



**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, February 8, 2017

Members present:

Jannie Armstrong, Virdjil Asanov, Tair Aziov, Virginia Bird, Alice Charles, Claudette Coles, Diana Diaz, Margarita Espinosa, Frank Franz, Maria Garcia, April Hurley, Sara N. Mejia, Michael Nelson, Floretta A. O'Brien, Rosa Peraza, Paul Ramirez, Wendy Rodriguez, and Gil Simmons

Members absent:

Evonne Capers (on personal leave), Sahre Davis, Jerry Jackson, Octavia Lewis, Moussa Siby and Carrie Taft

Elected Officials representatives present:

**Andy Toledo, representing Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.
Jay Baez, representing State Senator Gustavo Rivera
Charisse Suarez, representing Assemblyman Jose Rivera
Ibrahim Shatara, representing Assemblyman Luis Sepulveda
Evagelina Medellin, representing Assemblyman Victor Pichardo
John Fitzsimmons, representing Assemblyman Michael Blake**

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The February 8, 2017 meeting of Bronx Community Board #6 was held at the Bronx Early Learning Center, which is located at 1887 Bathgate Avenue, Bronx, New York, and was called to order at approximately 6:35 PM by board Chairperson Wendy Rodriguez.

II. INVOCATION

The meeting's invocation was delivered by Chaplain Floretta A. O'Brien.

III. COMMUNITY PERIOD

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

Ms. Giselle Jabalera, representing NYC Department of Health-Shop Healthy Bronx

Ms. Jabalera informed us about the Shop Healthy Bronx program put forward by the New York City Department of Health. The Shop Healthy Bronx program is currently in action in the East Tremont area. The Shop Healthy Bronx program works to bring healthy food options to bodegas and supermarkets in the area. The program also offers training to community organizations.

Ms. Karla Cabrera Carrera, representing Tremont Neighborhood Health Action Center

Ms. Carrera announced the Heart Healthy events taking place at the Tremont Neighborhood Health Action Center. The center is providing free blood pressure screenings every Friday for the month of February.

Mr. Jason Caraballo, representing Montefiore Health System

Mr. Caraballo announced that the Montefiore Health System is partnering with the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene for an event called Ending the Epidemic. Mr. Caraballo informed us that the goal of the initiative is to reduce the number of new HIV cases in New York State from 2,000 to 750. The event will be held on February 28th, 2017.

Ms. Marcia Stoddard-Pennant and Mr. Kelvin Hernandez, representing The Bronx Health Link, Inc.

Ms. Stoddard-Pennant and Mr. Hernandez informed us about The Bronx Health Link's initiative to promote health literacy. The Bronx Health Link is holding workshops to educate the public about the importance of health insurance. Their services are free and will be provided in both Spanish and English.

IV. BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr's report was presented by his Community Liaison, Mr. Andy Toledo. The report included, but was not limited to, the following information:

- **Borough President Diaz invited Bronx residents to make a difference in their community by joining their local Community Board. His office is accepting**

applications for all 12 Community Boards from city residents who reside, work or have professional or other significant interests in The Bronx. There are currently very few submitted applications for Bronx Community Board #6, therefore Borough President Diaz encouraged attendees to share this information. Applications are available at the Borough President's Community Board office, at their local community board office, and online at bronxboropres.nyc.gov. The deadline for submission of applications has been extended till the first week of March.

- Borough President Diaz will be holding the State of the Borough Address on Thursday February 23rd, 2017. The State of the Borough Address will be presented at Kennedy High School and streaming live on the Borough President's website at 11:30 AM.
- Borough President Diaz will be hosting a Dominican Heritage Month Event. This event will take place on February 16th, 2016 from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. The event will be held at the Hostos Community College Campus in the Savoy Multi-Purpose Room.

