

*The City of New York*  
Bronx Community Board Four  
General Board Meeting  
Held on Tuesday, MARCH 26, 2019  
BRONX MUSUEM OF THE ARTS  
1040 Grand Concourse & East 165<sup>th</sup> Street  
**Ms. Kathleen Saunders, Chair, Presiding**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Ms. Ramatu Ahmed, Mr. Rolando Aviles, Ms. Beverly Bond, Ms. Jacqueline Calderon, Mr. Jason Caraballo, Mr. Maynard Charles, Mrs. Rossmery Dais, Mr. Gregory A. Delts, Mr. Spencer Edwards, Mr. John Fielder, Ms. Ariane Garcia, Mr. Robert Garmendiz, Ms. Veronique Green, Mr. Walter Harris, Ms. Frances Hudson-Marrow, Ms. Marissa Jackson, Ms. Mildred James, Ms. Nurys Laureano, Ms. Marie McCullough, Bishop Earl McKay, Mr. Leandro Monzon, Mr. Ebrahim Dawda Ndure, Mr. Barry Nissen, Mrs. Zonia Ortiz, Ms. Arelis Pineda, Ms. Martha Reyes, Mr. Jimmy Rivera, Mr. George T. Robinson, Sr., Ms. Lilliam Rosa, Ms. Genny Sanchez, Ms. Kathleen Saunders, Mr. Avery Smith, Mr. Jackson Strong, Dr. Grace Zarate.

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:**

Mr. John Howard Algarin, Mr. Mohammed Mardah, Mr. Jamal Patrick.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Ms. Jodi Morales, Ms. Yohanny Rincon.

**STAFF:**

Mr. Paul Philps, District Manager

Ms. Lynne Thompson, Administrative Assistant

Ms. Elizabeth Gonzalez-Rodriguez, Senior Secretary

**ELECTED OFFICIALS:**

Ms. Shayra Reyes, representing US Congressman Jose E. Serrano

Mr. Victor Martinez, representing NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer

Mr. Justin Sanchez, representing Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr.

Ms. S. Hassan, representing NYS Senator Jose M. Serrano

Mr. Karim Arab, representing NYS Assembly Latoya Joyner

Ms. Gloria Cruz, representing NYC Council Diana Ayala

Ms. Stacy Strong, representing NYC Council Vanessa Gibson

**GUEST PRESENT:**

Ameena Ali-Unwomen Gambia, Amber Qureshi-NYC Parks/Greenthumb, Hananiah Shabazz-The Zaid Center NYC, Nathalie Arzu-CCI/MOMS Demand/Everytown, David Beller-Census, Jason M. Hilliard-Community Food Advocates NYC, Brenda Dock-Resident, Maria Caicedo-Community Food Action, Jamie Borden-Bronx Parent Life Together, Kimberly Jefferson-New York Public Library Melrose Branch, Guy Savau-Post Graduate Mental Health, Chris Kalsihtis-Court Deli, Janette Viera-Urban Pathways Inc., Leslie Segars-WestHab, Angel Perez-Credit Life Bar & Grill, Tierra Pais-Be Encouraged Inc., Alex Kipp-COIB, Beverly Williams-Resident, Bibi Karim-BronxWorks, Ali Cruz-Resident, J. Cartergena-Resident, Evelyn Rivera-11 West 172<sup>nd</sup> Street Tenants Association, Tamara Mayfield-Resident, Lewanda Wallne-SUS, Jhouana Peralta-Resident, Alejandro Vargas-Resident, Kylie Gil-Resident, Christian Williams-Resident, Kewdy Matos-Resident, Qiana Flynn-BPHN, Astrid Rodriguez-Resident, Danicia Benavides, Tracy DaSilva-Jones-HELP Morris, Taibat Ibrahim-MHHC, Julian Peterson-Resident, Mohammed Ni Org, Mabintou Sissoko, Edmond Walton Jr.-Legal Hand, Dion Powell, Patricia Wright, Hasina Foye, Nyah Wilson, Rasheida Alston.

