

The City of New York
BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR
GENERAL BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2020 | 6PM
ONLINE VIA ZOOM PLATFORM
Mr. Robert Garmendiz, 1st Vice Chair, Presiding

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ms. Rasheida Alston, Mr. James Boyd, Jr., Mr. Kweku Brew, Ms. Jacqueline Calderon, Mr. Jason Caraballo, Mr. Maynard Charles, Mrs. Rossmery Dais, Mr. Gregory A. Delts, Mr. Michael Durant, Mr. Spencer Edwards, Mr. John Fielder, Ms. Ariane Garcia, Ms. Ishaira Garcia, Mr. Robert Garmendiz, Ms. Veronique Green, Ms. Frances Hudson-Marrow, Mr. Lionell Jackson, Ms. Mildred James, Ms. Nurys Laureano, Ms. Anita Long, Mr. Paul Onyx Lozito, Ms. Marie McCullough, Mr. Leandro Monzon, Mr. Anthony Nacerino, Mr. Ebrahim Dawda Ndure, Mr. Jonah Nigh, Mrs. Zonia Ortiz, Ms. Arelis Pineda, Ms. Martha Reyes, Ms. Yohanny Rincon, Ms. Elba Rodriguez, Ms. Lilliam Rosa, Ms. Kedisha Samuels, Ms. Kathleen Saunders, Mr. Avery Smith, Mr. Constantious Stavroulakis, Mr. Jackson Strong, Ms. Kinanda Williams-Murray, Dr. Grace Zarate.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mr. Devon Greene, Ms. Robin Jackson, Bishop Earl McKay, Mr. Jimmy Rivera.

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Ms. Beverly Bond, Mr. Mohammed Mardah.

STAFF:

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

ELECTED OFFICIALS:

Ms. Alexis Ruiz, representing Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr.
Hon. Luis R. Sepulveda, New York State Senate Member
Mr. Ritchard Ewings, representing NYS Senate Member Luis R. Sepulveda
Ms. Latanya Christian, representing NYS Senate Member Gustavo Rivera
Ms. Mandi Heller, representing NYS Senate Member Jose M. Serrano
Hon. Vanessa Gibson, New York City Council Member
Ms. Reshma Harripersad, representing NYC Council Member Vanessa Gibson
Hon. Diana Ayala, NYC Council Member
Hon. Rafael Salamanca Jr., NYC Council Member
Ms. Charlene Matos, representing NYS Assembly Member Latoya Joyner
Hon. Nathalia Fernandez, NYS Assembly Member

GUEST PRESENT:

Reynaldo Punzalan Jr.-Friends of 4 Parks, Kimberly Jefferson-NYPL Melrose Branch, Evan Solomon-Urban Dove, Chris Bell-Resident, Hillard Greene, Patrick Rowe-Bronx Museum of the Arts, Abigail Haslam, Lamarr Stratton, Fernando Ortiz-NYC Department of City Planning, Althea Stevens-Resident, Malaikakirkwood, C. Wiatta Freeman, Tayra Vionette, Shirley Solomon, Takisha Dozier-Bronx Children's Museum, Lyna Saad-NYC HPD, Shelly Matos, Carys Gomez Morales, Samsung-Sm-Nq, Joyce Hogi-Harlem River Working Group, Michael Kaess, Charlene Freeman, Rosie Pettway-Resident, Edwin Guerrero, Jason Cohen-Bronx Times Newspaper, H. Martinez, Travis Thomas-Siena House Shelter, Atiya Ward-Resident, Christina's Iphone, George Manesis- Billy's At The Stadium, Lucy Goetz-Resident, Jackie Carter-Resident, Enrique Colon-New Settlement Apartments, Stephanie Griffin-Resident, Pierina Sanchez, Robert Barnes-Bronx District Attorney's Darcel Clark Office, Chris Campbell-Resident, Lon Wilson-N.Y.Walkers Club/Parks Committee member, Mary Steffenhagen-NYC News Service CUNY Newmark Graduate, Soleil Arthur-Charles, Geraldine Villatoro-Resident, Jose's Iphone,***.***-2955.

