

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

Minutes of the Meeting of the **Libraries & Cultural Affairs Committee**
Held at the Bronx Library Center on May 9, 2013

Present

Robert G. Abbott
Liana Acevedo
Michael Alvarez
Martha Gonzalez-Buitrago
Martin Wolpoff

Affiliation

CB#8, Committee Chair
NYPL Branch Manager, Jerome Park
NYPL Network Manager
NYPL Branch Manager, Kingsbridge
CB#8

The meeting began at 7:00 p.m.

WELCOME: Mr. Alvarez welcomed everyone to the Bronx Library Center. At the conclusion of the meeting he also conducted a brief walkthrough of the facility and described the specific programming on each floor.

UPDATE ON THE BUDGET CUTS FOR 2014 FISCAL YEAR. The NYPL has launched a “Stop the Cuts!” campaign to gain community support in overcoming a proposed cut of \$47 million dollars in the city funds for the NYPL in the budget that starts July 1, 2013. The campaign identifies the magnitude of the impact such cuts would have in branch hours, staffing, programs and general access to resources. Everyone is encouraged to use www.nypl.org/speakout to send letters to public officials.

UPDATE ON THE BRANCHES.

1. Unruly teenagers at Spuyten Duyvil – an incident was reported to the chair involving a large group of teenagers from MS 141 who entered the branch library for a couple of minutes, as they were looking for a “target” student for an unknown issue. Some patrons of the branch were frightened at the sheer number of teens that entered the branch at the same time. The branch manager was present. Discussions with the Public Safety committee and perhaps NYPD will follow. The branch manager is following up with security colleagues at NYPL.
2. Jerome Park plans to hold their annual summer reading kick-off on June 28th from 12:00 to 4:00. They will make a request for a “special event” closing of Eames Place for the four hours. Special events have a shorter time period for applications than the full SAPO procedure that has recently been discussed by the board. This committee fully supports the issuance of a special events permit.
3. The Kingsbridge branch reports that all arrangements have been made for the Bronx Youth Poetry Slam that is scheduled for Thursday, May 23rd from 6:00 to 8:00. The event is sponsored by CB 8’s Youth Committee.

New Business – COOKING PROGRAMS The Jerome Park branch manager started a teen cooking program in 2009 which has since grown to a regular schedule of every Thursday from 4:00 to 5:45 pm. In addition, a kids cooking program is now held on alternating Tuesdays and a family cooking program every other Saturday from 12:00 to 2:00 pm. The objective of the program is to show patrons new recipes that are healthy and delicious and, at the same time, teach kids to read a recipe, measure ingredients, and make healthy substitutions when possible. Trips to local farmers markets have also occurred to demonstrate the selection and value of including a variety of fruits and vegetables in meals.

The Kingsbridge branch has decided to follow the example of Jerome Park and is also beginning cooking programs. There are broad opportunities for community groups to help underwrite the costs of these initiatives. The committee recommends that Bronx Community Board 8, using extra-budgetary funds, award \$500 to the cooking programs at Jerome Park toward the purchase of equipment (such as a juicer, food processor, cutting boards and a small convection oven) and \$150 to the program starting at Kingsbridge.

BUDGET PRIORITIES FOR 2015 – CAPITAL AND EXPENSE. The committee has decided to resubmit the three capital budget requests from 2014 which were all endorsed by NYPL but lacked funding to be implemented. Capital improvements are needed at Spuyten Duyvil, Riverdale, and Van Cortlandt Park branches. The expense budget request is also resubmitted which is to fund the full, six-days-a-week service at all five of our branch libraries.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm

Robert G. Abbott, Chair