

The City of New York
BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR
GENERAL BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2021 | 6PM
ONLINE VIA ZOOM PLATFORM
Mr. Robert Garmendiz, Board Chair, Presiding

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ms. Rasheida Alston, Ms. Jacqueline Altamirano Marin, Mr. Isidro Bernabe Arguello, Ms. Beverly Bond, Mr. Kweku Brew, Mr. Jason Caraballo, Mr. Maynard Charles, Mrs. Rossmery Dais, Mr. Michael Durant, Mr. Spencer Edwards, Mr. John Fielder, Ms. Ishaira Garcia, Mr. Robert Garmendiz, Ms. Veronique Green, Ms. Frances Hudson-Marrow, Ms. Robin Jackson, Ms. Mildred James, Ms. Towona Joye, Ms. Nurys Laureano, Ms. Anita Long, Mr. Paul Onyx Lozito, Mr. Mohammed Mardah, Ms. Marie McCullough, Bishop Earl McKay, Ms. Michelle Mootreddy, Mr. Anthony Nacerino, Mr. Ebrahim Dawda Ndure, Mr. Jonah Nigh, Mrs. Zonia Ortiz, Ms. Arelis Pineda, Ms. Martha Reyes, Ms. Yohanny Rincon, Mr. Jimmy Rivera, Ms. Elba Rodriguez, Ms. Lilliam Rosa, Mr. Avery Smith, Mr. Constantious Stavroulakis, Mr. Jackson Strong, Mr. Elliot Viera, Ms. Kinanda Williams-Murray, Dr. Grace Zarate.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Ms. Sivan Bentt-Bruce.

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Mr. Leandro Monzon.

STAFF:

Mr. Paul Philps, District Manager
Ms. Lynne Thompson, Administrative Assistant
Ms. Elizabeth Gonzalez-Rodriguez, Senior Secretary

ELECTED OFFICIALS:

Brian Polanco, representing NYC Public Advocate Jumaane Williams
Alexis Ruiz, representing Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr.
Cecil Brooks, Jr., representing Congressman Ritchie Torres
Tiara Davis, representing NYS Senate Gustavo Rivera
Terrell Brock, representing NYS Senate Jose M. Serrano
June Soto, representing NYS Senate Jose M. Serrano
Hon. Luis Sepulveda, NYS Senate Member
Ritchard Ewings, representing NYS Senate Luis Sepulveda
Hon. Chantel Jackson, NYS Assembly Member
Hon. Vanessa Gibson, NYC Council Member
Thierno Younoussa Bah, representing NYC Councilwoman Vanessa Gibson
Jose Rodriguez, representing NYC Councilwoman Diana Ayala

GUEST PRESENT:

Deputy Inspector Charlie Bello-Commanding Officer NYPD 44th Precinct, Detective Roberto Oviedo-NYPD 44th Precinct/Community Affairs Unit, Iris Rodriguez-Rosa-NYC Parks & Recreation Bronx Commissioner, Joseph Jenkins-

NYC Department for the Aging, Rolando Aviles, Jr.-Resident, Renato Gomes-VIP Community Services, Moria Byrne Zaaloff-Bronx Health REACH, Ejiro Ojeni-HR&A Advisors, Inc., Domonique Lee Alston-Kwame Ture (formerly West Bronx), Lino Caceres-CB4 Consultant, Danesh Jaiprashad-Resident, Ezquiel Esparza M.-Resident, Naqi Cruz-Civilian Complaint Review Board, Alfonso Polanco-Resident, Carla Precht-Bronx Children's Museum, Chris Campbell-Resident, Kimberly Jefferson-NYC Public Library Melrose Branch, Jackie Carter-Resident, Nivardo Lopez-NYC DOT Bronx Commissioner, Ariela Heilman-Resident, S10+de Elizabeth-El Sazon Del Mujeron Restaurant, Amanda Harrington-NY City News Service, Nancy De La Rosa-Molino Rojo Restaurant, Aly Kravetz, Community Food Action, belinalagallegos, Alaina Beardsley, George Sanchez, Mary, Wilson Jack, Dennis Nilsen, Stephen Safari, Nicholas Filpo, Ana Melendez, H.Martinez, Debbie, 646-***-4994, iPhone, Galaxy S10e, iPad, iPhone Chiber, Angika, Madelyn Fayman, Martha Jones, Carol Volerman, Michael Owens, Elise Cannon, Tom Coles, Jeff Reese, AJ Cullens, Bestris Michaels.