V. ELECTED OFFICIALS' REPORTS

Evagenlina Medellin, representing Assemblyman Victor Pichardo

Ms. Medellin informed us that Assemblyman Pichardo has ten tickets left for their upcoming Black History Month Celebration. She provided community members with contact and location information about Assemblyman Pichardo's office and encouraged those experiencing tenant issues to attend tenant information sessions held at the office from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM on Thursdays. Ms. Medellin also introduced to us a new staff member.

John Fitzsimmons, representing Assemblyman Michael Blake

Mr. Fitzsimmons informed the community about Tenant Tuesdays, occurring weekly on Tuesdays at the Assemblyman's office. He announced that Assemblyman Blake would be holding a Black History Month Veterans event. Lastly, he announced that there would be three town hall events emphasizing the Three E's: Economic Development, Education, and Equity. These town hall events will address the work Assemblyman Blake's office has accomplished to improve the community and will enable community members to provide feedback. Two of the town hall events will be held in March and the last one in April.

Ibrahim Shatara, representing Assemblyman Luis R. Sepulveda

Mr. Shatara announced us that Assemblyman Sepulveda will be hosting three events: an

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essay writing contest for Black History Month, a Valentine's Day event at a Senior Center, and a spelling bee contest for 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students.

Jay Baez, representing Senator Gustavo Rivera

Mr. Baez informed us that Senator Rivera's office is hosting a family law clinic every Friday from 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM. He also advised those experiencing housing issues to book an appointment with a tenant specialists that is in their offices every Tuesday from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Senator Rivera will be partnering with Congressman Serrano for a Black History Month event on Saturday, February 25th, 2017 from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM.

Charsse Suarez, representing Assemblyman Jose Rivera

Ms. Suarez introduced herself to the community for first time.

VI. PRESENTATIONS

Megan Malaska, curator of Bronx Zoo Education, representing The Bronx Zoo

Ms. Malaska presented on The Bronx Zoo's Discovery Guide Program. Participants in the Discovery Guide Program interact with visitors of all ages at the zoo through a variety of exhibits and educational activities. These participants also assist with birthday parties and in Wildlife Conservation Society's Conservation Campaigns. The Bronx Zoo's Discovery Guide Program is currently looking for applicants who are 15 years old or older for their Spring season. Applications are due on February 18th, 2017. Interested applicants can find more information at <https://bronxzoo.com/volunteering/discovery-guide-volunteer-program>.

The Bronx Zoo is also hosting a career fair. Teens interested in participating in the Discovery Guide Program are encouraged to attend. Admission for the zoo will be free on the day of the career fair. The career fair will be held on Sunday, February 18th from 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM in Schiff Hall, located at the 2300 Southern Boulevard entrance.

VII. DISTRICT MANAGER'S REPORT

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

- Mr. Sanchez informed the community that Roy's Bar and Grill on East Tremont Avenue has been expanding. The restaurant will hold a grand opening on February 11th, 2017.
- Outreach to Eagle Academy resulted in 12 applications to become a board member.

- Mr. Sanchez stated that pop-up IDNYC location at the Community Board #6 office ended on February 3rd, 2017. The location helped over 200 New York City residents get a municipal ID.
- Mr. Sanchez informed us that the city budget was released. He encouraged the community board to seek support from elected officials.

VIII. PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PRELIMINARY BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018 AND THE CITY'S RESPONSES TO THE COMMUNITY BOARD'S FISCAL YEAR 2018 CAPITAL AND EXPENSE BUDGET REQUESTS.

No one requested to speak as part of the Public Hearing on the Preliminary Budget for Fiscal Year 2018 and the City's Responses to the Community Board's Fiscal Year 2018 Capital and Expense Budget Requests. Consequently, Chairperson Rodriguez announced that the Public Hearing would be rescheduled for a date and time to be announced.

IX. ROLL CALL ATTENDANCE

A roll call attendance was taken confirming the presence of a quorum of eighteen (18) members.

X. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Economic Development Committee: Ms. April Hurley, Committee Chair

Ms. Hurley reported on the business that was conducted at the January 17th, 2017 Committee Meeting. A presentation was conducted by Ms. Dior St. Hillaire of GreenFeen. She informed them on the Organic Carting Company in regards to the request for a letter of support from the board. Ms. Hurley stated that the committee voted in favor of the letter of support. There was a second presentation by Green Worker Cooperative, an organization that advocates for a stronger local economy rooted in democracy and environmental justice. She then informed us that District Manager Sanchez informed the committee about the initiative to create a Business Improvement District on East Tremont.

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

Mrs. Diaz reported on the business that was conducted at the January 17th, 2017 Committee Meeting. Ms. Carmen Rivera of VIP Community Services requested a letter of support for a generator, which was granted by Bronx Community Board #6's Health and Human Services Committee members.

Law Enforcement Committee: Ms. Claudette Coles, Committee Chair

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Ms. Coles announced that New York City schools will closed on February 9th, 2017. Ms. Coles informed the community about various events that she attended last month, including an interfaith prayer service for officers and the memorial mass at St. Raymond's church for Cindy Diaz. In reference to the death of Cindy Diaz, she reported that there have been three violent incidents involving guns so far this year. Ms. Coles reported on her visits to senior citizens and mentioned an initiative to reducing traffic collisions using reflective tapes on wheelchairs and canes. Lastly, she informed the community about the upcoming 48th Police Precinct Council meeting that will be held at 7:00 PM at the precinct.

Parks and Recreation Committee: Margarita Espinosa, Committee Chair

Ms. Espinosa reported on the business that was conducted at the January 18th, 2017 committee meeting. A representative from Greenthumb presented on the diverse gardens located in the Bronx. She announced an upcoming community clean-up day at Happy Land Monument on March 18th, 2017 from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM which community members and volunteers are invited to paint the monument. On March 25th, 2017, there will a mass and vigil for the 87 victims of the happy Land Social Club Fire.

Senior Citizens Outreach Committee: Virginia Bird, Committee Chair

Mrs. Bird reported on an event for seniors that occurred at Phipps Housing, and is planning another event for seniors in the future.

Transportation Committee: John Sanchez, District Manager

District Manager Sanchez reported that the Department of Transportation approved light studies in areas that were dark, and encouraged the community to call the board office with information about more areas that are in need of additional street lighting. District Manager Sanchez also highlighted issues of overcrowding with the Bx. 17 bus during rush hour.

Sanitation Committee: John Sanchez, District Manager

District Manager Sanchez reported that legislation for a 5 cents tax on plastic bags was passed by New York City Council, but it was overturned by the Senate. The final decision on the matter will be left to Governor Andrew Cuomo.

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

Mrs. Mejia reported on the business that was conducted at the January 19th, 2017 committee meeting. The committee met with Mr. Robert Frost in regards to a site on Boone Street by Freedom High School. The committee also discussed the possibility of starting to offer credit counseling sessions for housing through existing organizations. Mrs. Mejia

announced that the next committee meeting will occur at February 16th, 2017 at 6:30 PM.

XI. ADOPTION OF MOTIONS

1. A motion to adopt the minutes of Bronx Community Board #6's meeting of January 11, 2017 was made by Mr. Gil Simmons, seconded by Ms. Margarita Espinosa and unanimously adopted by acclamation (18 in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstentions).
2. A motion to issue a letter of support for VIP Community Services' application funding to the Bronx Borough Present, Ruben Diaz Jr. was made by Mrs. Virginia Bird, seconded by Ms. Diana Diaz and adopted by a vote of 18 in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstention.
3. A motion to issue a letter of support for GreenFeens's Local Organics Collection (L.O.C.) Pilot Program was made by Mr. Gil Simmons and second by Mr. Michael Nelson and adopted by a vote of 15 in favor, 1 opposition and 2 abstentions.
4. Agenda item VIII was tabled upon a motion made by Ms. Rosa Pereza, seconded by Ms. Alice Charles and adopted by a vote of 18 in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstention.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

The February 8, 2017 meeting of Bronx Community Board #6 was adjourned at approximately 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Carla J. Leon
Community Assistant