

**Minutes of the Law, Rules and Ethics Committee Meeting
Bronx Community Board 8
Monday, May 11, 2026 at 7:30 PM
Board Office – 5676 Riverdale Ave, Suite 100, Bronx, NY 10471**

1. Meeting called to order 7:43 pm

2. Attendance (quorum present):

Present (4): Martin Wolpoff (Chair), Steven Froot (Vice-Chair), Sylvia Alexander, Jyll Townes (Via Zoom, per ADA)

Absent (3): Charles Moerdler, Sergio Villaverde, Jessica Sosa

Guests (2): Julie Reyes (Board Chair), Steve Matthews (CB8 member)

3. Approval of Minutes: meeting of March 9, 2026 (no meeting held in April 2026)

In favor (3): Wolpoff, Froot, Alexander; Opposed: (0); Abstain (1): Townes.

4. Chair's Report

A. Criteria for Veteran's Award

The Chair reported that the Special Committee on Veterans' Services is expected to finalize criteria for the Veteran's Award so that the criteria can be voted on by the full Board.

B. Inquiries to NYC Conflicts of Interest Board (COIB) regarding use of the Borough Logo on polo shirts

The Chair noted that he and Board Chairperson Reyes had inquired of COIB as to any restrictions on the use of the Borough President's logo on polo shirts to be made available by a member of CB8 for purchase by other CB8 members. COIB's response was to seek guidance from Borough President's Office on use of the logo, the CB8 member in question should make a separate COIB inquiry but otherwise provided no direction or precedent. The inquiry offered the following limitations, community board resources would not be used, would not sell the shirts at community board meetings or events. It is permissible to sell the shirts to community board members, but shirts may be given, but not sold, to community board staff, to avoid giving the impression they need to purchase a shirt to do their job.

C. Second passage by full board of resolution approving Bylaws amendment

Amendment permits term-limited CB8 members to serve as Community Committee Members on any standing committee for which they had been a member during the previous five years, except executive and budget committees, as a community committee member during the first year that they become term limited without having to first attending three consecutive committee meetings

D. Note on procedure for Bylaws Amendments generally

The Chair noted that there is no rule in the Bylaws or Ethical Guidance Manual, but by longstanding precedent and for good order, all amendments to the CB8 Bylaws should go through the LRE committee *in the first instance*, for purposes of discussion, review or modification, if necessary, before being presented in the form of a resolution for vote by the full board. This does not mean that a resolution to amend the Bylaws cannot be introduced from the floor at the full board meeting if LRE does not recommend adoption of a particular amendment to the Bylaws, only that it should be presented in LRE as a first step.

5. Proposed Resolution to require Board chairpersons to use only City-provided email addresses when conducting official community board business

Board Chairperson Reyes presented a draft resolution to amend the Bylaws to require current and future board chairpersons to use an official City-provided email address (currently ending with ".gov") when conducting official community board business in the interests of transparency, accountability, professionalism and the creation of a collection of the annals of the community board.

The committee was in support of the measure and discussed whether it was necessary for the requirement to be made a part of the Bylaws, rather than to be added to the Ethical Guidance Manual, since although of importance, it was in essence a housekeeping matter. Following discussion, the Board Chairperson agreed that it was sufficient for the requirement to be included in the Ethical Guidance Manual.

The draft resolution, as amended, was as follows:

WHEREAS, Bronx Community Board No. 8 is a public body established to represent the residents of its district and is entrusted with conducting official business in a transparent, accountable, and professional manner; and

WHEREAS, the Chairperson, when acting in their official capacity on behalf of the Community Board, serves as the chief executive officer and spokesperson of the organization rather than as a private individual; and

WHEREAS, the use of a personal email address for official Community Board communications may create ambiguity as to whether correspondence is being sent in an official or personal capacity; and

WHEREAS, the use of an official Community Board email address ensures that records of official correspondence are properly maintained, accessible to authorized board personnel, and consistent with applicable records retention and public transparency requirements; and

WHEREAS, the use of a personal email address for official business may complicate responses to public records requests or litigation holds; and

WHEREAS, a consistent and recognizable email address associated with the Community Board enhances institutional credibility and enables members of the public, government agencies, and community partners to readily identify and verify official communications; and

WHEREAS, the Community Board has a responsibility to safeguard organizational data and community information in accordance with best practices in cybersecurity and data governance, which are better served through managed organizational email infrastructure.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Bronx Community Board 8 hereby requires that the Chairperson shall use only the official New York City agency email address, provided by the Office of Technology & Innovation (OTI), or an equivalent New York City agency or authority, when acting on behalf of the Board, for all correspondence, communications, and actions taken in their official capacity as Chairperson of the Community Board; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this policy applies to, but is not limited to, communications with elected officials, city agencies, community partners, members of the public, and other Community Board members when conducted in an official capacity; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Community Board's official email address shall be maintained and administered in a manner that ensures continuity of access upon any change in leadership; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Community Board District Manager shall work with the Chairperson to ensure proper setup, access, and transition protocols are in place for the official email account; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be communicated to all Board Chairpersons and shall be included in any onboarding materials provided to future Chairpersons, and the requirements stated herein shall be included in the Bronx Community Board 8 Ethical Guidance Manual.

