



**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, June 10, 2020**

**Members Present:**

Clarita Bailon, Virginia Bird, Evonne Capers, Nelson Chimilio, Margarita Espinosa, Maria Garcia, Laura James, Matthew Martinez, Michael Nelson, Floretta O'Brien, Jorge Ortiz, Reggie Powell, Paul Ramirez, Helga Robles, Gil Simmons, Lillie Steed, Carrie Taft, Noorjahan Wells, and Jacquetta Whaley.

**Members Absent:**

Nicole Carter, Diana Diaz, Frank Franz, Lanell Gardenhire, Julisa Hamilton, Audrey Harden, Maria Latimer, Rev. Marilyn Oliver, Rosa Peraza, Rev. Hiram Ratliff, Wendy Rodriguez, Maria Ruiz Gutierrez and Lisa Sanchez.

**Elected Officials Present:**

New York City Council Member Ritchie Torres  
New York State Senator Luis Sepulveda  
New York State Assemblyman Michael Blake  
New York State Assemblyman Victor Pichardo

**Elected Officials Representatives Present:**

Surey Miranda, representing New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio  
Alexis Ruiz, representing Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.  
Miguel Rondon, representing New York State Senator Gustavo Rivera  
Fiorella Bini, representing New York State Senator Luis Sepulveda  
Yaz Duarte, 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  
Wilfredo Mercado, representing Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark  
Terence Miller, representing the New York City Public Advocate Jumaane Williams  
Victor Martinez, representing New York City Comptroller Scott Stringer

**I. CALL TO ORDER:**

The June 10, 2020 meeting of Bronx Community Board #6 was held via Zoom Audio and Video Conference meeting ID 818 1398 4225 and via Zoom Video at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81813984225> and was called to order at approximately by 6:41 PM by Chairperson Evonne Capers.

## II. INVOCATION

The meeting's invocation was delivered by Board Member Jacquetta Whaley.

## III. COMMUNITY PERIOD

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

### Dr. Vanessa Salcedo, representing Union Community Health Center

Dr. Salcedo informed the community that Union Community Health Center is now conducting COVID-19 antibody testing at their facilities. She is strongly encouraging that individuals wear face coverings, practice social distancing, and frequently wash their hands because the duration of the COVID-19 antibodies has yet to be determined. She also strongly encouraged individuals that participated in the recent protests to get tested for COVID-19. Dr. Salcedo also announced that there is a virtual townhall for children and families, *Coming Together: Standing Up to Racism* with Sesame Street, that will explain racism to children available online. She also virtually provided us with information and resources for parents about safety and protection and racism for children.

### Gail Nathan and Dianne Hebbert, representing Bronx River Art Center

Ms. Nathan introduced Ms. Hebbert as the Education Manager of the Bronx River Art Center. Ms. Hebbert announced the programming that will be available at the Bronx River Art Center for the month of June and this summer online. Individuals who are interested in registering for their workshops can do so by visiting <https://www.eventbrite.com/o/bronx-river-art-center-5987115479>.

### Chantal Chantal, representing from River Garden

Ms. Chantal informed the community about the recent issues and discrepancies that have occurred between NYC GreenThumb and community gardens. NYC GreenThumb has been threatening to be non-supportive to community gardens if the new licensing agreements aren't signed. There are discrepancies with NYC GreenThumb's policies, practices and procedures. Ms. Chantal requested support and assistance from the local elected officials that were present.

### Clarita Bailon

Ms. Bailon expressed concern about the proposed reduction of the New York City Police Department's spending budget for fiscal year 2021.

## 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 informed us that Borough President Diaz Jr.'s report for the Community Boards for the month of June was emailed. If any individual would like to receive the report, they can email send her an email requesting it at [aruiz@bronxbrp.nyc.gov](mailto:aruiz@bronxbrp.nyc.gov).
- Ms. Ruiz announced that Borough President Diaz Jr. will be hosting a virtual memorial for Bronx residents lost to COVID-19. If you would like to share the memory of a resident, please send a picture and a small paragraph to Alexis Walters at [awalters@bronxbrp.nyc.gov](mailto:awalters@bronxbrp.nyc.gov).
- Ms. Ruiz also announced that Community Board membership reappointment letters have been mailed out. A formal letter will also be mailed once the staff returns to the office.

