

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 8 BRONX
MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON JUNE 14, 2022
MEETING HELD ONLINE VIA ZOOM
(Pending Approval)

PRESENT

Ed Green (Chair)	CB8 Public Safety Committee
Christopher Calhoun	CB8 Public Safety Committee
Margaret Donato	CB8 Public Safety Committee
Nick Fazio	CB8 Public Safety Committee
Georgia Santiago	CB8 Public Safety Committee
Stephen Vazquez	CB8 Public Safety Committee

Committee Members absent: Myra Joyce, Robert Kaplan, Ted Morris, Sergio Villaverde.

Guests: Joy Campbell-Priveterre (CB8), Kingsbridge BID, Ariel Ferreira (Blissful Kreation), James Maloney (Madison's), Satnam Singh (The Last Stop), Ortencia Jimenez Gomez (La Villa), Maria Romero (La Villa), Jodie Colon, Ryan Acquattro.

Chair Ed Green called the meeting to order at 7:18 pm (**Technical difficulties prevented the meeting from beginning at it's intended 7pm starting time*).

Roll-call of committee members.

1. Introduction of Committee Members and Guests

2. Approval of the May 17, 2022 Public Safety Committee Minutes

Approve in favor: 6 (E. Green, C. Calhoun, N. Fazio, S. Vazquez, M. Donato, G. Santiago)

Opposed: 0

3. NYPD Report –

None: **50th Precinct Representatives unable to attend Public Safety Committee meeting due to Officer availability (Officers deployed to Van Cortlandt Park Philharmonic event).*

4. FDNY Report

No report.

5. NYS Liquor Authority: Renewals

**Officer C. Sala of the 50th Precinct e-mailed BXC8 prior to this meeting to inform the Public Safety Committee that the Precinct had no notable complaints or issues surrounding any of the establishments requesting SLA renewals.*

Ariel Ferreira, Representative of Blissful Kreations, Inc., located at 6661 Broadway stated there have been no problems with his establishment and business is going well. He stated his business was a catering hall for private events (baby showers, communions, birthday parties, wedding ceremonies – mostly family oriented).

- Committee Member Stephen Vasquez inquired if there was an owner imposed cut-off time for these events. Mr. Ferreira stated the cut-off time was 1am.
- Committee Member Stephen Vasquez inquired if the location of this business would be effected by the proposed homeless shelter in the area. Mr. Ferreira stated that if the homeless shelter proposal was approved it would force his business to find another location.

The Committee voted unanimously to approve this application.

Vote to approve in favor: 6 (E. Green, C. Calhoun, M. Donato, N. Fazio, G. Santiago, S. Vazquez)

Opposed: 0

Abstain: 0

James Maloney, Representative of Madison's, located at 5686 Riverdale Avenue, appeared before the committee.

The Committee voted unanimously to approve this application.

Vote to approve in favor: 6 (E. Green, C. Calhoun, M. Donato, N. Fazio, G. Santiago, S. Vazquez)

Opposed: 0

Abstain: 0

Satnam Singh, Representative of The Last Stop, located at 5977 Broadway, appeared before the committee.

The Committee voted unanimously to approve this application.

Vote to approve in favor: 6 (E. Green, C. Calhoun, M. Donato, N. Fazio, G. Santiago, S. Vazquez)

Opposed: 0

Abstain: 0

6. NYS Liquor Authority: New

Ortencia Jimenez Gomez and Maria Romero, Representatives of La Villa, located at 240 West 231st Street, appeared before the committee.

- Committee Member Nick Fazio inquired if the owners are the same owners of Las Palmas, the previous restaurant at the location. Maria Romero stated that they are not the same owners.

- Committee member Stephen Vasquez asked what the hours of operation would be. Maria Romero stated the business would be open from 11am-11pm on Mon-Thurs and 11am-12am on Fri-Sat, but they were going to see how business was going and could potentially stay open until 2am if things were going well.

- Chair Green asked if the owners own any other businesses. Maria Romero stated that they own Pete's Café at 570 East Fordham Road, 925 McClean Corner Café in Yonkers and another restaurant at 2712 White Plains Road.

- Chair Green asked why the owners chose this area for their business. Maria Romero stated they wanted to try a new area out and this was going to be their first full Mexican Restaurant and all the other business were basically diners.

- Chair Green asked when the business would be opening. Maria Romero stated they are currently having an issue with the Department of Buildings getting an inspection done in a timely manner, so whenever that process is concluded they should be ready to open.

