

# 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 12, 2020

#### **Members Present:**

Jannie Armstrong, Clarita Bailon, Evonne Capers, Nelson Chimilio, Diana Diaz, Margarita Espinosa, Frank Franz, Maria Garcia, Lanell Gardenhire, Maria Latimer, Matthew Martinez, Michael Nelson, Floretta O'Brien, Reverend Marilyn Oliver, Rosa Peraza, Reggie Powell, Helga Robles, Lisa Sanchez, Angel Santana, Gil Simmons, Lillie Steed, Carrie Taft, Noorjahan Wells and Jacquetta Whaley.

#### **Members Absent:**

Virginia Bird, Nicole Carter, Christopher Collazo, Julisa Hamilton, Audrey Harden, Laura James, Jorge Ortiz, Paul Ramirez, Reverend Hiram Ratliff, Wendy Rodriguez, Angel Rosario, and Maria Ruiz Gutierrez.

#### **Elected Officials Present:**

Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark Councilwoman Vanessa Gibson

#### **Elected Officials Representatives Present:**

Surey Miranda, representing New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio
Alexis Ruiz, representing Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.
Israel Sanchez, representing Council Member Ritchie Torres
Davon Harris, representing Council Member Rafael Salamanca Jr.
Fiorella Bini, representing New York State Senator Luis Sepulveda
Mack Makishima, representing New York State Assemblyman Michael Blake
Nicholas Peters, representing New York State Assemblyman Victor Pichardo
Glendalys Salgado, representing New York State Assemblywoman Karines Reyes
Brian Polanco, representing Public Advocate of the City of New York Jumaane Williams

#### I. CALL TO ORDER:

The February 12, 2020 meeting of Bronx Community Board #6 was held at the Tremont Library located at 1866 Washington Avenue, Bronx, New York 10457 and was called to order at approximately by 6:36 PM by Chairperson Evonne Capers.

#### II. INVOCATION

The meeting's invocation was delivered by Board Member Reverend Marilyn Oliver.

#### III. COMMUNITY PERIOD

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

#### Wil Francis, representing Tremont Library

Mr. Francis announced that the Tremont Library is offering Free Tax prep on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. They are also offering another class Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:30 AM to 1:30 PM. The New York Public Libraries are celebrating their 125th year and Tremont Library is displaying its ten most checked out books. Their sound lab is up and running, in which they have trained youth in the community on how to use multimedia equipment. Interested participants can log onto the library website to make an appointment for the sound lab. They will be offering podcast classes for the public soon. All of their classes are free of charge.

# Allison Marino, representing Phipps Neighborhoods

Ms. Marino informed the community that Phipps Neighborhoods is currently offering a free program for 18 to 26 year olds who have their GED/HSE and are interested in the healthcare field called Career Network: Healthcare. Career Network: Healthcare teaches participants life and work skills in preparation of their career in the healthcare field. Program participants receive weekly stipends and MetroCards. The program classes run for 13 weeks from Monday to Friday from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. The participants obtain the opportunity to intern at Montefiore and are guaranteed interviews upon completion. They have placed over 100 program participants with jobs at Montefiore. They are now starting their twentieth cohort. Information sessions about program are available for potential participants. If you are interested in participating, call or text Jasmin Ramos at (718) 801-3337 or email her at jramos@phippsny.org.

#### **Billie Scott, representing Children of Promise**

Ms. Scott informed us that Children of Promise's mission is to embrace and empower children with incarcerated parents. Children of Promise offer programs such as afterschool programs, summer day camp, mentoring and one-on-one tutoring. Mental health services are woven into all that they do. Children enrolled in their services have a clinician that they work with one on one, in addition to group therapy sessions. They also offer support groups for the parents and caregivers to help them support the children holistically. Children of Promise's program center is presently under construction. The center will be located on Webster Avenue and East 176th Street. The intake program requirement is that the child has an incarcerated parent, but once the parent returns home the child is allowed to stay

in the program until they are 18 years old. For more information about Children of Promise, you can contact Billie Scott by email at bscott@cpnyc.org or by telephone at (718) 483-9290 ext. 310.