## V. ELECTED OFFICIALS' REPORTS

### New York State Assemblyman Victor Pichardo

Assemblyman Pichardo informed the community that there has been civil unrest and looting in his district, particularly Community Board 5. His office has been working with local minority-owned businesses to address the aftermath of the looting. The demonstrations have left a mark on public discussions and they have also been catalysts to the introduction of new policies. Assemblyman Pichardo believes that we should rethink law enforcement and distribute resources to more vulnerable communities. He also informed the community that eleven laws have passed and among them was the repeal of 50A, which revokes a section of the civil rights law that gives blanket protection of disciplinary records of officers. The assembly also passed a bill that deals with officers having a mandatory obligation to offer medical aid A. 8226-B. The assemblyman further explains that the strategy isn't about going after all of the officers but the people have the right to know who is policing their communities. There are officers who have been injured during the demonstrations but there are also officers who have been caught on body cameras for improper conduct and have a history of such behavior. Assemblyman Pichardo believes that reinvesting in education and positive activities will make our communities safer. Junior has been killed a few years back in Bronx Community Board #6 because of the lack of investment in the right areas. He also believes that instead of investing in what happens after a tragedy occurs, we should be investing in places that would prevent tragedies happening and give a more positive outlook on life. Our communities deserve that investment. We are in phase 1 and we will be approaching phase 2. Assemblyman Victor Pichardo is looking forward to having conversations with Bronx Community Board #6 and the community to address getting back to normalcy as his physical office opens up as well. Elected officials are considered lobbyists for criminals and seen as anti-police by colleagues. However, the Assemblymen tells the community that he works everyday to try to create a more equitable society. He is tired of hearing that elected officials are only looking at one side of the conversation because they are talking to law enforcement and the community about this topic on "defunding the police". There are a lot of inequities and law enforcement have been a part of that but there are other aspects to it too. Assemblyman Pichardo said that we need to recalibrate and see what law enforcement means in the 21st century. We are looking at 20% budget cuts all across the board but the law enforcement is still keeping a significant amount of its budget. He also said that there is a space for conversation but let's not lose the momentum. Although COVID-19 has led to a \$13.5 billion budget cut and the law enforcement budget should be relocated for youth services. Assemblyman Victor Pichardo has been reaching out to the Mayor to ask him to not cancel

the Summer Youth Employment Program. For more information and weekly updates, individuals can follow Assemblyman Pichardo on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram at vpichardo86 or contact his district office at (718) 933-6909. He also informed the community that newsletters are sent via email. The community can also contact Nick Peters at [petersng@nyassembly.gov](mailto:petersng@nyassembly.gov) if they have any questions for the office or need assistance.

### **New York State Senator Luis Sepulveda**

Senator Sepulveda informed the community that NYPD budget is really high considering how much the state had to cut for other programs during COVID. The senator said that the NYPD Commissioner admitted that the NYPD budget is high and can work within the confines of a new budget. On June 11 at 4 PM, there is an Unemployment Town Hall on his Facebook page. The office is still conducting food drives and distributing PPE's. He also told the community that the bills are not anti-police but are actually pro-police because it will create a better environment between the police and community. The state has also passed a law allowing people the right of action, if you call the police without justification against a person of color and pretend that you are under threat. Police engaged in misdemeanor with communities of color must maintain statistics to see if they are over policing communities of color. Police are seeing that there is oversight and the transparency will help our communities in the future. The Eric Garner Anti Chokehold Bill has passed on the state level, which means that the chokehold will be considered a criminal act unless the officer can show that their life was in danger at the time the chokehold was employed. However, if the chokehold is used as a method to subjugate someone then you will face criminal sanction. Senator Sepulveda told the community that they can call the office for more information regarding specific details of the bills passed regardless of whether they live in his district. He also informed the community that there is a potential for a second wave, but people aren't being as careful as they were. However, we should continue safe practices to curve the spread of COVID-19. In response to the question of his position, he voted in favor of all of the reforms. In the senate, there has been overwhelming support in favor of the reforms. Senator Sepulveda also pointed to a comment that the chokehold should be eliminated altogether but it should be considered if the police officer is in danger and that is the only way that they can save their own lives. Officers carry a gun and discharge if they believe that they are in imminent danger. There is typically a review of if the discharge is justified. In Eric Garner's case, the police were not in danger and in that case, they wouldn't be justified. It never happened before that the chokehold is illegal to use it unjustifiably until this bill was passed. Senator Sepulveda said that he tries to legislate what the community tells him everyday and represent them to the best of his ability. He also informed the community that there was talk of restructuring the reunion contracts so that police settlements are paid through pension funds that would require a whole change of the reunion contracts. There is also a discussion about whether the union would allow the police officers who have engaged in unlawful activities be outed by the union itself. There was unnecessary violence against our young brown and black folks, lack of provision of masks in our communities and the death of George Floyd, which led to this movement, but we have to keep going. For more information, the office can be contacted via phone at 718-991-3161 or email [team@senatorsepulveda.com](mailto:team@senatorsepulveda.com).