## Public Session

1. *Amber Qureshi*, NYC Parks/GreenThumb – The GreenThumb Youth Leadership Council is accepting applications now for their program. It is for Bronx youths ages 12 to 21 who want to volunteer. The application process is open until April 19, 2019. The application can be accessed at [bit.ly/YLCParticipantApplication](http://bit.ly/YLCParticipantApplication).
2. *David Beller*, U.S. Census Representative – NYS gets about \$75 billion in federal funding. The Bronx, however, is underfunded. This year we may lose two seats in Congress. The census has an economic and social impact. Therefore, there are many jobs available for the incoming US Census. The pay rate is \$20 for census takers and \$30 for field supervisors. Those interested may contact 855-JOB-2020 for further information.
3. *Maria Calcedo*, Community Food Action – Once again the Community Food Action will partner with New Settlement Apartments to provide the 170 Farm Stand from July to November every Wednesday from 2:30 pm to 6:30 pm at the corner of 170<sup>th</sup> Street and Townsend Avenue.
4. *Kimberly Johnson*, NY Public Library-Melrose Branch – The Library's regular operating hours are Monday to Friday from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. They have now added hours on Sundays from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm as a result of the Grand Concourse Branch which is currently closed. Additionally, the Participatory Budget polling will take place at this site until April 7, 2019. The branch is also providing assistance for Pre-K registration application process.
5. *Jason Caraballo*, Montefiore Medical Center – Provided the 2019 Bronx Community Health Survey to assess what issues are priorities in our community. The survey is also available online at [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BX\\_CHS\\_2019](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BX_CHS_2019).
6. *Tiera Pais*, Be Encouraged, Inc. – She is doing her annual prom drive to provide prom dresses and suits for underprivileged seniors. At this time she is accepting gently used prom dresses and accessories in addition to any other donation that can be provided to finance this project.

**Welcoming remarks and announcements** by Ms. Kathleen Saunders. The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:28 pm. Pursuant to Chapter 70 Section 2800 of the City Charter the actions and procedures of Community Boards and their committees are governed by the applicable provisions of the City Charter and New York State Open Meetings Law (OML, Section 100-111 of the New York State Public Officers Law) and Freedom of Information Law (FOIL, Section 84-90 of the Public Officers Law). Each Community Board shall meet at least once each month. Community Board 4 shall meet every fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) Tuesday of the month. This Tuesday, March 26, 2018, the meeting is held at The Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse, Bronx, NY.

**Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance** led by Bishop Earl McKay.

**Motion to Review/Correct/Adopt of General Board Meeting:** Mr. Rolando Aviles made a motion to accept the General Board Minutes for February 26, 2019. The motion was seconded by Mr. Barry Nissen. After the vote with 35 in favor and 4 abstentions, the **motion carries**.

## District Manager's Report

- Gotham Tennis Bubble – The Executive Committee met with the owners of Gotham Stadium Tennis on February 14, 2019. They discussed a public safety issue. They have been in operation since 2009. They said they wanted to work with us and do more for the community to have access to the tennis courts. They wanted our support to allow the bubble placed over the tennis courts to remain in place. The bubble was

installed because of work being done at the Major Deegan. The work on the Deegan has finished but Gotham wants the bubble to remain where it is. We tried to work with them and offer our assistance however; they were no show on numerous occasions. Needless to say, they have been informed by DPR that the bubble must come down and it is non-negotiable.