#### Alexis Davila, representing Cardinal McCloskey Community Services

Ms. Davila informed the community that Cardinal McCloskey Community Services' Family Foster Care Program is a foster care agency that assists individuals who are interested in becoming foster parents with the necessary resources and information. Due to the increased need of foster care homes, Cardinal McCloskley Community Services are looking for foster parents who are interested in fostering children. Individuals who are interested in becoming a foster parent must have a stable income and a stable household. Cardinal McCloskey Community Services offers services across Manhattan and the Bronx. They are conducting orientation every Thursday from 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM at 529 Courtlandt Avenue, Bronx, New York 10451. For more information,

To reach them, call 718-993-7700 or visit their website www.cmcs.org.

# Clarita Bailon, representing Community Board 6

Ms. Clarita Bailon informed the community that Community Board 6 is spreading awareness for local laws regarding bail reform. They would like to educate more people on bail reform and urge everyone to support this cause.

#### Devin D'Agostino, representing Fordham University

Devin D' Agostino announced that Fordham University has a West Wing program in which students learn more about civic service and leadership in their community. The courses address issues in the community and how to solve them. Students are concerned with the issues related to Fordham's place in the Belmont community. They are currently working on Fordham's outreach into the community. In particular, they are working on a lecture series in which Fordham professors and students speak to the community on campus. They will be working with John Sanchez to start this program.

#### Lamar Brown, representing New York Connects

Mr. Lamar Brown informed the community that New York Connects helps people with disabilities to find housing, education, transportation, as well as apply for health care benefits. They are located on 3rd Avenue and are welcoming people in the area with disabilities who need assistance. Reach NY Connects by phone at 1-800-342-9871, online at www.nyconnects.ny.gov, or in person. Locations can be found at their website, and the local office's phone number is 1-844-862-7930.

# Caroline D. Davis, representing SBH Health System & St. Barnabas Hospital

Ms. Caroline D. Davis announced that the St. Barnabas has a community service plan in which they are targeting baby friendliness and care for women, violence in the community, and food security. They are also inviting everyone to an open health meeting on the flu and coronavirus presented by CAHA on February 26th from 9:30 to 10:30 located in the Braker Building, 4th floor of the Thomas Murray Conference Room. RSVP by email to sbhevetns@sbhny.org. CAHA holds monthly health meetings. Additionally, they are offering a podcast on different health concerns.

#### 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 announced the BronxCountsChallenge, which is an online creative competition calling on Bronx middle and high school students to submit an original song, rap, spoken word, poem, dance performance or artwork, which educates or encourages neighbors to participate in the 2020 Census. All creative projects must be original, mention the Bronx and include why it's important for everyone to be contacted and counted. Entries must be posted on Instagram or Twitter using the #BronxCounts from February 24, 2020 to March 2, 2020.
- Ms. Ruiz also informed the community that the Borough President is having the State of the Borough Reception, which will take place on Thursday, February 20, 2020 from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM at 851 Grand Concourse. One of the Bronx Community Board #6 Member's will be honored.
- Ms. Ruiz announced that there will be a Dominican Heritage Celebration on February 27, 2020 from 5:30 PM to 9:00 PM and the location is to be determined.

#### V. ELECTED OFFICIALS' REPORTS

#### Surey Miranda, representing New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio

Ms. Miranda announced that the application for the Mayor's Office Internship opened and the office encourages high school, undergraduate and graduate students to apply. The application deadline is March 20, 2020. She also encourages the community to use free city services to file taxes. Her phone number is 646-691-4876.