1. *Alida Quinones, Case Manger – Bronxworks* – Reaching out by phone and text-banking to help residents complete the census application in less than ten minutes. People are slow to respond. They should know their information is private and it is protected by Title 13 of the Federal law. They can complete the census on line or via phone. There is assistance in 13 different languages. There is \$675 billion available. In 2010, the Bronx lost funding and legislative seats because of poor census registration. For assistance in filling out the census reach out to 347-835-0262.
2. *Rachel Guildo, Programs Director – Bronxworks* – Programs are available online in Yoga, Nutrition and Cooking. You can register for free. We encourage the public to join. To request to participate reach out to r.guild@bronxworks.org.

Welcoming remarks and announcements by Ms. Kathleen Saunders. The Chair called the meeting to order via the Zoom platform at 6:15 pm.

Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance led by Bishop Earl McKay.

Motion to Review/Correct/Adopt of General Board Meeting: None at this time.

Roll Call for Board Members – Elizabeth Rodriguez. After roll call, she established that quorum was met.

District Manager’s Report

- Extended condolences to Ms. Lynn Thompson and Mr. Jimmy Rivera for the passing of their mothers.
- Antibody and COVID-19 testing is available at Morris Avenue and at CityMD at 1610 _____.
You can also access the nyc.gov webpage to find COVID-19 testing sites.
- NY Yankees – What they do
 - Food Bank of NY
 - \$100,00 food delivery
 - PPE delivered to BronxCare
 - Janet Jimenez – give additional food and water.
- Sweet Water Yoga – free virtual classes from May – September
- MADD Equities with collaboration with CM Gibson and the NY Football Club served over 150 families
- Our office is physically closed but open virtually
 - We will have a general board meeting in June via zoom
 - September will be a full board meeting
- New policies & procedures will be available
- The Census is not quite at 50% in its completion
- Absentee voting by June 23 – please get out to vote. Make your vote count.
- Lastly, thank you to all the front-line workers.

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

Economic Development Committee- The committee reported the following requests for letters of support. **1) Glackens Bar & Grill Corp.,** - 135 E. 149th Street – **Renewal.** **2) Yankee Twin Eatery & Bar** – 844 River Avenue, **Class Change.** The motion was seconded by Mr. Spencer Edwards. After the vote, the **motion carries.**

Municipal Services Committee – The committee was presented by the NYC Department of Transportation (DOT) on their Better Buses Initiatives along Edward L. Grant Highway at 167th/168th streets which is a vision zero priority area. Because of its long crossing distances, unprotected bike lanes and speeding encouraged by its wide roadway, this area impedes pedestrian safety. DOT proposes to create bus boarding islands and safer bike lanes, etc. By doing so, this will improve the speed of buses, bus stop accessibility, shorter crossing distances, improvement of pedestrian crossing and bicycle safety. However, there will be a loss of 6-20 parking spots. The committee also had a presentation requesting a Letter of Support for the design and construction of a new FDNY EMS headquarters at 1257 Morris Avenue between 167th & 169th Street. This new facility will replace the

existing one at 1080 Ogden Avenue between 165th Street and 166th Street. This new facility will be the restocking station for the ambulance supplies, it will be open 24 hours and it holds 11 units. It will provide 24 parking spots; therefore, they will not use any residential parking. The construction will take approximately two to three years to complete. At committee, it was voted unanimously to grant a Letter of Support. They will come back to committee at a later time with proposed renderings of the design and construction. The Committee motioned to provide a LOS for the design and construction of an EMS Headquarters at 1251 Morris Avenue. It was seconded by Dr. Grace Zarate. After the vote, the **motion carries**.

Housing & Land Use Committee – The committee did not have any voting items at their last meeting. They did, however, discuss the Budget Priorities for FY2022 that will be submitted in October. The committee Chair advised that as far as the soccer stadium is concerned, we do not have a specific proposal on it. We are still discussing in general whether municipal land will be used for the stadium or any other project that will benefit and incorporate the best use of the land. We are also grateful for the Urban Land Institute and the work on the recommendations and help to craft the community’s vision.

Parks and Recreation Committee- The committee announced the Bike ride meetup to Lehman College. The committee will continue the process of the Park Surveys in the district. The Chair extended an invitation to attend the Parks Committee to learn more about the Committee’s involvement in the parks in the district and the district needs of those parks.

