

Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting
February 2, 2022
Held on Zoom
(pending approval)

Committee Members Present

Laura Spalter (Chair), Bob Bender (Vice Chair), Sylvia Alexander, Joy Campbell-Priveterre, Margaret Della, Rosemary Ginty, Rob Jacklosky, Edward Green, Robert Fanuzzi, David Gellman, Ramdat Singh, Omar Murray, Nick Fazio, Martin Wolpoff, Julia Gomez, Deb Travis, Sergio Villaverde.

Committee Members Absent

Charles Moerdler, Theodore Morris III, Dan Padernacht.

Staff

Ciara Gannon, District Manager

Guests and CB8 Members

Ethan Stark Miller.

Chair Spalter called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

Approval of Minutes

There was a motion to approve the Executive Committee Minutes, Sylvia Alexander and Rosemary Ginty requested correction of a paragraph under Education in the minutes of January 5, 2022. The minutes will be corrected before they are voted on.

Chairperson's Report

Chair Spalter reported that applications for re-appointment will go out this week from the Bronx Borough Presidents office. It will arrive in US Mail.

L. Spalter reported on the city request that all government agencies make a 3 percent cut. We haven't gotten that at the board from OMB, but we anticipate that we will. L. Spalter attended the review and the hearing on 715 Terrace View Avenue (The Marble Hill BSA Project). In a nutshell, we lost. Four BSA commissioners agreed that the plan had changed considerably and therefore they agreed with the applicant. But they repeatedly noted that over the years, the community board made many objections and the objections had an impact. We had some impact on the following changes. The project went from 59 to 24 units; 7 stories to 4 stories with an extra step. Originally, there were zero parking spaces and that was increase to 16. They said that our concerns were important in their consideration.

Our resolution we sent it was on behalf of the Land Use Committee. C. Moerdler said there was no need to vote on it, because the case is over now.

Chair Spalter reported on the 6661 Broadway Homeless Shelter issue. She met with Majority Leader Andrea Stewart Cousins, along with Jeff Dinowitz and Eric Dinowitz. Yonkers is very concerned about the homeless shelter and the Yonkers Broadway BID launched a letter-writing campaign to Yonkers officials. There was a letter in the *Riverdale Press* from Main Street Alliance that was also signed by South Yonkers BID. We thought there were issues on the state and local levels. They are with us in trying to improve on this plan.

Treasurer's Report

Joy Campbell-Priveterre reported that the budget had not changed much since December and there are no Budget Modifications since January. Looking at Operating Budget Update, it's essentially the same except for the allocated amounts under "Personal Services" and "Other Than Personal Services," the differences was occasioned by salaries and monies paid for cleaning services. She walked the committee through the report. The difference under Code 600 includes: advertising, cleaning and an order from W.B. Mason. Under item 1.3 "Purchase Orders and Accounts Payable" the total encumbered funds are now \$6253, due to cleaning services. There is a lag in the processing, so there are still some items that need to be reconciled. Under item 1.4, Rent and Energy are OMB's responsibility and is not part of the \$269,000 budget. The rent has been paid, but there is a lag in processing. L. Spalter alluded to the proposed cut, but there is a cushion with respect to personal services. J. Campbell-Priveterre said she wanted to thank Diomarys Escano-Bell for her help, as well as Ciara for her support.

District Manager's Report

Ciara reminded that the Borough President is accepting applications for Board Members, due March 4th. The application can be found on our website and the Borough President's website.

Ciara wanted to thank the 50th Precinct and Captain Girven and his team for their quick action on recent requests (including night time activity opposite St. Margaret's R.C. Church). They have been doing night drive-bys. If residents continue to see this suspicious activity, they are asked to call 911 immediately and the police will respond. The Bronx District Managers met with the representative of Mayor Adams, Fred Kreizman, Commissioner of the Mayor's Community Affairs Unit. It was a great meeting, and Ciara looks forward to working with them on community issues and initiatives. We have contacted by the new director of community affairs for Sanitation, and we are working on arranging a meeting with them as well.

Ciara said that the Stagg Group would be attending Monday's Land Use Committee to discuss their plans for 3741 Riverdale Avenue.

Deb Travis asked if the process where would-be applicants came to a Full Board Meeting and obtained a signed affidavit of attendance was still in effect. Also, if committee meetings could stand as a substitute for a Full Board meeting for these applicants. Laura and Ciara affirmed that the affidavit process was still in force. Ciara said she would check about whether applicants could attend committee meetings instead of the Full Board Meeting.

Committee Resolutions

Ed Green of Public Safety Committee presented a resolution for Riverdale Steakhouse at 5601 Riverdale Avenue. The committee voted unanimously to approve the renewal application for full liquor licenses.

Deb Travis presented on the T&T resolution honoring Bill Stone with a street co-naming on the corner of 237th and Hudson Manor Terrace. It passed unanimously. D. Travis remarked that a lot of people came out and spoke in favor of the co-naming. M. Wolpoff and D. Gellman had comments on the first sentence of the resolution. There was some discussion and revisions were made to the resolution.

Issues for Discussion

Ed Green brought up the issue of “no shows” for liquor license applications. At the last meeting, there were 6 S.L.A applications, and there were 5 “no shows” and that is highly unusual. The recent trend of these applicants not showing up is a bit troubling. The current policy is that the committee will not approve an application if the applicant does not appear at the meeting. Multiple calls were made and were not returned. Perhaps the COVID situation has given some business owners the impression that they are exempt from the standard protocols. Ed Green is asking that we draft a letter saying that when a business fails to appear twice, we will write and send a standard letter to the S.L.A. noting that the businesses were no shows at the meeting. Several members endorsed this approach. A few objected, asking about outreach efforts. Ed said the CB office does do outreach to try to bring them in, but it’s been happening more frequently lately.