### **John Sanchez, Bronx Community Board #6 District Manager**

The NYPD budget is mainly decided by the City government and negotiated between the City Council and the mayor. You need to reach out to city elected officials to speak out about this. The two council members in our district are Councilmember Ritchie Torres and Councilmember Rafael Salamanca

Jr. Councilmember Ritchie Torres' office can be contacted via phone at (718) 842-8100 and via email at [rtorres@council.nyc.gov](mailto:rtorres@council.nyc.gov). Councilmember Rafael Salamanca Jr.'s office can be contacted via phone at (718) 402-6130 and via email at [salamanca@council.nyc.gov](mailto:salamanca@council.nyc.gov).

### **Noorjahan Wells, Bronx Community Board #6 Board Member**

Ms. Noorjahan Wells explained that people around the world are still sensitive to what happened. She believes that it was too soon to sympathize with the cops. We still haven't seen what happened with George Floyd's case. She is asking elected officials to be mindful on what side they are on and what they plan on doing in the future. She also suggested postponing the conversation about officers getting injured on the job.

### **Michael Robles**

Mr. Michael Robles said that it is concerning that officers are using the chokehold. He admits that he doesn't know cop tactics and is a novice. He believes that life threatening is subjective and there are different de escalation techniques and not all of them warrant a chokehold. A two to three man restraint is less threatening, while a chokehold seems to be more of a one on one combat. He is concerned about law enforcement using the chokehold whatsoever. Mr. Robles said that the Summer Youth Employment Program has been cancelled and families rely on this program because the child can be productive while earning some income during the summer. The protests were led by the youth and it's unfair that there aren't resources for the youth in the summer. He suggested that there can be some collaborations with small businesses to hire youth in the community.

### **New York State Assemblyman Michael Blake**

Assemblyman Blake informed the community that the repeal of 50a, ending of racial profiling, and making sure that medical assistance happened in custody are all steps in the right direction. As a Black man in America, who has twice experienced police brutality, he believes that we can't accept cop cars running over people. He said that police brutality is racist. We need to make sure there is funding for our communities from the City Council and what is happening cannot continue. We shouldn't have more investment in jails, but redirect the investment to education. Before there was Corona, we had a pandemic of poverty, discrimination and racism. We need funding for our localities. He also informed the community that if they go to [thebronx.org](http://thebronx.org), there is more information on how we can focus on equity and justice. The last thing we need is to destroy our community and in large parts, these people, who are looting, aren't even from the Bronx but other parts of the city. The assemblyman said that we will get immediate grants for relief of these small businesses who have been affected by the looting. He also believes that we need to think about how we demilitarize the police and how they had PPE, while nurses and doctors didn't. We couldn't get help for our schools or communities but we were able to get more people locked up. He informed us that the police began as slave patrols and if the whole premise of the organization began as to what they needed to do to catch a black person, then we can't ignore their origins. The organization is worried about being demonised, but if they weren't covering up information and killing our people then they wouldn't have to worry about that. He also said that the energy in the last 16 days has been powerful and we cannot allow the divisions to continue. He told the community that George Floyd is the modern day Emmett Till. It will mean nothing if all we did was march and protest and change the law if everyone doesn't also fill out the census so we can get

resources and go and vote. Whether it be through Absentee voting, early voting or on election day, if we need to change things, then we need to go vote.

Absentee ballots will be counted but not on the day of voting. Everyday, the assemblyman has been convening a community group to address specific issues including how we can have remote SYEP. We can figure out how they can work from home and would send a proposal to the city. He also believes that the chokehold is wrong regardless of the justification. A lot of this needs to be directed at the council because they voted on a budget in 2015 that allowed for 1,300 more cops to be hired. The assemblyman said that he is running for Congress because a lot of injustices happen on the federal level that disrespected our communities. If anyone needs to reach out to the office or join the 11:00 AM Daily Update Zoom Meeting, then they can at 718-538-3829 or email [yaz79districtbx@gmail.com](mailto:yaz79districtbx@gmail.com)

### **Reggie Powell, Bronx Community Board #6 Board Member**

Mr. Reggie Powell believes that we need to get rid of choke hold completely. He saw this one news story of a wild pitbull and the police officer used a taser to subdue the dog. However, police officers usually pull out a gun on a Black or Brown person. It seems that there is more compassion for a dog compared to a person. The Black Lives Matter is spearheaded by the youth and they took matters to the street. He also said that Corporate America is ready to put money in the community's hand to create racial equality.

