



**THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

**BOROUGH OF THE BRONX**

**COMMUNITY BOARD #5**

**Honorable Vanessa L. Gibson., Bronx Borough President**

**Chairperson  
Angel Caballero**

**District Manager  
Kenneth Brown**

**Bronx Community Board 5  
General Board Meeting Notes  
September 25, 2024**

**Meeting start:** 6:11pm

**Attendance:** Mario Acosta, Nekeisha Afful, Chantal Allison-Konteh, Yazmin Benitez, Eloise Bennett, Phyllis Bowdwin, Erachie Brown, Angel Caballero, Bakary Camara, Julian Cleveland, James Cogger, Carrie Cuthbertson, Osiris Guzman, Tisha Hatch, Gail Hill, Marlene Jimenez, James Lin, Maribel Maria, Nanette Matthews, Theresa Mims, Robert Nieves, Tierra Pais, Juan Parra, Brenida Parsons, Dilletta Pina, Benjamin Richardson, Patricia Rojas, Beverly Smith, Carlos Veras, Cheryl Westbrook

**Excused:** Bobby Akumah, Annette Dejesus, Roxana Gonzalez-Jimenez, Michelle Heath, Shenia Rudolph, Argenis Santiago-Payamps, Charles Shorter.

**Absent:** Wilfrido Bonilla, Felix Ceballos, Catherine Cudjoe, Lucia Deng, Stacy Infante, Suri Medina, Chef Geneva Wilson

**Welcome and Chairperson's Report**

- Chairperson Angel welcomes all new members to Community Board 5.
- There were several events held over the summer. The Back-to-School event on Davidson Avenue managed to give out 600 backpacks to attendees.
- All members received the Board bylaws and a shortened version of Robert's Rules of Order in their packets. Packets also have a current list of committees and committee chairs and a schedule of general board meetings during calendar year 2024/2025.

**District Manager's Report**

BCC Campus \* Gould Hall, Room 200 \* 2155 University Avenue \* Bronx, New York 10453  
Telephone (718) 364-2030 \* Facsimile (718) 220-8426 \* [bx05@cb.nyc.gov](mailto:bx05@cb.nyc.gov)

Serving these Neighborhoods:  
Fordham, Morris Heights, Mount Hope, University Heights

- A week ago, the office published a job description for a Community Assistant. The description is currently on the website, posted on City Record, as well as in board members' packets.
- Friends of Echo Park continue to meet. Seeking to make the park more accessible for all users.
  - Meet on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month, 6pm at Davidson
- Friends of Aqueduct Park continue to meet. The Old Croton Aqueduct Walk Scenic Landmark marker was unveiled in mid-September. It is the first scenic landmark in the Bronx.
- NYC Partners of Prevention is working on a virtual Town Hall about cannabis safety
  - Oct 23, 6pm-8pm (same date as the next CB 5 general board meeting)

#### **Voting Items:**

- Approval of June 2024 General Board minutes
  - Benjamin motions to approve June 2024 meeting minutes; Dilletta seconds the motion to approve the minutes.
  - 29 yes, 1 abstention. The motion passes and the meeting minutes for the June 2024 General Board Meeting are adopted.

#### **NYPD 46<sup>th</sup> Precinct**

- Inspector Jeremy Scheublin, 46<sup>th</sup> Precinct (spoke earlier in the agenda)
  - Cell: 646-306-9701
  - Timely update: Personnel deployment impacted by the United Nations assembly in Manhattan during the week of September 23<sup>rd</sup>.
  - Ongoing program focuses on Priority Blocks
    - The NYPD Identified precincts with historical issues of violence. 46<sup>th</sup> precinct is one of the first two participating
    - Five blocks identified, will eventually add all blocks within the precinct
    - Want to build the perception that all city agencies are engaged and servicing the community. After, will continue work by building community services within the community.
      - Carrie, board member, provided insight she has seen around Bean Morris Community Garden. Around Burnside Avenue and 181<sup>st</sup> Street: agencies have worked on beautification, such as trimming overgrown trees. Cleaned up local playground, which has made the playground more enjoyable for children and families.
  - Increase of 80% in quality-of-life enforcement
    - Have towed several marijuana trucks, other illegally parked vehicles

#### **Public Session:**

- Sallie Smith:
  - Welcomes everyone to the first general board meeting of this year. Her issues are long-standing and have not seen much improvement. Box trucks take up parking spaces and space on the sidewalk. A truck is currently located on East Burnside and Ryer Avenue (has been there since the pandemic). Another is on Grand Concourse and either 182<sup>nd</sup> or 183<sup>rd</sup> Street and has been selling fruits/taking up sidewalk space.
  - Cleanliness has been a major issue. There is an accumulation of trash in the planters that split up the Grand Concourse.
    - Street sweepers- the general area around Ms. Sally's home has not been swept due to parked cars.
  - Wants to reemphasize that the bathroom at Echo Park must be replaced. The bathroom was removed due to public health concerns and was never reinstated.
  
- Honorable Jose A. Padilla Jr.
  - Intends to seek a letter of support regarding renaming a section of Anthony Avenue in honor of Richard Soto (who passed away in June 2024)
    - Plans to make a presentation with a full biography at a future Municipal Services committee meeting
  
- Shanise Lopez
  - Resident of the Morris Heights section (Andrews Avenue/ University cross street Tremont Avenue)
  - Currently experiencing issues with street sweepers because cars do not move during the times indicated on parking signs. Car owners have started to wait with cones to "reserve" parking spots. Has not seen any ticketing agents pass out tickets.
  - An illegal mechanic is operating in the area as well.
  - Has lived in the area for over 40 years. Changes in the past two years have been significant.
  