- February 27, 2019 – 97 W. 169<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Met with potential responders to the RFP for Spring Bank located at 69 E. 167<sup>th</sup> Street.
- March 1, 2019 – Financially Fit Friday with Spring bank was a great success. About 50 people stopped by.
- March 4, 2019 – Met with Councilmember Diana Ayala to discuss the pending soccer stadium development, new office spaces for the Board and the proliferation of shelters and supportive housing projects.
- March 6, 2019 – The Municipal Services Committee was attended by DOT, DDC and MTA. MTA provided an overview of the Existing Conditions report of the Bus Redesign project. A draft plan will be released in May and the final plan will be developed in the summer months.
  - DDC is finishing the improvements on the Grand Concourse
  - DOT – the station at 174<sup>th</sup> Street was recently renovated and now the outside of the station is getting a makeover. The bridge over the Grand Concourse and E. 174<sup>th</sup> Street is going through rehabilitation.
    - They will replace the sidewalk at the subway entrance in order to maintain accessibility.
    - Replace concrete parapet and install new chain link fence
    - Replace lighting fixture
    - Construct new medians
    - Replace catch basin and drainage
    - Repair underdeck, concrete spills and replace safety netting.
- March 7, 2019 – Met with Carla Precht and Takisha Dozier from the Bronx Children’s Museum to discuss their concern around pedestrian safety and walkability around the area of Exterior Street.
- March 11, 2019 – Attended update of the Bronx Children’s Museum along with Marissa Jackson. The museum is scheduled to open next year.
  - Also met with another potential developer for 97 W. 169<sup>th</sup> Street.
- March 12, 2019 – Testified at the City Council Subcommittee for Government Relations on the FY2020 Budget.
- March 13, 2019 – Attended NYC Comptroller Stringer’s Roundtable discussion at the Andrew Friedman Home. Topics ranged from affordable housing, schools, homelessness and infrastructure.
  - Met with Jason Hilliard Food Advocates who are advocating the Office of Food and Nutrition Service’s enhanced cafeteria redesign.
- March 14, 2019 – Met with DYCD to review funding and programming in the district.
- March 19, 2019 – Participated in a phone interview in relation to research being conducted by WHEDco and the Pratt Institute related to workforce development.
  - There is a Workforce Development Task Force led by JobsFirst as it relates to Jerome Avenue. A survey has been provided to each board member to fill out and they have been asked to take five of the survey to people in their community. The deadline for the surveys is April 5, 2019.
- Technical Assistance Panels (TAP) – There may be a potential soccer stadium coming to our district. There have been many discussions about parking lots and garages operated by Bronx Parking Development. We have discussed the importance of an active role in determining how these city parcels are used. The DCP Bronx Office has offered an opportunity to do some planning work around these properties. The Urban Land Institute has a program named Technical Assistance Panel which offers expertise to municipalities with land use challenges. The offer objective, unbiased recommendations from a panel of diverse experts. He recommends that the Board take advantage of this opportunity and asked that the Chair of Housing & Land Use bring a motion to the floor to explore the possibility of using TAP with Urban Land Institute and partnering with DCP for the proposed soccer stadium and use of the parking lots.
- Women’s History Month – recognition of noteworthy women on the Board. Those recognized were Ms. Ariane Garcia, Ms. Rossmery Dais, Ms. Marissa Sow-Jackson and Dr. Grace Zarate.
- June 1, 2019 – Highbridge Community celebration along with the 44<sup>th</sup> Precinct and the New York Yankees with a rain date on June 8, 2019 will be held at Nelson Playground from 12:00 pm to 5:00 pm. There will be

basketball and soccer tournaments, free bikes and helmets, bouncing houses, etc. Save the date will be sent. Ten Board members will be needed to volunteer for the day. Email the DM if interested in participating.

- CB4 is partnering with BronxWorks to offer free swim lessons to 100 CB4 residents. Youths ages 2-12.
- April Board meeting – SBS Train the Trainer
- May Board meeting – Jerome Avenue Plan Update – DCP
- April 8<sup>th</sup> – Parliamentary Procedure Part II – Please RSVP
- April 18<sup>th</sup> – Youth & Education Charter School Overview
- May 14<sup>th</sup> – will be meeting along with Ms. Bond with Michael E. Jones from State Liquor Authority. Any Board member who is interested, email Paul Philps.

### **Presentation on Chapter 68 of the City Charter, the City's Conflict of Interest Law – Alex Kipp**

The presenter discussed the Conflict of Interest and how it may implicate community board members. There are three units at Conflict of Interest Board. They are the Training Unit, the Enforcement Unit and the Advice Unit. If a conflict of interest is involved, one can NEVER participate in the discussion. Three areas to keep in mind when a conflict exists are *disclose, discuss and do not vote*.

The information provided was:

- A list of regulations concerning the conduct and activities of Community Board members.
- Explanation of the method of tabulating votes if Board members have conflicts of interest.
- Selected excerpts from Charter Chapter 68 and explanatory notes.
- A summary of COIB advisory opinions concerning Community Boards.

Quorum is 50% plus 1.

When you're a community board member you are always a community board member when conducting community board business.

No valuable gifts of \$50 or more may be accepted. If you are offered any gifts because you are a Community Board member, you must refuse it.