#### Israel Sanchez, representing Council Member Ms. Ritchie Torres

Mr. Sanchez informed us about the recent bill that prohibits food stores and retail establishments from refusing to accept payment in cash. Businesses have until November to comply with the bill. He also informed the community that the Council Member also introduced a bill requiring the Department of Investigation to hire someone to investigate suspicious business practices of businesses that have contracts or pending contracts with the City. The rest of bills that were mentioned at the previous meeting are still in the committee and if anyone wants any updates regarding a specific bill, they can call the office directly. The office also provides free tax prep services. Mr. Sanchez reminded everyone that on March 1, 2020, the plastic bag ban will begin. The office received 1,000 Department of Sanitation reusable bags and is giving it out to the community. The office can be reached at (718)842-8100.

#### Davon Harris, representing Council Member Rafael Salamanca Jr.

Mr. Harris informed the community that the council member introduced a bill, which requires new

development to have 15% of the units for the homeless population. Council Member Salamanca worked on a bill with the Public Advocate in which a racial impact study is requested prior to rezoning Southern Boulevard. Mr. Harris also informed the community regarding the FairFares program, which gives people living below the national poverty line the opportunity to purchase metro cards for a reduced price. The office has DSNY bags that they will be distributing. Councilmember Salamanca and the Public Advocate will have a bail reform discussion on February 25, 2020 at 940 Garrison Avenue from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM. Mr. Harris will ask the Councilmember his plans for the veterans, in terms of housing, and get back to the district manager to disseminate The office is located on 1070 Southern Boulevard and the office number is (718) 402-6130.

#### Fiorella Bini, representing New York State Senator Luis Sepulveda

Ms. Fiorella Bini informed the community that the office provides assistance with housing, SNAP applications as well as health care. Ms. Fiorella Bini announced that on the first Friday of each month they will be going to senior centers to provide the services they have in their office. The office began at Jackson Steven Center last month and they will eventually go to all the senior centers in the district. Along with other senators, Senator Sepulveda hosted a Bronx Delegation Budget Forum, where local organizations were able to submit some of their budget requests in Albany along with other legislators. The office is focusing on funding for schools, public housing and other local community organizations. The senator is open to meeting with any organizations with funding requests throughout the district. Ms. Fiorella Bini announced that there will be an annual spelling bee that will be in collaboration with Assemblymember Karines Reves on April 4, 2020 at Stevenson High School Campus at 1980 Lafavette Avenue, Bronx, New York 10473. The starting time for third graders is at 9:00 AM; for fourth graders is at 11:00 AM and for fifth graders is at 1:00 PM. The schools in the district have received the information and third, fourth and fifth grade students will be competing. There will also be an annual Easter egg hunt on the same day on April 4, 2020 at the Castle Hill Houses Baseball Field from 12:00 PM-3:00PM and on April 5, 2020 and there will be another one at Vidalia Park from 12:00 PM-3:00PM. The office is located at 900 Rogers Place and is open from 9:00 AM-3:00 PM from Monday through Thursday and 9:00 AM-12:00 PM on Fridays.

# Mack Makishima, representing New York State Assemblyman Michael Blake

Mr. Mack Makishima informed the community that the office provides HRA housing assistance 11:00 AM-3:00 PM located in their district office. The office also wanted to give a reminder of the 2020 Census. The office will be spreading the message in collaboration with Borough wide Initiatives on how important the Census is, especially for communities of color. The office will be working with the Coalition of Children and Families to get an accurate count. There will also be a Census intake session at the office. The office has yet to decide on the logistics of the event and they will reach out to the community once there is more information. Mr. Makishima announced that there will be a Black History Month event on February 28, 2020 at 7:00 PM at Great Holy Tabernacle, 3780 3rd Avenue, The Bronx, New York 10456. There is also a rapid response system regarding issues with NYCHA and the community should reach out to the office. Mr. Makishima also informed the community that the office is seeking energetic interns who are interested in public service. The office is located at 780 Concourse Village West Bronx, New York 10451. The office number is (718) 538-3829.

