

**MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 2021 MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND SANITATION COMMITTEE  
OF BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 8**

January 20, 2021

Zoom

Committee members present: K. Argenti, C. Dartis-Galvin, R. Fanuzzi, R. Spalter, C. Tepulus, D. Travis,

In attendance: B. Bender, D. Gellman, L. Spalter, N. Fazio (BxCB8); A. Bosch, E. Ardizzone (DEP); S. Caruso (DSNY); G A. Purves, A. Persico, A. Bleier, A. Rauch, D. Shashou, G. Axelbank; G. Gallent; I. Smith; J. Sokolow; J. Colon; M. Gibbs, P. O'Brien, R. Berroa, M. Miller-D'Alessandro

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm.

- I. Minutes of December meeting were approved unanimously.
- II. Chair's Report
  - A. DSNY will begin to enforce new rules for mandatory commercial organic recycling on July 31 2021. Law was passed in 2020 but enforcement was suspended due to COVID-19. Future meeting is planned in coordination with CB8 Economic Development committee, DSNY, and SBS.
  - B. Committee issued 3 recommendations to Con Ed on its response to Hurricane Isais: harden overhead wires; tighten "loops" of electrical supply that connect customers to each other so that fewer customers lose power when the "loop" goes down; amend response to downed power lines to give MTA more notice and authority to reroute affected bus lines
  - C. Public comment period for new law for Commercial Waste Zone is extended to February 9.
  - D. Maureen Leddy, NYS DEC Director of Climate Change is scheduled for February committee meeting to discuss Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act. Chair noted local interest in CLCPA law and proposed amendment to it, supported by local state elected officials.
  - E. Chair participated in a call with Chair Spalter and DM Gannon with Bronx DSNY superintendent to review sanitation issues in district, particularly at 242<sup>nd</sup> and JPR.
- III. New York City Watershed Supply Operations  
Adam Bosch, Director of Watershed Public Affairs

In response to local 311 complaints about the taste and smell of water from taps, Adam Bosch presented the following overview of NYC water supply and the agency's ongoing research:

DEP maintains 280 water supply facilities, including 7 wastewater plants, in the NYC watershed, and performs 2,000,000 water quality tests a year, the most of any city in the U. S., allowing for real-time monitoring. Testing applies 240 parameters of water quality.

Catskill Aqueduct is undergoing extensive rehabilitation, requiring 10-week shutdowns until 2022. Rehabilitation and cleaning will increase 30-40 MGD capacity when complete. Typical distribution of water supply is 50% Delaware; 40% Catskill; 10% Croton. During construction: 75% Delaware and 25% Croton.

Delaware Aqueduct will also be shut down from Fall 2022 to Spring 2023 for rehabilitation and construction of a bypass, during which the ratio will be 60% Catskill and 40% Croton. Additional projects include Lower Catskill Aqueduct rehabilitation, Catskill pressure tunnels, a new tunnel between Kensico and facility in Eastview; and federally mandated cover over Yonkers Hillview reservoir. Croton system provides essential backup for and during ongoing rehabilitation projects.

Water from the Croton system—which includes the Croton Filtration Plant in Van Cortlandt Park—has been in use since October 27, 2020. Complaint calls about musty water—averaging 15-25 per day--began in November, coincident with seasonal aquatic “die-offs” in open reservoirs. “Low service” areas—clustered in Upper Manhattan, the South Bronx and East Bronx--are getting 100% Croton water; “high service” areas—almost all the West Bronx-- are a blend of Catskill and Croton. Almost **no** calls come from areas getting 100% Croton water. Almost **all** calls in our area from areas getting water from two different water systems, with different mineral content and taste, based on time of day and demand. DEP concludes that Croton water from the Filtration Plant is not the cause of the musty smell and achieves high water quality grades.

Organic compounds in reservoirs are 100% harmless to human health and found in nature but are the leading cause of water complaints in the world and cannot be filtered out. Studies have shown some people have heightened sensitivity to these compounds. DEP is working with international research scientists and agency engineers to mitigate organic compounds and has moved the issue to the top of its research agenda. DEP will implement chlorine dioxide treatment at reservoirs to attempt to oxidize compounds and is also targeting invasive species known as hydrilla, a source of phosphorous, growing in New Croton Reservoir. Water runoff containing salt is changing reservoir ecosystems. Need was stated for watershed protection and reservoir shoreline maintenance.

Community can expect ongoing shutdowns due to reconstruction work in 3 aqueducts, which are timed for lower water demands in the fall season. Changes in taste can be expected to last 8-10 weeks per year.

311 calls are essential to DEP’s response and mapping of water usage and are strongly encouraged. Chair recommended a monthly call with DEP to log 311 calls and map water source changes.

IV. DSNY Service and Budget Issues

DSNY Community Affairs Officer Stephen Caruso

- A. DSNY offers tools and supplies to partners, including Community Boards, undertaking community clean-ups. It does not have restrictions but offers PPE for COVID-19 safety.
- B. Dumping persists at JPR but DSNY does not dedicate enforcement patrols by district and are in short supply.
- C. DSNY trucks at Broadway and 242<sup>nd</sup> Street are no longer able to move around parked cars because of the narrowed service lane. Bins have been moved to median to facilitate DSNY pickup but N. Fazio reports that merchants complain about litter on sidewalk, not commercial pickup. S. Caruso noted that most commercial trucks pick up at night when cars are not parked. E and S and Economic Development Committees seek solution, including changing DSNY pick-up times to work around merchant hours.
- D. DSNY headcount in our district is 60 workers and 10 supervisors, but with retirements forthcoming. Household collection frequency is unchanged for FY 2021. Litter basket pickup is down from 7 days to 3 days dedicated to bins in commercial areas, though some commercial areas get additional pick up days with regular household collection. Mayor designated 27 NYC neighborhoods hardest hit by COVID-19 for restoration of funding and full service.
- E. Chair reviewed DSNY Budget Register for 2022 and responses to CB8 2022 Budget Priorities with S. Caruso and will submit committee's responses to Bx CB8 for Preliminary Budget Hearing. Committee places emphasis on restored garbage pickup and funding for NYC Compost Project.

V. New Business

Marble Hill resident A. Purvis seeks litter baskets from DSNY for excessive litter in front of mixed residential and commercial neighborhood. S. Caruso states that litter baskets attract litter and due to 60% service cuts, DSNY does not seek more litter baskets. S. Caruso will circulate basket application. C. Tepus recommended outreach to CM Rodriguez.

Respectfully submitted,

R. Fanuzzi,

Chair, Environment and Sanitation Committee