### **Discussion: Board Member Action**

The attention was brought to the Board in which Board member, Ramatu Ahmed has failed to attend General Board Meetings in September, October, November 2018 and January 2019 placing her membership in jeopardy. Ms. Ahmed failed to notify the Board office beforehand of her absences as required by the Board's By-Laws. Ms. Ahmed received notifications bringing to her attention her unexcused absences and conversations of her absences were discussed with her, the Board Chair and the District Manager to correct said action. Ms. Ahmed had the opportunity to correct her actions but she did not do so. Ms. Ahmed was given the floor to make a statement. Additionally, other Board members were given the opportunity to provide to the discussion. It was clearly understood by all parties involved, that the Board has a policy in place that we have to adhere to. Mr. Barry Nissen motioned for the removal of Ms. Ramatu Ahmed from the Board for lack of attendance. It was seconded by Mr. Rolando Aviles. After the vote of 27 in favor, 2 against and 5 abstentions, the **motion carries**.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT- HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES- HOUSING & LAND USE- MUNICIPAL SERVICES & EDUCATION - PARKS- YOUTH SERVICES**

**Economic Development Committee-** The Committee were presented by the below listed and at committee they voted to grant a letter of support as follows: **1) Credit Life Bar & Grill.** 1275 Edward L. Grant Hwy, **New Application.** **2) NPK Donut, Inc./Court Deli Restaurant** - 96 E. 161<sup>st</sup> Street, **Renewal.** **2a) NPK Donut, Inc.** for ULURP # N180479ECX; DCA#1244698-DCA for Sidewalk Café consisting of 18 tables and 51 seats. **3) Legends Hospitality, LLC / NY Yankees Partnership** - 1 E. 161<sup>st</sup> Street, **Alteration.** The Committee motioned to provide letters of support. It was seconded by Ms. Veronique Green. After the vote of 32 in favor, 1 opposition and 3 abstentions, the **motions carries**.

**Municipal Services Committee** – The committee was updated by the Department of Design and Construction on Phase B of the Reconstruction of Grand Concourse Service Road. Additionally, NYC Transit presented the Bronx Bus Network Redesign. They will have open houses in May and June. Also, the DOT is starting work on the rehabilitation of Grand Concourse Bridge over E. 174<sup>th</sup> Street. Details were provided earlier in the DM

report. The project will commence March 2019 and culminate by December 2019. The Chair will be stepping away for a short while and in her absence, Ms. Mildred James will act as Interim Chair.

**Housing & Land Use Committee** – The committee Chair received a letter from the DM for initiative work with CB4 to study the issue of public land around Yankee Stadium that is currently leased to Bronx Parking Development Co. This land is used as parking for non-residents. The Urban Land Institute through their TAP initiative has identified it as a study for the use of the land. This land can be used for housing. Mr. Jackson, Chair of the Committee motioned to work with Urban Land Institute and DCP to identify the highest and best use of the properties occupied by Bronx Parking Development Co. which is public land. The motion was seconded by Mr. Robert Garmendiz. The vote was unanimous to grant a letter of support. The **motion carries**. The committee also had a presentation on 1159 River Avenue currently occupied with storage sheds off of 167<sup>th</sup> Street. This will be a supportive housing project. There have been many sites coming to our district with this type of housing. There was not a need for a letter of support because said project is “as of rights” development. The Chair has invited HPD to attend their upcoming meeting on April 1, 2019 where a representative can provide information and criteria for building in NYC.

**Parks and Recreation Committee**- A survey trip took place on March 16, 2019 to the waterfront Green Spaces. The committee motioned to provide a letter of support to the Parks Department for the reconstruction of Franz Sigel Ballfields including light. The motion was seconded by Bishop Earl McKay. The vote was unanimous to grant a letter of support. The **motion carries**.

**Health Services Committee** – The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation once again ranked the Bronx #62 as far as health disparities. The committee urges everyone to contact their elected officials to address this and help Bronx residents have better health options. This report is available online. On March 14, 2019 attended the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute in Washington, DC. The Chair took the opportunity to bring to this institutes attention the Bronx ranking and what assistance they could provide to improve the Bronx’s ranking.

