



**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. WENDY RODRIGUEZ
Board Chairperson

MR. JOHN SANCHEZ
District Manager

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD #6
Meeting minutes of Wednesday, May 10, 2017

Members present:

Jannie Armstrong, Virginia Bird, Evonne Capers, Alice Charles, Claudette Coles, Diana Diaz, Margarita Espinosa, Frank Franz, Maria Garcia, April Hurley, Sara Nunez-Mejia, Michael Nelson, Floretta A. O'Brien, Rosa Peraza, Paul Ramirez, Wendy Rodriguez, Moussa Siby, Gil Simmons, and Carrie Taft

Members absent:

Tair Aziov, Virdjil Asanov, Sahre Davis, Jerry L. Jackson, and Octavia Lewis.

Elected Officials representatives present:

Famod Konneh, representing Mayor Bill De Blasio
Thomas Lucania, representing Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.
Rafael Moure, representing City Councilmember Ritchie Torres
Ramon Cabral, representing Congressman Jose E. Serrano
Jay Baez, representing NYS Senator Gustavo Rivera
Charisse Suarez, representing NYS Assemblyman Jose Rivera
John Fitzsimmons, representing NYS Assemblyman Michael Blake
Ibrahim Shatara, representing NYS Assemblyman Luis Sepulveda
Evangelina Medellin, representing NYS Assemblyman Victor Pichardo

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The May 10, 2017 meeting of Bronx Community Board #6 was held at the Tremont Branch Library, which is located at 1866 Washington Avenue, 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:

Linda Rosenthal, representing Bronx Early Learning Center

Ms. Rosenthal announced that the Bronx Early Learning Center are currently enrolling children into pre-kindergarten. The children must be 4 years old by December 31, 2017 to qualify. The full-day pre-kindergarten program runs from 8:40 AM to 3:00 PM with nutritious breakfast lunch and snack, top quality instruction using the Creative Curriculum and lovely indoor and outdoor play areas.

Amjad Mujaahid, representing the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Bronx Neighborhood Health Action Center

Mr. Mujaahid announced that there's a Bronx Neighborhood Health Action Center in the East Tremont Avenue area (1826 Arthur Avenue). The Action Center are part of the New York City's effort to promote health equity and reduce health disparities at the neighborhood level. He also announced that the center is offering classes like prenatal yoga, cpr training, zumba, yoga for stress and health, belly dance, infant safety, and safe sleep. They are also offering assistance with health insurances and food stamp applications.

Kristallynn Leonard

Ms. Leonard announced that Encounter NYC's youth group of 3rd graders to 6th graders meets every Wednesday evening from 5:00 PM to 6:30 PM. The teens she also announced that the teenagers meet every Thursday evening from 5:00 PM to 6:30 PM. These gatherings assist the students' goals and achievements through their workshops and seminars. They also host events every third Friday of the month from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM for those who can appreciate music and enjoy connecting with others.

Carmen Rivera, representing VIP Community Services

Ms. Rivera thanked Bronx Community Board #6 and the community for their participation and support at the Mural Paint Fest that was held on Saturday, May 6th.

Mercedes De La Cruz, representing Independence Care System

Ms. De La Cruz informed us that the Independence Care System provides a series of specialized programs and services. She also informed us that they are a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting senior adults and adults with physical disabilities and chronic conditions to live at

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home and participate fully in community life. Lastly, she announced that they are going to be hosting an art show called A Fairytale Affair on Friday, July 21, 2017.

Laura James, representing Bronx River Art Center

Ms. James announced that the Bronx River Art Center is currently conducting a series of Saturday Art Workshops from Saturday, May 6th to Saturday, June 24th. There are conducting a morning class from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM and an afternoon class from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM. These workshops are hosted by Bronx Community Board #6's office (1932 Arthur Avenue).

Wilson Francis, representing Tremont Branch Library

Mr. Francis announced that the Tremont Branch Library will be opening a sound lab this fall where individuals will take piano lessons, do sound design, our simply record demos. Mr. Francis also expressed interest in extending the library's service hours, and requested that attendees sign a petition advocating to elected officials in support.

IV. BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr's report was presented by his Director of Community Boards and Legislative Affairs, Mr. Thomas Lucania. The report included, but was not limited to, the following information:

- Mr. Lucania announced that the Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. kicks-off Bronx Week 2017. He was joined by hundreds of proud Bronxites at the Bronx County Building's Veterans' Memorial Hall. The Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. will be celebrating the grand finale of Bronx Week 2017 with the annual induction ceremony and Bronx Week Parade. It was announced that Prince Royce, Funkmaster Flex, Selenis Leyva and Dr. Manny Villafana would be honored as the newest members of the Bronx Walk of Fame, which it's also celebrating its 20th year.
- Mr. Lucania announced that the Bronx unemployment rate has fallen to its lowest number recorded in the modern era. Unemployment in the Bronx fell to 5.7 percent in March 2017 from 6.5 percent in February 2017.
- Mr. Lucania informed us that "City Hall in Your Borough" will be landing in the Bronx the last full week of May for a week. The week will include meetings with local groups, various stops and events in the borough, and a town hall.