KEY TAKEAWAYS AND AGENDA ITEMS

Public session commenced at 6:06 p.m.

• Public Session

- Joseph Jenkins from the Department of Aging presented.
 - DFTA My Ride is a three-year on-demand car service pilot for eligible older adults and individuals with disabilities developed by the New York City Department for the Aging in partnership with the New York City Department of Transportation.
 - The goals of the pilot are to provide access to eligible participants in transportation desert areas and to study the impact of on-demand car service on participants' social determinants of health.
 - Requirements
 - Be age 60 or older or a person with disabilities age 18 or older
 - Be a New York City resident that resides in one of the following 14 NYC Community Districts (CDs): Queens 6, 7, 10, 12 and 14; Bronx 4, 5, 8 and 10; Brooklyn 5, 13, 15, 16 and 17.
 - Call 212-244-6469 for more info.
- ***The meeting was shut down temporarily around 6:15 p.m. due to multiple disruptions by public guests who hacked the Zoom meeting.***
- Renato Gomes, VIP Community Services
 - Received a grant from the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to support equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines
 - Wants to increase reach and build vaccine literacy, confidence, and trust with priority communities
- Mariah Gonzalez, Bronx Health Reach
 - Asked for a street closure permit for a health fair on October 8.
 - Pfizer and Moderna will be available.
 - In partnership with Urban Health Plan, two mosques, and a hair salon (East 166th Street between Morris and College Avenue).
- **Welcoming remarks and announcements by Robert Garmendiz, Board Chair**
 - Meetings will be on Zoom until at least mid-January.

3. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance by Bishop Earl McKay

4. Roll Call

- 41 Present; 1 Excused, 1 Absent

5. Report by NYPD 44th Precinct

- Deputy Inspector Bello, Commanding Officer, NYPD 44th Precinct presented.
- Discussed the recent shooting in Claremont Park
 - Four people were shot. One was DOA; one is most likely going to be paralyzed.
 - Motive is gang related (Bloods and Crips).
 - No suspect
- Discussed ongoing Quality of Life issues
 - This year alone there have been about 27,000 3-1-1 calls.
 - Focuses on chronic areas (e.g. 750 Grand Concourse)
 - Discussed double parking issues, NCO program, light towers, among other topics
- Next Community Council Meeting is 10-13-21 at 630pm at 85 East 165th Street.
- Commissioner Iris Rodriguez
 - Noted that she is short-staffed.
 - Has slightly over 40 officers, including six sergeants and two captains for the entire borough of the Bronx

6. Introduction of Deputy Inspector Bello, Commanding Officer, NYPD 44th Precinct

- Started career in the 44th back in 2005
- Promoted many times, transferred to Manhattan (2628)
- Back in 44 as CO as of June 17, 2021.

7. Review/Correction/Adoption of General Board Meeting minutes

- No minutes from June were presented.

8. Report by CB4 District Manager by Paul A. Philps

- Former Board Chair, Kathleen “Kitty” Saunders, passed away last month. She began her Board service in 2003.
- Trash and litter have been a huge issue in CD4. CB4 partnered with the New York Yankees, the Department of Sanitation services, Sanitation Foundation, and Bronx Care to collect trash at four sites.
- We had a 118 volunteers and collected 1,080 pounds of garbage.
- Participated in a backpack giveaway on September 2. Gave away over 100 backpacks and 200 bags of fresh produce.
- PS70 will participate in a three-year program with Wellness in the Schools.
- New intern is Lino Caceres
- Six new Board members joined CB4 in September.

