

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

MINUTES OF THE LIBRARIES & CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD MARCH 14, 2013 AT THE BOARD OFFICE

Present

Robert G. Abbott
Amy Moore
Lamont Parker
Martin Wolpoff
Michael Alvarez

Affiliation

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

The meeting began at 7:00 p.m.

Welcome: The committee welcomed Michael Alvarez and wished him well on returning to the position of Network Manager for NYPL responsible for a large number of branch libraries in the Bronx including the five branches in the community board area.

Update: Mr. Alvarez updated the committee on:

- The 4.5% cut in the 2013 budget (will cause deferred expenditure on acquisitions and other items but have no direct impact on services to patrons or hours of operation). The cut to the 2014 budget is anticipated to be 7.5% and that will have substantive impact. We are waiting on the Mayor's Executive Budget. NYPL will begin its advocacy campaign shortly.
- Activities at the branches and staffing levels (currently interviewing for Branch Manager at Van Courtlandt Park). He also commented on a patron complaint at Spuyten Duyvil; the progress on obtaining security clearance to continue outreach in the schools; the newly adopted procedures for obtaining a Street Activity Permit; and the planned Poetry Jam at the Kingsbridge branch library that is being sponsored by CB8's Youth Committee.

Discussion: The committee then discussed the report "**Branches of Opportunity**" that was released in January by the Center for an Urban Future. The report documents and illustrates that "the public libraries are serving more people in more ways than ever before, and they have become an increasingly critical part of the city's human capital system; but they have been undervalued by policymakers and face growing threats in today's digital age." The committee will explore a possible meeting to specifically deal with the recommendations in the report. Mr. Alvarez will work with the committee chair and report back.

Other Business: The expense and capital budget priorities for fiscal year 2015 were briefly discussed. As the priorities submitted for 2014 were all endorsed but lack funding, it is likely the same priorities will be adopted for the 2015 budget formulation process.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm

Robert G. Abbott, Chair
Libraries & Cultural Affairs Committee