B. Fanuzzi sympathized with businesses struggling during COVID, but said this trend was concerning and E. Green’s approach seemed reasonable. Deb Travis asked how business owners would remedy this once the letter is sent. She asked could a corresponding letter also go to the business alerting them that a letter has gone to the S.L.A? E. Green said his intent was that the initial letter to the business would serve that purposes and there will continue to be multiple efforts to reach out to them. Sergio Villaverde asked if the “no shows” in question are new applications. Ed said no: one was a new application, but four were long-standing businesses renewing. S. Villaverde commented that perhaps we don’t need to require the longstanding business to come before us just for the sake of the policy. E. Green said the letter would only be sent after multiple attempts to have them appear. He said it was an interesting idea, but that inconsistent treatment might prompt charges of holding different businesses to different standards. N. Fazio endorsed E. Green’s approach but acknowledged the validity of S. Villaverde’s point. M. Della said that if there is no issue with the business, we shouldn’t force them to come in. L. Spalter commented that this was a robust discussion and that the discussion would continue.

FY 2023 Budget Discussion

David Gellman said we were expecting to get a response from the OMB on timing of budgets. We are supposed to have a budget hearing for FY 2023 on Tuesday, February 8th, but they have not yet gotten back to us. Given the fact that we are supposed to respond by February 15th, that the OMB will get back to us by next week.

He asked that we set aside some time to look at our budgets and comment on them before Tuesday or before whenever we are to write our response for February 15th. Please communicate with committee members before this month’s committee meeting to ask them to help compile budget items (Capital budget priorities and expense budget priorities) and prioritize them for approval by April 20th. M. Della

asked if special committees were allowed to make budget requests. The answer was no, special committees could only do so in concert with other committees.

Marty Wolpoff of LRE presented on the Conflict of Interest Board notice about a Manhattan Community Board member who is also on the Board of the Armory in North Manhattan and the executive director of an agency that uses the Armory. This member spoke up on behalf of her agency and the Armory and was fined \$1500 for abuse of the city charter. She was fined even though she disclosed her membership. It turns out it wasn't her speaking up that crossed the line but that she appeared as a representative of her agency at the meeting. He said he will ask the legal minds on his committee to parse this. M. Wolpoff presented a second item on New York City PBA suing the Conflict of Interest Board because the CCRB went into executive session repeatedly without announcing why they were going into executive session. They complained this was a violation of the open meetings law. The COIB acknowledged that the CCRB acted improperly but ultimately denied the PBA's suit. Finally, Marty reminded everyone that the minutes be submitted within the 12 days of a meeting, but the law is interesting because it has the additional phrase "if practicable." But that we have to strive as much as possible to get the minutes in.

Margaret of SCRE asked that standing committees send their list of activities to improve equity issues in the committee. The deadline for lists of how to improve equity in the community was due on January 31st in advance of this Thursday's meeting. She said that the following committees have not yet responded: Budget, Education, HHS, Housing, Land Use, LRE and Public Safety. She may have missed an email perhaps you are happy with what SCRE wrote. She's saying this so that people can get in touch with her. So, if you do have feedback on the issues touching racial equity let her know. She'd like to know if you are comfortable and if the list is up to date. Thanks to those committees and chairs that have gotten in touch with her. She asked that chairs put issues of racial equity in their committee agendas. SCRE members are a part of all standing committees. She said it was important that issues around SCRE were not siloed in SCRE and are normalized in conversations in standing committees or wherever it might be.

Chair Spalter mentioned that the duration of Full Board meetings have become excessive when they end at 10:45 p.m. She asked that we put ourselves back on the routine of our in-person meetings that would begin at 7:30 and that would routinely end before 9:30 p.m. Now, we start at 7 p.m. and go on for hours. It's an issue because we lose our board members who can't stay for votes, and we lose our public as the night progresses. It may even discourage prospective new CB members if they see how long the meetings go on.

She asked everyone to think about solutions. She asked for more discretion to move things along, to limit questions. She has already spoken to some of the electeds. He urged chairs to consider only giving highlights in chair reports or asking people to refer to the minutes. One proposal might be that the committee with the resolutions on the agenda go first. We want to think about ways to get the meetings back to two hours.

M. Wolpoff noted that for the last couple of months LRE has been considering rules that might be applicable to all committees and time limits might be part of that discussion. Bob Bender seconded Chair Spalter's suggestion that at the old in-person meetings, the travel time to and from, and desire to get home would contribute to peoples' desire to end the meeting early. B. Bender seconded the idea of

putting the committees with resolutions up first, and that chairs need not do long reports, but rather say “refer to my agenda” or “refer to my minutes.” E. Green also agreed, and pointed out that community members had to wait a long time to hear their issues discussed. E. Green suggested have a target end time in mind.

D. Travis said there might be some guidelines issued on what a good chairs’ report looks like. She also pointed out that one issue might be the process where we “amend the agenda.” Whenever we want to add an item to the agenda, it often turns into a lot of parliamentary procedure that gets in the way of getting the peoples’ business done. There might be a more practical or commonsense way to proceed in those moments.

M. Della said she was in favor of all of this.

David Gellman commented that we spend a lot of time discussing individual items or the concerns of an individual resident or on wordsmithing on a document----and these are things that can be done offline.

At 8:12 there was a motion to adjourn. It was seconded and the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by Rob Jacklosky, Secretary

Reviewed by Laura Spalter, Chair