### **Glendalys Salgado representing New York State Assemblywomen Karines Reyes**

Ms. Glendalys Salgado informed the community that they have been receiving a lot of calls regarding absentee ballots. Anyone who hasn't received an application or ballots they should call the Bronx Board of Elections to find out whether or not it has been sent out. Early voting begins on Saturday, June 13th to Sunday, June 21st. The community can call (718) 299 - 9017 regarding absentee voting. By an executive order, everyone should have received their application in the mail. You still have the option of early voting or voting on Tuesday, June 23rd. You should also remember to wear masks and maintain 6 feet distancing when you go to vote. For more information on early voting, you can go on <https://vote.nyc/page/early-voting-information>. There will be a food giveaway but will be postponed to due to the weather, but it will be held on Vidyalya Park on East 180th Street between Daly and Vyse Avenue and any updated information will be provided to Bronx Community Board# 6. For more information, you can contact the office via email at [salgadog@nyassembly.gov](mailto:salgadog@nyassembly.gov).

### **Surey Miranda, representing the New York City Mayor de Blasio**

Ms. Surrey Miranda informed the community that the city expanded COVID-19 and antibody testing. She also told the community to reach out to her if anyone knows of business owners who have been affected by the looting. The mayor also said some NYPD funding will be shifted from NYPD to youth and social services, details are still being finalized. If anyone has any comments that they want to be considered, then they should email her. There was going to be an internship fair in collaboration with Bronx Community Board #6 before COVID. Now, the office is looking at possibly something similar to SYEP but the office has to rethink since it is already June. The office can be contacted at 212-788-1412 or 347-985-5692 or via email at [smiranda@cityhall.nyc.gov](mailto:smiranda@cityhall.nyc.gov). She also encourages all to get tested, whether for COVID-19, if you have any related symptoms or the anti-bodies. The community can visit <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/coronavirus/get-tested/covid-19-testing.page> to find the closest testing site.

**Wilfred Mercado, representing the Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark**

District Manager, John Sanchez, asked if the Bronx DA would be pursuing charges against protestors. Mr. Wilfred Mercado said that he will find out and inform the district manager. Queens, Bronx, Manhattan and Brooklyn District Attorneys wrote a statement to criminalize chokeholds.

The Bronx DA's Crime Victims Assistance Unit provides referrals and information, crisis intervention, criminal justice advocacy, therapy and relocation assistance to victims of crime. The community can call (718) 590-2115 for more information. District Attorney Clark said, "As a direct result of this pandemic, we are seeing an enormous drop in reporting of abuse. We at the Bronx District Attorney's Office continue to work with the Bronx Special Victims Squad of the NYPD and other partnering agencies to ensure that children in our community are kept safe. If you suspect a child is being abused, neglected or maltreated, please report it to the numbers below. If you have any questions, call the Bronx District Attorney's Office Child Abuse Hotline at 718-838-7344.

**Terence Miller, representing the New York City Public Advocate Jumaane Williams**

Mr. Miller asked that if any individual would like to know how the New York City Public Advocate has responded to the recent events, they can email him at [tmiller@advocate.nyc.gov](mailto:tmiller@advocate.nyc.gov)

**Victor Martinez, representing New York City Comptroller Scott Stringer**

Mr. Martinez informed the community that the comptroller made a call to the mayor to redistribute the NYPD budget. The NYPD budget is around \$5.9 billion every year. The comptroller is demanding to reduce the budget by \$1.1 billion over 4 years, which would be \$260 million annually and shift funds to other services that would impact the community. It costs the city \$1.3 billion to pay for claims against the NYPD. The community can use the link (<https://comptroller.nyc.gov/newsroom/comptroller-stringer-to-mayor-de-blasio-cut-1-1-billion-in-nypd-spending-over-four-years-and-reinvest-in-vulnerable-communities-and-vital-services/>) for more information. The community can contact the office via phone at 646-647-7491 or via email at [vmartin@comptroller.nyc.gov](mailto:vmartin@comptroller.nyc.gov).

**Helga Robles, Bronx Community Board #6 Board Member**

Ms. Helga Robles suggested that children can clean the streets because there aren't enough garbage cans. They can ride with the Department of Sanitation or work by foot. They can also complete OSHA training and learn about construction work in apprenticeship.