The Committee voted unanimously to approve this application.

Vote to approve in favor: 6 (E. Green, C. Calhoun, M. Donato, N. Fazio, G. Santiago, S. Vazquez)

Opposed: 0

Abstain: 0

*No Representative showed up to represent El Tina Restaurant, located at 308 West 231st Street.

7. NYS Liquor Authority: Corporate Change

None

8. Old Business

None

9. New Business

Community resident Jodie Colon stated she had just observed a man acting suspiciously, looking at vehicles on the Henry Hudson Bridge in front of 2395 Palisade Ave. She stated she

called the 50th Precinct to report this and was unable to contact anyone, then called 311 and they refused to take the complaint and told her it should be a 911 report. She stated she didn't call 911 because she felt it wouldn't be prioritized. When she returned to the area a short time later she observed the trunk of the car the man was looking at had been broken into.

Ed Green stated he received complaints about excessive noise at 262nd Street & Broadway and met with Parks Department officials about potential solutions to this problem.

Committee Member Nick Fazio stated there was an ongoing issue with parking and noise of scooters outside one of the establishments on Johnson Avenue and one of the scooter owners had an altercation with a patron of the establishment. Nick stated the 50th Precinct had been notified by BXC8 and he wanted the Public Safety Committee to be aware of this and hopefully this situation could be mitigated.

Committee Member Chris Calhoun stated there was a cannabis vending truck at 242nd Street and wondered about its licensing legality. Ed Green stated he was aware of the truck and would make further inquiries to the 50th Precinct about the legalities of this business.

Nick Fazio stated the cannabis truck is an illegal vending issue but the NYPD no longer enforces illegal vending. He stated there are a lot of vendors in the area operating without proper Department of Health licenses and every time BXC8 followed up with the Department of Consumer Affairs and Worker Protection they received notification that there was no violation and were given no explanation. Nick stated that, after extensive correspondence with the agency, the DCWP finally told the Board that their new policy was they could ask a marijuana vendor to see a valid license, but if the vendor refused - the agency would close out the violation. Nick stated that apparently it's now voluntary for a vendor to show a valid license.

Jodie Colon stated that making sure the vendor has a street activity permit might be a better approach to dealing with this issue. Nick responded by saying that would be a Department of Transportation enforcement issue.

Discussion of increase in local crime and what role the Public Safety Committee has in addressing this issue:

Ed Green stated Compstat numbers indicate crime in our area has more than doubled over the course of the last three months and he believes rising crime is largely due to laws that are not being enforced and laws that are making it more difficult for police to fight crime.

Nick Fazio stated that this committee should continue to be the voice of the residents and convey the qualitative data we're receiving to local law enforcement and Elected Officials.

Stephen Vasquez stated we should have our Elected Officials answer questions about laws that effect crime in a well-attended public forum.

Jodie Colon stated that better use of available communication tools would get the word out to residents and increase community turnout to meetings, which would allow people to be heard at a centralized collection point, and this would be a more effective way of communicating a message to Elected Officials and local law enforcement agencies.

Chris Calhoun stated the Public Safety Committee has had some effective conversations with the 50th Precinct that have caused them to respond to resident complaints and had a positive impact on our community.

Committee Member Georgia Santiago stated that mopeds, motorcycles and bicycles riding on the sidewalks are a danger to pedestrians. She stated 231st Street and Broadway has become disgusting and there are pigeons that carry disease that are everywhere and people are feeding them.

Guest Ryan Acquotta stated he works for an alternative to incarceration program and these issues are very important to him. He stated there are a lot of contributing factors to increases in crime.

Stephen Vasquez suggested the Public Safety Committee could meet at a location other than the 50th Precinct if there's a specific public safety issue in that particular location. He suggested that might encourage community turnout.

Discussion of potential Public Safety Committee "Hybrid Meetings":

Ed Green stated he feels it's not advisable to have any kind of committee vote tonight on whether the committee wants to use the hybrid meeting model because there were many committee members absent and we still had not received confirmation from the 50th Precinct whether or not video recording would be allowed in the Precinct. Ed stated there also are technical aspects of this process that BXC8 had not yet resolved that could impact our decision.

Jodie Colon stated BXC8 should consider being more proactive in reaching community members and engaging them.

Ed Green stated this will be the last Public Safety Committee meeting before the summer break and our committee meetings will resume in September.

10. Meeting was adjourned at 8:41pm

Minutes submitted by Committee Chair Ed Green.