Health Services Committee – The committee had a presentation from VIP Community Services. They are requesting a letter of support for the Single Room Occupancy (SRO) at 946 College Avenue. They’ve appeared in front of this community board six years before and are now requesting a renewal of the letter of support. This is for a 65 unit facility housing single individuals. A motion was made by the Committee to provide a letter of support to VIP Community Services, Inc. for the renewal of their application to the Department of Health at the SRO located at 946 College Avenue. The motion was seconded by Ms. Veronique Green. After the vote, the motion carries. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation report will be available next month and the Bronx ranking will be posted on it. There is a new Health Director of the Health Policies at the Bronx Borough President’s office. She is Dr. Nancy Kheck. She has been invited to attend the committee when her schedule permits. Ms. Reyes reached out to the Operation’s Manager of the Green Market requesting them to extend their hours or provide an additional day. They comply by adding a day on Fridays at the Lincoln Hospital location and will also be opened all year long. Additionally, the Norwood at Dekalb Avenue will also be opened all year round on Thursdays. The committee continued their discussion on the District Needs Statement and they are asking for a comprehensive health center in view of the very high number of people coming into the community. We are lacking services and currently only Lincoln Hospital and BronxCare hospital are available along with a few scattered clinics. Lastly, the Corona Virus is affecting worldwide with only a few cases in the U.S., but it is headed this way. How can the community board help? We can help by keeping people informed and educating them. Let’s keep people focused on facts and recommend that they visit the Department of Health’s website and download and share the fact sheet. It is recommended that people wash their hands. This is very important in order to control the spread. Seek medical attention if they develop a cough and/or a fever. The corona virus has been named by the World Health Organization (WHO) as COVID-19.

Report by the Bronx Borough President’s Office represented by Alexis Ruiz

- Thanked all the Board Members and essential workers.
- Advised that the reappointment letters will be sent soon.
- For all COVID-19 updates visit the Bronx Borough President’s website.

Report by Local Elected Officials or their representatives.

Councilmember Vanessa L. Gibson

- We have many New Yorkers on the road to recovery from COVID-19. My condolences to Jimmy Rivera and Lynn Thompson for the loss of their mother.
- Thank you to all for all the work that you do in our community.
- Every day at 10 pm we applaud to all essential workers for the work they have been doing

- The District Office is open from 10 am to 6 pm daily. Our staff is available to answer your calls. You can contact the office at 718-585-7500 or at district16bronx@councilnyc.gov.
- Giving out face masks and hand sanitizers.
- Working with many organizations
- Three issues facing our community
 - Food Access
 - COVID 19 testing sites
 - Morris Heights Health Center
 - HHM Morissania-1225 Gerard Avenue
 - LPAC-14 W 170th Street
 - CityMD Urgent Care at 161st Street
 - Elected Officials working on getting a test site in Highbridge
 - Antibody Testing Site at 4006 Third Avenue
 - Basic Services – Access to healthcare
- Free vaccination for children in over 1000 facilities. Through its Vaccine for Children’s program. The number to call is 844-nycnyc.
- Free air conditioners through the Department of the Aging, HPD, HRA and NYCHA
- Social distancing changes. Initially NYPD were to enforce and now Release the Grip, Bronx Rising Against Gun Violence, Guns Down, Wipe Up and Save our Streets will assist in the enforcement as well.
- NYC Absentee ballots
- Please be mindful of a second COVID in the next few months
- Budget
 - Negotiation
 - City Council implemented remote budget making Budget at City Council is in full effect
 - Public meeting took place last Thursday
- February 27, 2020 – Black History Month Celebration at 6 pm at the NY Botanical Garden.
- March 8, 2020 – State of the District 2020 at Bronx Museum of the Arts at 3 pm.
- March 20, 2020 – Women’s History Month Celebration at 12 pm at the Bronx Museum of the Arts.

Councilmember Fernando Cabrera

- Introduced legislative – The Work at Home Bill. You can get people to work at home for those that work for the City and those who have challenges with childcare.
- Fed over 1000 hot meals
- Provided masks. To request masks, contact councilmanfernandocabrera@gmail.com.

- Budget looking dismal – We started with a \$7.1B gap and now we are at almost \$10B gap. If we do not get federal aid, jobs and programs will be cut. We put in for \$12B and we will be lucky if we get \$4B assistance. We need help! Please reach out to Congress members.
- Last two years he was able to led the initiatives for Community Boards to get their grants, but OMB blocked it. He is asking the administration that these funding should be restored.

Announcements:

None

Meeting adjourned at 8:34 PM.

Prepared and submitted by Ms. L. Rosa.