# Nick Peters, representing Assemblyman Victor Pachardo

Mr. Nick Peters announced that there will be an upcoming event partnered with Fresh Air Fund, which runs Camp Jr, on February 29, 2020. The event will be a summer/winter party from 10:00 AM-1:00 PM at Monroe College. Parents can sign up for Camp Jr with representatives of Fresh Air Fund, while the kids are out playing. On Wednesdays from 10:00 AM-1:00 PM and Thursdays from 2:00 PM-5:00 PM, the community can come to the office to sign their children up for Camp Jr. The focus in Albany is the new budgets. There are weekly updates in English and Spanish on social media, so the community can follow the assemblymember on Twitter, Facebook, Youtube and Instagram at victorpichardo86. The assemblymember is pushing for a bill that would waive fees for graduate schools. Mr. Peters said that the assemblyman would like the pushing jews law to pass this year. He also informed us that the assemblyman supports the ATV bill, which would make sure all vehicles on the road are registered and supports higher education, especially for children who are unable to afford it. Mr. Peters also informed the community that the assembly member wants to increase school budget aid, expand Pre-Kindergarten across the state, wants expansion of the green light bill, as well as getting reduced metrocard fares. There are immigration lawyers at the office once a month on the last Friday. There is also a tenant support unit, who is in the office on Thursdays from 11:00 AM-3:00 PM. The office is open 10:00 AM-6:00pm from Monday to Friday and located on 2175C Jerome Avenue, Bronx, New York 10453. The phone number of the office is 718-933-6909.

# Glendalys Salgado, representing New York State Assemblywoman Karines Reyes

Ms. Glendalys Salgado informed the community that the office is trying to do more events in the West Farms area. There will be two Easter egg hunts in collaboration with Senator Luis Sepulveda. On April 4, 2020, there will be one at the Castle Hill Houses Baseball Field from 12:00 PM-3:00PM and on April 5, 2020, there will be another one at Vidalia Park from 12:00 PM-3:00PM. Ms. Salgado also announced that there is a Black History Month Celebration in collaboration with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People on Saturday, February 29, 2020 from 4:00 PM-6:00 PM at St. Paul's Evangelical Church on 1891 McGraw Ave, Bronx, New York 10462. The Assemblywoman, who is a registered nurse, helped send out mental health professionals to Puerto Rico so they can provide mental health services for those who have been affected by the earthquake. Ms. Salgado also informed the community that the office invited students from P.S.6 and P.S.214 to visit the office in Albany. Schools can contact the office if they would like students to visit the Assembly and the Senate. The office can be contacted at 718-931-2620.

#### Brian Polanco, representing Public Advocate of the City of New York Jumaane Williams

Mr. Brian Polanco informed the community to reach out to the constituent services team at 212-669-7200 or email them at gethelp@advocate.nyc.gov regarding any issues. He announced that the public advocate recently passed a bill that would increase the fine for city employees who are using their parking permits from \$250.00 to \$500.00. The office introduced a bill that would require childcare providers to reach out to other guardians if the parents are out of reach to ensure the child's safety. Mr. Polanco announced that the office also introduced another bill that would create the position of a Visual Inclusion officer, who would review agency websites and public content to make sure that that the content is up to standard. He also announced that the office recently co-sponsored a bill to create a database in order to track capital projects citywide or anything related to capital funds. On February

25, 2020 from 7:00 PM-9:00 PM at The Point located at 940 Garrison Avenue, Bronx, New York 10474, the office in collaboration with Councilmember Rafael Salamanca, will be hosting a bail reform forum with policy experts and legal service providers. Mr. Polanco's number is 212-669-4032.