V. ELECTED OFFICIALS' REPORTS

Famod Konneh, representing Mayor Bill de Blasio

Mr. Konneh introduced himself to as the new Bronx Borough Director.

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Rafael Moure, representing Councilmember Ritchie Torres

Mr. Moure announced that there will be a Citizenship Application Assistance event of Saturday, May 20, 2017 from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM at I.S. 254 (2452 Washington Avenue). He also announced that there will be Mother's Day Luncheon for seniors on Saturday, May 13, 2017 from 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM at the Wings Academy High School. Mr. Moure thanked all of those who helped their office during the Participatory Budgeting Process either by going to their offices, going out to collect votes or by collecting votes at the schools. The total of votes collected were 3,959. The following were the winning projects: Laptops in Schools, Smartboards in Schools, P.S. 54 Jungle Gym, NYPD Cameras, Bronx River Art Center Theater Equipment, and Tree Guards. Mr. Moure also informed the community about legislation addressing the homelessness crisis Councilmember Ritchie Torres is introducing to the council. One legislation would require the city to create a list of landlords that accept vouchers, and the other would require the city to give direct deposit to landlords that accept vouchers.

Jay Baez representing Senator Gustavo Rivera

Mr. Baez announced that Senator Rivera would be visiting multiple senior centers in the Bronx during spring recess. Mr. Baez reminded the community about the information sessions they conduct for tenants in their offices on Tuesdays from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM. He reported that the job fair held on May 3, 2017 had over 500 attendees. He also announced that Senator Gustavo Rivera and Urban Justice Center's Domestic Violence Project are partnering to host a monthly Family Law Clinic at his district every last Friday of the month from 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM. Lastly, Mr. Baez distributed the Senior Resource Guide for the 33rd Senate District. For more information or to schedule an appointment, he asked that you call their district office at (718) 933-2034.

John Fitzsimmons, representing 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. Mr. Fitzsimmons announced that Assemblyman Michael Blake's office is working with Community Action for Safe Apartments to host a Know Your Rights workshop for tenants with a free legal clinic and information about how to get repairs in a rent stabilized building. The workshop is being held at 35 Mercy Place at 11:00 AM on Saturday, May 20.

Ibrahim Shatara, representing Assemblyman Luis Sepulveda

Mr. Shatara announced that their office will be hosting a Mother's Day event on Thursday, May

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11, 2017 from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM at the Castle Hill Senior Center. He also announced that a job fair will be held on June 16, 2017 from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM at the New South Bronx Center-Police Athletic League (991 Longwood Avenue). Mr. Shatara announced that Assemblyman Luis Sepulveda will be hosting a community blood drive on Wednesday, May 31 from 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM at 1973 Westchester Avenue.

Evangelina Medellin, representing Assemblyman Victor Pichardo

Ms. Medellin informed us about immigration assistance and Know Your Rights information available at the Assemblyman's office. She announced that their office is providing housing assistance on Thursdays from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM. She also announced that they are hosting a health fair on Saturday, May 13, 2017 from 12:00 PM to 2:30 PM at Public School 85.

Ramon Cabral, representing Congressman Jose E. Serrano

Mr. Cabral informed us that that Congressman Jose Serrano aided in auditing the Postal Service, highlighting problems and creating legislation to create solutions. Furthermore, Congressman Serrano is fighting for funding in Washington, D.C. under the new administration. Mr. Cabral invited the community to a Mother's Day event his office is co-sponsoring on Friday, May 12 from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM.

VI. PRESENTATIONS

Rosemary De Luca, Wildlife Conservation Society, Bronx Zoo

Ms. De Luca presented on the proposed parking regulations changes on Southern Boulevard from East 182nd Street to East 185th Street. She's proposed that a sign reading "No Parking from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM" be installed on Southern Boulevard from East 182nd Street to East 185th Street from April 1st to June 30th every year. This proposal will approximately remove 30 parking residential parking spaces. She stated that this proposal is being made to better manage school busses drop-off and pick-up and for the safety of our children. She informed us that the Bronx Zoo parking lots are filled to capacity during this period of the year. The Bronx Zoo attempted to add to more traffic enforcement officers to prevent traffic congestion in this intersection, but the issue is not being resolved which is why they are making the proposal stated above.

Cheryl Roberts, Greenburger Center for Social and Criminal Justice

Ms. Roberts presented on the Greenburger Center Hope House on 849-853 Crotona Park North. She informed us that they haven't been able to secure funding, but they are currently working hard to secure funding through the State legislative budget for fiscal year 2018. She also informed us that with the anticipated funding, they are going to be able to increase the bed capacity in the facility from 16 to 25. Lastly, Ms. Roberts informed us that they are increasing licensure requirements, which will result in increased staffing and regulation.