Vote on resolution: In favor (4): Wolpoff, Froot, Alexander, Townes; Opposed (0); Abstain (0).

6. If a resolution to support legislation to establish a single payer health system is raised, are there any conflict-of-interest concerns that would prevent them from voting?

The Chair reminded the committee that COIB had provided him with guidance when he inquired about voting on a resolution to encourage the City Council to vote to prevent retirees from being switched into a Medicare Advantage program. The written response was that chair's financial interest in the insurance companies was minimal and suggested review of the City Charter which defines fiscal interest at being at least \$250,000.

7. Recommendations of Working Group appointed by Board Chairperson to consider possible restructuring/reorganization of CB8 committees

The Board Chairperson asked that the Committee consider the recommendations of the Working Group. The recommendations of the Working Group were as follows:

- Standing Committee realignment or dissolution --
 - Incorporate Cultural Affairs with Parks & Recreation
 - Combine Youth with Education & Libraries
 - Combine Housing with Land Use
 - Combine Aging with Health, Hospitals & Social Services
 - Eliminate Law, Rules & Ethics
- Make Special Committee on Racial Equity (SCRE) a standing committee
- Require Board members to join only one standing committee, rather than two
- Permit all appointed Board members to participate at any committee meeting!

The Chair noted that he had. On many occasions, in person and via email, requested that the Working Group provide the procedure it used to develop its recommendations, the data it collected to support its recommendations, and the rationales for each of the changes it proposed, but that such information has not yet been provided to the Committee.

The Chair also noted that he had been reminded of a report on Board Structure and Operations prepared by a CB8 special committee in January 2007 that canvassed the committee structure used by other community boards in NYC and made recommendations for changes in CB8 structure. The chair distributed the report to Committee members, the Working Group and the Executive Committee. He also distributed minutes from the February 2008 community board meeting that discussed and acted on the report. The Chair further noted that he had recently prepared two separate surveys to be completed by chairs of committees that were to be impacted by the Working Group's suggestions. The second survey was forwarded to all board members. The second sought to determine if board members would join a second one or two committees if the requirement that board members join two standing committees were reduced to one; however, there were too few responses to the surveys to make them useful.

In discussing the proposals advanced by the Working Group, the Committee noted that it was difficult to evaluate the recommendations in the absence of some understanding of the empirical bases and rationales underlying each proposal. The Committee also was of the opinion that it was not possible to fully evaluate the proposal to reduce the requirement that Board members join two standing committees without knowing how the standing committees would be restructured.

Separately, the Committee was of the opinion that the proposal regarding permitting all Board members to participate in any committee meetings was unnecessary because that is the manner in which the Board currently conducts, and has in the past conducted, its business, and

all members of the public, no less Board members, are urged to attend and make their views known at committee meetings.

In three separate votes, the Committee voted unanimously to table consideration of three of the recommendations until next Fall, pending receipt of the Working Group's methodology, data, and rationale for its proposals.

Vote to table consideration of proposals for standing committee realignment or dissolution -- In favor (4): Wolpoff, Froot, Alexander, Townes; Opposed (0); Abstain (0).

Vote to table consideration of making SCRE a standing committee -- In favor (4): Wolpoff, Froot, Alexander, Townes; Opposed (0); Abstain (0).

Vote to table consideration of proposal that Board members be required to join one rather than two standing committees -- In favor (4): Wolpoff, Froot, Alexander, Townes; Opposed (0); Abstain (0).

8. Communications with COIB concerning how COIB determines penalties

Recent correspondence with COIB was reviewed. Based on an inquiry from the chair, COIB provided an outline of criteria used to determine how punishments and fines were meted out

9. NYC Conflicts of Interest Board Determinations

The Committee reviewed the latest determinations from COIB.

10. NYC Council legislative spreadsheet

The latest spreadsheet had been distributed to members of LRE and of the executive committee

11. Unfinished Business – none.

12. New Business - none.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:36 pm

Next Meetings: Monday, June 8, 2026.
Meetings begin at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Steven Froot, Vice Chair

Approved,
Martin Wolpoff, Chair
Law, Rules and Ethics Committee

Meeting Recording: <https://youtu.be/Shr6N3ciLUU?si=HO7JixroCZxVMoV->