages in manufacturing, and showed that wages in manufacturing are significantly higher. He argued that ensuring people to obtain better-paying jobs could help people afford housing. He also informed us that a corner of Bronx Community Board #6 is zoned as an industrial business zones (one of 21 such industrial business zones in the city). However, this area is mainly used for other uses, instead of for industrial manufacturing, which is common in NYC because zoning has not been updated in a long time. Mr. Moritz-Chapelliquen argued that allowing other uses in industrial business zones makes it harder for existing industrial businesses to stay and raises rents due to more lucrative uses. The Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development recommends reforming city zoning to ensure industrial business zones are only used for industrial uses. They also recommend appropriate infrastructure and urban design for IBZs, to make and move goods in and out as efficiently as possible and the support of nonprofit development to reduce speculation.

VII. DISTRICT MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Sanchez's district manager's report included, but was not limited to, the following information:

- **Mr. Sanchez informed us that many exciting events have happened in the last month, including the mural going up at Community School 211 and the Department of Small Business Services presenting about an opportunity to invest half a million dollars into the community.**
- **Mr. Sanchez encouraged the community members to continue attending meetings and noted that the more people engage and show up, the more responsive city agencies will be.**
- **The community board held its first gallery show with art from local schools at the community board office; held Bronx Celebration Day with Fordham University.**
- **Mr. Sanchez reported that he met with the Bronx Borough Chief of Family Court, and discussed raising the age from 16 to 17. The Bronx is the only borough that does not have a youth court (Brooklyn is getting its second), which helps youth avoid criminal records for minor offenses such as jumping turnstiles. Mr. Sanchez urged elected officials' representatives present to support a youth court in the Bronx.**

VII. ROLL CALL ATTENDANCE

A roll call attendance was taken confirming the presence of a quorum of seventeen (17) members.

IX. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Economic Development Committee: Ms. April Hurley,

Ms. Hurley reported on the business that was discussed at the Economic Development meeting of March 14, 2016. She stated that Ms. Teresa Garcia from the Department of Small Business Services gave a presentation on the New York Main Street Program. Ms. Hurley, on behalf of the committee, advised the board to submit a motion for a letter of support to the Department of Small Business Services for the New York Main Street program on East Tremont Avenue.

Housing and Land Committee: Mrs. Sara N. Mejia, Committee Chair

Mrs. Mejia reported on the business that was discussed at the Housing and Land-Use committee meeting of March 16, 2017. The committee discussed the Mayor's latest plan to close all cluster shelter sites and instead replacing them with an additional 90 shelters across the city to assist families in need. She asked that the board and committee members should communicate with Nicole Jordan over any issues on the conditions of existing sites. Mrs. Mejia stated that the committee is well aware that this Community Board has the most shelters.

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Law Enforcement Committee: Ms. Claudette Coles, Committee Chair

Ms. Coles announced that the 48th Precinct Council meets every last Tuesday of the month. Ms. Coles reported on the business that was conducted at the 48th Precinct Council meeting. She announced that there's been a 6% increase in crimes in the area. In addition, she reported on the business conducted at the Law Enforcement committee meeting of March 15, 2017. She stated that they discussed the Youth Officer's requests for more engagements. Lastly, she invited the community to the next meeting on Tuesday, April 25, 2017.

Health and Human Services Committee: Mrs. Diana Diaz, Committee Chair

Mrs. Diaz informed the community that Fernando Jimenez from MassMutual presented to the Health and Human Services committee about MassMutual's policy for parents aged 18 - 42 that provides \$50,000 dollars to their children for education if they were to pass away. She told the community to contact the board for Mr. Jimenez's contact information.

Sanitation Committee: Evonne Capers, Committee Chair

Ms. Capers announced that the Sanitation Committee did not have a report to give, but encouraged the community to show up to the Sanitation Committee meetings every third Thursday of the month.

Parks and Recreation Committee: Margarita Espinosa Committee Chair

Ms. Espinosa reported on the business that was conducted at the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting of March 15, 2017. She announced that the Happy Land 27th Anniversary Memorial mass and vigil occurred on March 25, 2017. Ms. Espinosa thanked those who were involved in helping plan and run the anniversary event, and said that the memorial was a huge success. She also announced that the Community Board was planning an It's My Park Day at Tremont Park.

Senior Citizens Outreach Committee: Virginia Bird, Committee Chair

Mrs. Bird reported on the business that was conducted at the Senior Citizen Outreach committee meeting of March 16, 2017. She stated that a presentation was given from the Regional Aid for Interim Needs on the Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program. The Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program (GWEP) Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grant was designed to promote wellness and health aging among Bronx older adults. Volunteers would undergo training to be equipped to provide education sessions for older adults at a Bronx-based senior center or community site. Mrs. Bird announced that the next meeting is April 20, 2017.

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Youth and Education Committee: Sahre Davis, Committee Chair

Ms. Davis discussed the details of the Youth and Education committee's meeting of March 15, 2017. They discussed the art gallery, which opened on March 24th and that they are still accepting art submissions. They also discussed the possibility of hosting a youth talent show. She also encouraged people to come to their committee meetings which are held every third Wednesday of the month.

X. ADOPTION OF MOTIONS

1. A motion to adopt the minutes of Bronx Community Board #6's meeting of March 8, 2017 was made by Mrs. Virginia Bird, seconded by Ms. Margarita Espinosa and unanimously adopted by a vote of 17 in favor, zero opposed, and zero abstentions.
2. A motion to support the resolution in support of the development of worker-cooperatives in the Bronx and the Worker Cooperative Business Development Initiative was made by Ms. April Hurley, seconded by Mrs. Sara Nunez-Mejia and adopted by a vote of 17 in favor, zero opposed, and zero abstentions.
3. A motion to issue a letter of support to the Department of Small Business Services for their New York Main Street Program Application for East Tremont Avenue was made by Mr. Paul Ramirez, seconded by Mr. Michael Nelson and adopted by a vote of 17 in favor, zero opposed, and zero abstentions.

XD. ADJOURNMENT

The April 12th, 2017 meeting of Bronx Community Board #6 was adjourned at approximately 9:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted:
Carla Leon
Community Assistant