VII. DISTRICT MANAGER'S REPORT

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

- **Mr. Sanchez thanked Councilmember Ritchie Torres and Assemblymember Jose Rivera for helping JROTC students from Roosevelt High School Campus to visit West Point Military on April 22, 2017.**
- **Mr. Sanchez announced that the Bronx River Art Center will be hosting their pop up workshops at the community board's district office every Saturday from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM until June 24, 2017. He also thanked Ms. Sahre Davis, Youth and Education Committee Chair, for her work in this effort.**
- **Mr. Sanchez congratulated board member, Mr. Gil Simmons, for being awarded a grant in the amount of \$2000 from the Citizens Committee for New York for a community garden next to the Quarry Ballfield.**
- **Mr. Sanchez announced that It's May Park Day clean-up has been scheduled for Saturday, May 20, 2017 from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM at Tremont Park (East Tremont Avenue and Lafontaine Avenue entrance).**
- **Mr. Sanchez also announced to the board members that the Coro New York Leadership training will be on Saturday, June 3, 2017 and Saturday June 10, 2017 from 10:00 AM to 2:30 PM at the district office.**
- **Mr. Sanchez informed us that Councilmember Salamanca and Assemblymember Blake shared their letter addressed to Mayor de Blasio with the community board in regards to their opposing for a drop-in center for homeless men at 1790 Marmion Avenue. He stated that our community has consistently been chosen for these sites and that he will continue to advocate against oversaturation.**

VIII. DISTRIBUTION OF STIPEND CHECK TO THE COMMUNITY BOARD'S 2017 NOMINEES TO THE NEW YORK YANKEE COMMUNITY COUNCIL'S YOUTH LEADERSHIP CORP.

Stipend checks of \$750 from the New York Yankees' Community Council were distributed to the community board's five nominees to the council's Youth Leadership Corp. The nominees were: Hilda Acosta (not present), Alex Collazo, Ana De La Cruz, Javier Salcedo, and Victor Viera

VII. ROLL CALL ATTENDANCE

A roll call attendance was taken confirming the presence of a quorum of nineteen (19) members.

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IX. COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Committee Reports was included in our meeting packages. Chairperson Wendy Rodriguez asked that we read the reports at our leisure.

Chairperson Wendy Rodriguez also asked the Committee Chairs of those committees with upcoming meetings or events made announcements.

Housing and Land Committee: Mrs. Sara Nunez-Mejia, Committee Chair

Mrs. Nunez-Mejia announced that the next Housing and Land-Use Committee Meeting will be held on Thursday, May 18, 2017 at 6:30 PM.

Parks and Recreation Committee: Margarita Espinosa Committee Chair

Ms. Espinosa announced that It's May Park Day clean-up will be on Saturday, May 20, 2017 from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM at Tremont Park (East Tremont Avenue and Lafontaine Avenue entrance).

Senior Citizens Outreach Committee: Virginia Bird, Committee Chair

Mrs. Bird announced that the Mother Day's Luncheon for seniors will be on Saturday, May 13, 2017 at Wings Academy High School, 1122 East 180th Street, from 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM.

Youth and Education Committee: Moussa Siby, Committee Co-Chair

Mr. Siby announced and encourage all youth to attend the upcoming Youth and Education Committee meeting on Wednesday, May 17, 2017.

X. ADOPTION OF MOTIONS

1. A motion to adopt the minutes of Bronx Community Board #6's meeting of April 12, 2017 was made by Mrs. Virginia Bird, seconded by Ms. Margarita Espinosa and unanimously adopted by a vote of 19 in favor, zero opposed and zero abstentions.
2. A motion to approve Bronx Community Board #6's budget for Fiscal Year 2018 was tabled upon a motion made by Ms. Rosa Peraza, seconded by Ms. Alice Charles and adopted by a vote of 19 in favor, zero opposed and zero abstentions.
3. A motion to issue letter of support to the Bronx Zoo on the proposed parking regulation

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changes on Southern Boulevard from East 182nd Street and East 185th Street was tabled upon a motion made by Ms. Maria Garcia, seconded by Mr. Paul Ramirez and adopted by a vote of 15 in favor, 4 opposed, and zero abstentions.

4. A motion to provide a letter of support in favor of Councilmember Salamanca's and Assemblymember Blake's letter to Mayor de Blasio which opposes the siting of 1790 Marmion Avenue as a drop-in center for homeless men was made by Ms. Rosa Peraza, second by Ms. Evonne Capers and by a vote of 19 in favor, zero opposed and zero abstentions.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

The May 10, 2017 meeting of Bronx Community Board #6 was adjourned at approximately 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

**Carla J. Leon
Community Assistant**