**Youth Services & Education** – The committee had a presentation by Jason Hilliard for Enhanced Cafeteria Redesign by the Community Food Advocates NYC. Funding will be \$500,000 per school. This will include more menu options and appealing aesthetics. The committee motioned to provide a letter of support for Community Food Advocates for Enhanced Cafeteria Redesign. The motion was seconded by Ms. Zonia Ortiz. After a vote of 32 in the affirmative and 2 abstentions, the **motion carries**.

### **Report by the Bronx Borough President’s Office represented by Justin Sanchez**

- Reappointment letters will be sent out soon. If any member did not complete the No Harassment Certification, they will not be reappointed.
- Camp Junior through Fresh Air Fund. Two weeks in the summer free for youths. This is for youths ages 13 to 19. For more information, contact 212-897-8900. Applications can also be acquired at [child.freshair.org](http://child.freshair.org).
- Bronx Borough President has partnered with the Dept. of Education to offer community based organizations an education facility. Interested organizations must apply for a permit with the DOE. The fee will be waived and the BBP will cover the fee for using said space. First come first serve basis. Request closes on June 30, 2019.
- Bronx Local Hot Sauce Contest – Food collaborates and local community gardens have come together to organize a group called the Bronx Canasta. They are having a contest to submit your best salad dressing and salad marinate recipes to [bronxcanasta.nyc](http://bronxcanasta.nyc). The winner will have their original recipe, salad or marinate made from local community gardens and distributed worldwide. The contest ends on April 15, 2019 at 5:00 pm.

### **Report by Local Elected Officials or their representatives.**

*New York State Senator Jose M. Serrano* represented by S. Hassan

- The new representative for the Senator introduced herself and is looking to work with us.
- The Senator is sponsoring a poster celebration for children in grades K-6 in recognition of Earth Day. The theme this year is Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. Students are welcome to submit their entries by April 17, 2019 for this contest on the Senator’s website: [serrano.nysenate.gov](http://serrano.nysenate.gov).

*Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner* represented by Karim Arab

- Legal Services – Every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday from 3pm to 6 pm.
- Tenant Support Specialist – Every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday from 11 am to 3 pm.
- Immigration Screening Services on the third week of the month. To set up and appointment, contact the office at 718-538-2000.
- Free tax preparation services on April 2 and April 12, 2019. Must bring social security card, W-2, 1099, bank information and expenses information. Contact the office for any further information.
- NYC Assembly passed Bill 32-76-the Maternity Mortality Review Board.

*Councilmember Vanessa L. Gibson* represented by Stacy Strong

- March 27, 2019 – Women’s Herstory Month celebration honoring women of commitment, courage and distinction in NYC. Mullaly Recreation Center-1020 Jerome Avenue from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm.
- Mobile free legal services available April 10, May 21 and June 12, 2019. The vehicle is stationed in front of 1377 Jerome Avenue. For appointment contact 718-588-7500.
- May 17, 2019 – Job Fair at the Bronx EOC-1666 Bathgate Avenue from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. This event will be in partnership with Senator River, Assemblyman Blake, Senator Sepulveda and Assemblywoman Reyes.
- April 11, 2019 – Garifuna Heritage Celebration at the Bronx Museum of the Arts from 6 pm to 8 pm.
- June 1, 2019 – Highbridge Community Celebration with Community Board Four and CM Ayala.
- Family Law Clinic – Asking for referrals for anyone that may need these services. Available the last Wednesday of the month.
- Partnered with SBS to offer assistance to business owners; particularly those impacted by the Jerome Avenue rezoning. SBS representative is available at our office every first and third Monday of the month from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm.

*Comptroller Scott M. Stringer* represented by Victor Martinez

- March 27, 2019 - Women Herstory Month Celebration at the Public Library – 476 Fifth Avenue, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor. From 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm.
- Requesting that the Charter Review Commission created by the City Council to put on the ballot a Chief Diversity Officer. Of the \$19 billion spent on businesses last year, only 5% went to women and minority based businesses. A Chief Diversity Officer will be able to help with this. At a later date, will be providing a petition with this request.
- M/WBE University – various workshops available. Contact our office for detail or pick up an information flyer.

**Announcements:**

None

***Meeting adjourned at 8:43 PM.***

***Prepared and submitted by Ms. L. Rosa.***