# Darcel Clark, representing Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark

Ms. Darcel Clark announced to the community that she was elected for another four years in November 2019. She or a staff member has been going throughout the Bronx community to inform the people about the new Criminal Justice Bail Reform, which has been a long time coming considering how the black and brown community have been treated as evident through Rikers Island. The new laws have gone into effect beginning January 1, 2020. She is going to discuss the bail reform, discovery reform laws and speedy trial. Judges decide the bail depending on the character and history. The DA's office can recommend bail. After the bail reform, all misdemeanors, in which you serve time for a year or less and low- level nonviolent felonies aren't eligible for bail, which can all be found online. Therefore, regardless of past records, judges can't set bail. Ms. Clark informed the community that those at Rikers Island are awaiting trial because they weren't able to afford bail. Ms. Clark told the community that the legislature needs to close the loophole of those same people repeating the same crimes because they no longer have to pay bail. Ms. Clark informed the community that discovery refers to all the evidence in the case and the reform requires the prosecution and defense attorney to exchange all of the evidence, so that the attorneys are both prepared for the trial. However, before the reform, the defendants were pleading guilty without knowing what evidence was against them. Previously, the defense attorney had to write to the judge to request a motion for the DA to provide evidence on the case, but now, it is an automatic discovery, so the DA has to turn over the evidence within 15 days without a motion and the Da's office has to sign a compliance certification. The court will then decide if the office has complied. There isn't any way to retrieve all of the evidence required, so it is up to the court to decide how important the missing information is. However, 15 days isn't always enough and the DA requests an additional 30 days to gather the evidence, which is granted by some judges but not all. The DA's office is also required to turn over the witness' contact information, which Ms. Clark is afraid it would prevent people from reporting crimes. However, the DA can ask for a protective order for the witness from the judge to prevent sharing the witness' contact information until later on in the process. The DA's office has a witness security program, in which the DA has detectives, who are assigned to cases where the victims are in fear of retaliation. The defense attorneys have alternative contact measures, so the defense doesn't have the witness' actual home phone number or address. The trials are supposed to go faster considering the discovery reform but Ms. Clark informed us that there has been very few cases that went on trial because they are chasing after evidence. Ms. Clark requests the public to give the office more time to adjust and adapt to the new laws. The DA will take all the evidence from the crime scene so that the Defense Attorney doesn't have to return to the crime scene, which in some cases could be somebody's home. The DA would argue to the judge that it isn't safe and it is an invasion of privacy. If it is still allowed, the victim is allowed to have law enforcement present at the time of the investigation. The witness and victims can see the evidence depending on the situation. The DA suggests that 60 days is a more reasonable time frame to turn over the evidence to the defense attorney. If the community has any other questions, they can reach out to the Community Affairs at the DA's office.

#### Captain Joseph Tompkins, representing 48th Precinct

Captain Tompkins announced that he has just been assigned as the commanding officer of the 48th Precinct. He informed the community that most of his supervising career took place in the Bronx, including serving as the captain for three years in the 44th Precinct.

# Councilwoman Vanessa Gibson, representing Council Member Vanessa Gibson

Councilwoman Vanessa Gibson informed the community that she represents District 16. The council members are working with assembly members on the Bail Reform and they will be hiring about 1,000 new workers in the law enforcement agencies. She also told the community that they have added \$175 million to their budget because it is a mandate from Albany. She informed the community that Election Reform has also been voted and she urged the community to speak with their representatives regarding the new reforms. The council members began the budget process for New York City and they work on budget priorities at borough board meetings. The budget released by Mayor de Blasio is \$96 billion and it grows every year. City council members will begin their hearings on the first week of March at City Hall and every agency will speak on the budget's impact on their work. All the council members will work with their advocates to come up with priorities as the executive budget is released in April. The second round of hearings will continue in May after the executive budget. The council members will work with administrators to put together a final adopted budget by July 1, 2020. Ms. Vanessa Gibson informed the community that a priority for all the council members are youth programs. In the two past budgets, the community board budget has been increased by \$42,000 to enhance the work of the community board. The city council members were also able to introduce the reduced metrocard program, Fair Fares. If community members live at or below federal poverty level between 18 and 64 years old, then they can apply online, through 311 or the city website. She also announced that the city council recently passed bills around food policy, codifying the Mayor's Office of Food Policy, developing a ten year policy strategy and the Reckless Driver Accountability Act, which will begin in Brooklyn. The reckless driver accountability will start in Brooklyn. Drivers will have to take a drivers accountability course if drivers receive a certain number of offenses, red light and speed light violations within a twelve-month period. If drivers fail to take the course, then the vehicle will be impounded. This is going to be a pilot program for three years and will be expanded if it turns out successful. Ms. Vanessa Gibson announced that on February 27, 2020 at 6:00 PM, there will be a Black History Month celebration at the Botanical Garden. There will be a Women's History Month event on March 20, 2020 at the Bronx Museum of the Arts at 12:00 PM. The councilwoman oversees the capital commitment plan in the city, which is \$110 billion. She also announced that the deadline to apply for discretionary funding is February 18, 2020. There will be a town hall meeting on February 18, 2020 at 6:30 PM at the Gethsemane Baptist Church regarding the bail reform law and housing shelters for youth, who are eighteen years old and older. On February 19, 2020 from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM, there will be a resource event to help respond to tickets issued by city agencies at Morrisania Library, 610 East 169 Street Bronx, New York 10456. Her office also provides free legal services.