9. Committee Reports

- Parks
 - Committee Chair Paul Lozito presented.
 - A letter of support has been requested for the design of Goble Park Playground with the condition that any fencing around street trees be preserved to the extent feasible.
 - Motion carried: 32 in favor, 3 opposed.
- Economic Development Committee
 - Committee Chair Beverly Bond reported.
 - Renewals of liquor licenses
 - El Timbirichi Restaurant
 - Suyo Gastrofusion
 - Molino Rojo
 - El Bohio
 - El Nuevo Patio
 - Motion carried: 33 in favor; 0 opposed; 1 abstention.
 - New application
 - El Sazon
 - AriadNY
 - Motion carried: 31 in favor; 2 opposed; and 3 abstentions.
 - New Business
 - Ricardo Lopez, Bronx Borough Commissioner for the Department of Transportation, presented. The topic was the Permanent Open Restaurants Text Amendment.
 - A robust discussion occurred. The subject was on the floor for about an hour. The Board noted that the Economic Development Committee was only given a week to review—an inadequate amount of time to provide thoughtful input and ask questions.
 - The motion to approve the text amendment carried: 22 in favor; 6 opposed; 4 abstentions. It was duly noted that the text had already been approved by City Council thus underscoring the fact that CB4 did not have time to truly offer counsel.
 - Background in short:
 - The City Planning Commission is planning on voting on the zoning text amendment at the beginning of October.
 - The resolution in front of CB4 had to do with sidewalk seating only.
 - The presentation concerned: 1) the text amendment to remove the restrictions in the zoning resolution for open dining on the sidewalks; and 2) a preliminary discussion about what a permanent open restaurant program will look like, both on sidewalks, and in the roadway.
 - Background: Over 11,000 restaurants were granted permits for either sidewalk or roadway dining city wide. And this helped save an estimated 100,000 jobs throughout the city.
 - The City Council voted in 2020 to establish a permanent outdoor dining program.

- Their vision for the program is that it would be administered by DOT completely; DOT would be the sole agency accepting and vetting applications as well as enforcing the rules. They think the introduction of the roadway option is a new opportunity for restaurants, especially those who may have narrow sidewalks.
 - There will be no roadway seating allowed in the wintertime.
 - They think it will take at least a year and a half to develop new rules.
 - While they are developing the new rules, the current emergency program will be in effect for another year and a half.
- Zoning proposal
 - The removal of the zoning text amendment would allow them to expand the universe of sidewalk cafes throughout the city.
 - They currently have a total of 49 active permits in CB4, mostly concentrated along 161st Street, 167th Street, and Jerome Avenue.
 - 14 of these restaurants would have not been legal before COVID because they were prohibited in the zoning resolution, and another 6 would have been prohibited because they were residential neighborhoods.

10. Report by the Office of the Bronx Borough President, Ruben Diaz, Jr. and Local Elected Officials or their representatives

- Council Member Vanessa L. Gibson
 - She can be reached directly at 718-588-7500 or Tbah@council.NYC.gov.
 - Family friendly events coming up including another Silent Disco Movie Night for October.
 - In an effort to battle food insecurity and encourage people to utilize local farmers markets, they are doing pop ups at a few markets in the area and distributing Health Bucks (vouchers that can be used to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables).
 - Reported that she was able to secure \$6 million for PS 126 to transform the school playground and roof.
- Senator Sepulveda
 - Eviction moratorium is extended until January 15, 2022.
 - The Excluded Workers Fund application portal is now open. For a list of community organizations that assist with the application, please visit: https://dol.ny.gov/cbolist?f%5B0%5D=filter_term%3A1136
 - Workforce Diversification Project: <https://bit.ly/3kSZ7ZN>
 - Call directly at 718-991-3161 for help with unemployment claims, SNAP and Cash Assistance, Medicaid, landlord-tenant issues, and more.
 - Senior Resource Fair on Saturday, October 9th from 2pm-5pm in partnership with RAIN and the National Association of Hispanic Nurses.

- The Resource Fair will take place at El Parque de los Niños located at Metcalf Avenue, between Watson and Westchester Avenues, Bronx, NY 10472. Health screenings, giveaways, and refreshments will be provided.
- A question was raised concerning Senate Bill 4547, which would legalize accessory dwelling units. They will get back to CB4 with an answer.
- Cecil Brooks, representing Congressman Ritchie Torres
 - Discussed strengthening the Bronx’s diplomatic ties by inviting other politicians and heads of state to the district to learn about immigration patterns, job market, and more.
 - Recent meetings included the Governor of West Virginia, the President of Kosovo, and the African Advisory Council.
 - Passed the National Defense Authorization Act
 - Currently focused on software protections, financial crimes, and cyber security.
 - Since Rikers Island is going to be shut down and phased out over time, they are looking at what the federal government can do.
 - Working on is FEMA assistance, especially after the hurricane.
 - Contact directly at 718-541-2552 or cecil.brooks@mail.house.gov

11. Old Business/New Business

12. Announcements/Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Prepared and submitted by Mr. Jonah Nigh