

## BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

### MINUTES OF THE LIBRARIES & CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON SEPTEMBER 10<sup>TH</sup>, 2015 AT THE SPUYTEN DUYVIL, 650 WEST 235<sup>TH</sup> STREET

#### Present

Marvin Goodman  
Sylvia Alexander  
Martin Wolpoff  
Angie Miraflor

Kayla Whidbee  
Martha Gonzalez-Buitrago  
Philip Freidman  
Tim Tureski  
Rebecca Barbier  
Amy Joy Robateau

#### Affiliation

CB8, Committee Chair  
CB8  
CB8  
Associate Director, West Bronx  
Neighborhood Library Network  
Jerome Park Library Branch  
Kingsbridge Library Branch  
CB8  
Spuyten Duyvil Branch  
Riverdale Library Branch  
CB8

The meeting began at 6:00PM.

The chair read a report from the New York Public Library about the five libraries in Community Board 8: Jerome Park, Kingsbridge, Riverdale, Spuyten Duyvil and Van Cortlandt. This last year there were a total of 437,361 visits to these libraries. There were 2,943 library programs offered, which attracted 51,657 total program attendance. It was noted that 40% of visitors are students at, or below high school level, with 54% of them speaking another language at home. The Bronx saw the biggest increase in program attendance and circulation out of all five boroughs with a 225% increase in program attendance a 35% increase in circulation, according to the 2015 report. The chair pointed out that our local newspapers advertise these programs.

The NYPL received a large increase in City operating funds for FY16, but this is still below 2008 levels. This restoration of expense funding will enable our CB8 libraries to increase the hours of operation, hire more librarians, and have more books and more programs.

The Chair introduced Angie Miraflor, Associate Director of the West Bronx Neighborhood Library Network, who oversees the 5 libraries in CB8. Ms. Miraflor reviewed the budget renewals noted by the chair and noted that the extended hours of operation will enable the Grand Concourse Branch to have Sunday hours. The NYPL will be hiring 100 new librarians citywide in line with the new educational initiative, one brand new librarian for each CB8. The Bronx has the most number of schools involved in the school outreach programs.

For the first time, the library system was put into the ten-year city capital plan. \$300 million was planned for NYPL for long-term capital planning. Building upgrades and technology upgrades are needed, such as elevator replacements, heating and cooling system updates, windows and doors replacements, new roofs, fire alarms and security upgrades. These are all part of \$20.9 million planned for CB8 NYPL for FY17. However, additional funding is needed for

expansions; especially Van Cortlandt Library and Spuyten Duyvil Library. There is a high level of community engagement and involvement in our branch library programs. The speaker pointed out that our 5 library branches circulate over 1 million items yearly, which amounts to 20 items per resident.

The speaker noted that for this year as an example; the Jerome Park Library has 2 ESOL classes for this fall and winter; some branches have 2 or 3 classes. For after-school activities, students can get homework help. There are many arts and cultural programs. Internet access is available on library computers. There is a big school outreach program. Classroom teachers registered can borrow large numbers of books (100 books) for extended periods. Students enrolled in this program can keep books and audio books for longer periods and do not pay fines for late returns. There are collections for citizenships preparation and books in different languages. Kingsbridge Library has a family literacy program and a pilot program for early education of pre-K children, as well as all others. Parents and care-givers of those children will have workshops. There will be a reach-out program to get them involved. All which works to see which activities really work. Kingsbridge also has a teen production program put together and run by teens for writing, project management, public speaking, performances. There is a teen advisory group for determining teen programs, including financial literacy programs, writing and poetry. There is an extensive computer usage on both adult and children's levels. Computer classes for beginners are available, as well as Wi-Fi.

The branch librarians at the other branches also described in great detail the programs at their particular branch. These are similar to those detailed at Kingsbridge and Jerome Park. There was a description of programs at summer schools. The speaker noted that here have been 2 outreach librarians to visit Bronx schools to work with school librarians, and there will be additional outreach librarians for the West Bronx in the new budget, so each will now be working with approximately 30 schools. The chair recommended a closer connection with the education committee to work together for school librarians and NYPL librarians.

As a result of questions, the issue of the possible joining of NYC's 3 library systems (NYPL, Brooklyn PL and Queens PL systems) into one system, as is true of all other city departments.

The minutes of the previous meeting of June 2015 were approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.

The next meeting of the Libraries and Cultural Affairs Committee will be in November 2015, with the site to be determined.

Respectfully submitted,

Marvin Goodman  
Chair, Libraries and Cultural Affairs Committee