# VI. DISTRICT MANAGER'S REPORT

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

• Mr. Sanchez announced that there will be two civics workshops every month for the rest of the year at different locations each month.

- Mr. Sanchez also informed the community that Bronx Community Board #6 is sponsoring free fitness classes for the community. The classes will be held on Saturdays at Aquinas high school at 10:00 AM-12:00 PM.
- Mr. Sanchez also announced that the Bronx Community Board #6 is also sponsoring youth volleyball programming from Saturday, January 18, 2020 through Saturday, April 4, 2020 at Aquinas High School from 10:30 AM to 5:30 PM.
- Mr. Sanchez recognized the Fordham University West Wing students at the meeting, who will be helping Bronx Community Board 6 with some of the initiatives.
- Mr. Sanchez informed the community about the Bronx Community Board #6 annual scholarship contest for high school seniors, who live in the Bronx Community Board #6 district. Students have to provide proof of address and a video stating what their plans are after college and why it's important for people who graduate from college to return to the neighborhood and improve it. He also asked elected officials for help in reaching out to schools in the district. He said everyone who signed up will receive the flyer. The deadline is May 1, 2020.

#### 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. PRESENTATIONS

There were no presentations.

#### IX. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Board Member Rosa Peraza asked for the fiscal operating budget of Bronx Community Board #6. Chairperson Evonne Capers asked her to attend the committee meeting to get more information.

Chairperson Capers announced that the committee reports are in the general board meeting packets, which were provided to all the board members.

Chairperson Capers also announced that committee meetings are always the third week of the month. Unless otherwise specified, all committee meetings will begin at 6:30 PM and take place at the Community Board's district office at 1932 Arthur Avenue, Room 403-A.

#### X. ADOPTION OF MOTIONS

- 1. A motion to adopt the minutes of Bronx Community Board #6's meeting of January 8, 2020 was made by Ms. Jacquetta Whaley, seconded by Ms. Maria Garcia and adopted by a vote of twenty three in favor, one opposition and zero abstention.
- 2. A motion to issue a letter of support to Emma L. Bowen Community Service Center for their proposed development at 2306 Webster Avenue was not voted on.

#### XI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business to discuss, the February 12, 2020 meeting of Bronx Community Board #6 was adjourned at approximately 8:15 PM pursuant to a motion made by Ms. Evonne Capers, second by Mr. Gil Simmons and unanimously adopted by acclamation (twenty-four in favor, zero opposed and zero abstention).

**Respectfully submitted:** 

Sanzida Talukder Community Associate

OF			
8, 2020 ADJOURMENT			
Yes			
Yes			
Yes			
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Yes			
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Absense			
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	Yes  Yes  Yes  Yes  Yes  Yes  Yes  Yes	8, 2020 ADJOURMENT  Yes  Yes  Yes  Yes  Yes  Yes  Yes  Ye	Note