**Councilman Ritchie Torres**

Councilman Ritchie Torres announced that the budget is a few weeks away from being passed. He wanted to get some feedback from the community about policing and so far, the council has been thinking of ways to reduce and reform policing, while redistributing resources to the young people. In April, the mayor proposed a budget that would cut about one third of the Department of Youth and Community Development, while largely keeping the NYPD budget intact, which was rejected by the council. He wanted to reach out to Bronx Community Board 6 before finalizing the details of the budget. He refuses to vote for a budget that maintains the NYPD budget and the council is committed to keeping the Summer Youth Employment Program. He also informed the community that he will

send the breakdown of the budget that will be passed. The chokehold ban will be passed on the city level. Not only do we need the legislation, but also need punishment and hold the officers accountable. The Department of Investigation has been assigned to look into the mishandlings by officers of protestors. This department has the authority to arrest police officers if they find the officers criminal. He is currently working with BronxConnects to implement Cure Violence in the Bronx precincts. He also encouraged community members to join city council hearings.

## **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 Bronx Community Board #6 will be hosting free fitness and yoga online classes during the month of June on Saturdays from 10:00 AM to 12:30 PM. Individuals who are interested in participating can register by emailing [bronxcb6@bronxcb6.org](mailto:bronxcb6@bronxcb6.org).
- Mr. Sanchez informed us that New York City Community Boards will be facing a possible \$10,000-\$20,000 reduction in their fiscal year 2021 budget. These budget reductions will significantly impact communities.
- Mr. Sanchez also announced that Bronx Community Board #6 will be conducting their series of Civics and Organizing workshops later this month via Zoom Video Conference and Facebook Live. Individuals who are interested in participating can register by emailing [bronxcb6@bronxcb6.org](mailto:bronxcb6@bronxcb6.org).
- Mr. Sanchez also informed us about the possibility of not being able to meet in person in September. If that is the case, then Bronx Community Board #6 will continue to conduct their community board meetings through Zoom Video and Audio Conferencing.
- Mr. Sanchez also announced that Bronx Bronx Community Board #6 and Bronx River Art Center are conducting free online art classes on Wednesdays during the month of June at 3:00 PM. Individuals who are interested in participating can register by emailing [bronxcb6@bronxcb6.org](mailto:bronxcb6@bronxcb6.org). They can also visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/o/bronx-river-art-center-5987115479> for further information.

## **VII. ROLL CALL ATTENDANCE**

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

## **VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Chairperson Evonne Capers announced that due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, Bronx Community Board #6 did not hold committee meetings for the month of May. Therefore, there were no committee reports to report.

## **IX. ADOPTION OF MOTIONS**



- 1. A motion to adopt the minutes of Bronx Community Board #6's meeting of May 13, 2020 was made by Mr. Matthew Martinez, seconded by Ms. Margarita Espinosa, and adopted by a vote of nineteen in favor, zero opposed and zero abstaining.**
- 2. A motion to reschedule Bronx Community Board #6's election of officers to September 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic was made by Mr. Nelson Chimilio, seconded by Mrs. Virginia Bird, and adopted by a vote of nineteen in favor, zero opposed and zero abstaining.**

## **X. ADJOURNMENT**

**There being no other business to discuss, the June 10, 2020 meeting of Bronx Community Board #6 was adjourned at approximately 8:57 PM pursuant to a motion made by Ms. Jacquetta Whaley, second by Mr. Michael Nelson, and unanimously adopted by acclamation (nineteen in favor, zero opposed and zero abstention).**

**Respectfully submitted:**

**Sanzida Talukder  
Community Associate**

**Carla Leon  
Community Associate**

**ATTENDANCE AND VOTING RECORD FOR BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD #6 MEETING OF JUNE 10, 2020**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>ATTENDANCE</b>	<b>MINUTES OF MAY 13, 2020</b>	<b>ELECTION OF OFFICERS</b>	<b>ADJOURNMENT</b>				
Clarita Bailon	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes				
Virginia Bird	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes				
Evonne Capers	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes				
Nicole Carter								
Nelson Chimilio	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes				
Diana Diaz								
Margarita Espinosa	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes				
Frank Franz								
Maria Garcia	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes				
Lanell Gardenhire								
Julisa Hamilton								
Audrey Harden								
Laura James	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes				
Maria Latimer								
Matthew Martinez	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes				
Michael Nelson	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes				
Floretta O'Brien	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes				
Rev. Marilyn Oliver								
Jorge Ortiz	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes				
Rosa Peraza								
Reggie Powell	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes				
Paul Ramirez	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes				
Helga Robles	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes				
Rev. Hiram Ratliff								
Wendy Rodriguez								
Maria Ruiz Gutierrez								
Lisa Sanchez								
Gil Simmons	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes				
Lillie Steed	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes				
Carrie Taft	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes				
Noorjahan Wells	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes				
Jacquetta Whaley	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes				