

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

Minutes of the Meeting of the **Libraries & Cultural Affairs Committee**
Held at the community board office on April 27, 2011

Present

Robert G. Abbott
Bill Stone
Jane Fisher

Affiliation

CB#8, Committee Chair
CB#8
NYPL, Network Manager

The meeting began at 6:00 pm.

Old Business

The Proposed Forum: Ms. Fisher and Mr. Abbott reported that the proposed Forum to inform the community of future plans for the NYPL branch libraries will be deferred until the fall of 2011. This will permit the 2012 city budget to be adopted (see below) and align the presentation with any refinement in the NYPL long range plans over the next several months.

New Business

The primary topic for discussion focused on the mayor's proposed changes to the 2012 operating budget which has potential major setbacks for the NYPL branches. Ms. Fisher enumerated the impact on both the number of days and hours that a branch would be open (cut to 28 hours/week and four days) as well as a 1/3rd cut in the book budget, reduction in children's programs and staff layoffs. She noted that the reduction in hours would probably take place in the mornings and that would have an impact on senior citizens. The proposed cut is \$40 million.

The NYPL will launch a campaign to mobilize support to restore the cuts in the budget. Ms. Fisher will advise the committee on specific advocacy steps that could be taken.

2013 Budget Priorities

The capital projects (major renovation of the Spuyten Duyvil branch and expansion or a new site for the Van Cortlandt Park branch) will continue to be priorities for the 2013 budget.

Correspondence

The chair shared a message that came to the board office from a library patron who does not feel that gaming should be offered in the library branches. Ms. Fisher explained that the initiative was very successful and had made the library relevant to a large segment of the population that was not showing up at all. By getting teens into the library and having them

engage with staff, they then learn about the services and programs that are available. In several situations the gaming participants have created a “community” and become supportive of each other and foster growth and development. She acknowledged that the enthusiasm of some game players can be disruptive and each branch manager is responsible for maintaining the library space for all patrons to enjoy their visit.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.

Robert G. Abbott, Chairman
Libraries & Cultural Affairs Committee