- Melissa Mejias, Family Enrichment Center
  - Located at 2001A Creston Avenue. Offers free programs and resources for the community. Welcomes anyone interested in serving on a neighborhood advisory to speak to her after the meeting.
  
- Ariel Amaya
  - Has lived in the Bronx for about 4 years. Has several community recommendations he would like to make.
    - As a biker, he would like to see improvements made to bike lanes and overall visibility for bikers in the area.
    - He frequents local parks to play basketball, etc., Other parks have options to rent sporting equipment and would like to see something like that implemented.
  
- Emmanuel Martinez, BJT Merchants Association, Davidson Community Center

- Invites residents to a tour on October 9, 10:30am. Meeting point is the Davidson Center.
    - Tour will walk Burnside, Jerome, Tremont (BJT)
  - Want community participation and input about business and resident needs.
  - Will be hosting a meeting about property/business owners needs and concerns on October 17, 12pm
- Benjamin Richardson, PS 28 Parent Association President (Mount Hope)
    - Mr. Richardson started to speak about local school concerns and the new NYC School Chancellor but had to withhold comments due to his conflict of interest.

### **Elected Officials' Reports**

- Leonardo Coello, Mayor Eric Adams's Office
  - A new NYC School's Chancellor has been appointed: Melissa Aviles-Ramos
  - City of Yes passed the City Planning Commission, now will be going to the City Council and will likely have several hearings. Hearings will be available live via the City Council website.
  - Money in your Pocket program: <https://www.nyc.gov/content/moneyinyourpocket/>
    - The program helps New Yorkers review several benefits they may be eligible for, all in one place.
    - Program will eventually expand to automatically review all benefits receivers to see what other services they may qualify for
- Alexis Ruiz, Borough President Vanessa Gibson's Office
  - On Monday, September 23, BP joined DYCD, NYPD at Borough Hall to announce FY2025 allocation for new cameras and command van for public surveillance
  - The office has several upcoming events:
    - September 28, 2pm-8pm: LGBTQ voter registration event
    - October 6: Tour de Bronx cycling event
    - October 16, 5:30pm: Italian Heritage Celebration
    - October 10, 4:30pm: Resolution A Funding information session
- Guillermo Rodriguez, Councilmember Oswald Feliz Office
  - On Monday, sent a letter to new NYPD interim commissioner regarding new resources in 46<sup>th</sup>, 48<sup>th</sup>, and 52<sup>nd</sup> precincts– “While the NYPD has made progress over the past year in reducing crime, communities in the Bronx have been left behind.”
  - Reminds residents that Health Bucks are available to constituents. Can be used to purchase fresh produce at Farmer's Markets.
- Maria Villalobos, Councilmember Pierina Sanchez Office
  - Several bills enacted: Intro 435: Expanding availability of rapid testing for sexually transmitted infections. Intro 904: Establishing a proactive inspection program for buildings (after Billingsley Terrace collapse).

- The office worked on several initiatives over the summer, including the renaming of a street in the Kingsbridge area after Nicholas Feliz Dominici, the child who passed in 2023 due to fentanyl exposure.
- Announcement is coming soon regarding the Kingsbridge Armory
- Jack Shaevitz, Assemblymember Yudelka Tapia Office
  - Back-to-school event distributed about 1000 backpacks
  - Senior Luncheon held on September 25, hosted about 300 senior citizens
  - Participated in a panel with State Senator Nathalia Fernandez about overdose and substance abuse prevention in the Bronx on September 17
  - Other initiatives
    - Walkthrough with Sanitation Department
    - Walkthrough with Friends of Echo Park + Oswald Feliz
- Abou-Bakhr Meite, Assemblymember Landon Dais Office
  - The community office is open on Mondays and Tuesdays for walk-ins
  - Can assist with housing and landlord harassment, rental support, finding free legal services.
- Lia Guzman Genao, State Senator Gustavo Rivera Office
  - Several events and initiatives over the summer months:
    - Senior Health Fair and Luncheon on July 25
    - 2500 backpacks given out throughout the district
  - The office continues to offer legal clinics in collaboration with nonprofits. Monthly NMIC Housing and Immigration clinics
  - October 5, 1pm-4pm: Environmental Justice Fair at Williamsbridge Oval
- Vincent Sepulveda, State Senator Luis Sepulveda Office
  - Several events and initiatives over the summer:
    - Connected 300 families to food pantry services.
    - Workforce Development Resource Fair on May 17
    - Father's Day event on June 15
    - Participated in Back-to-School drive that gave out 1500 backpacks and school supply packages
- Joanna Rivas, Congressman Ritchie Torres Office
  - Phone: 718-503-9610
  - Office continues to offer assistance with federal agencies
  - Responded to report of carfentanil in the Bronx, which is 100 times more potent than fentanyl (the current leading cause of drug deaths in the US, already stronger than heroin and morphine).
    - Urged the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to dismantle supply chains that are bringing carfentanil into the Bronx.

- Rep. Torres claims Con Edison has been overcharging Bronx clients. Compared to those receiving services on National Grid, Bronx residents pay highest rates in the city.
- Department of State is now accepting passport renewals online. Easier process than via mail. Many constituents report it being a faster process.
- For those who may have been impacted by the 2024 NPD data breach, Rep. Torres' office recommends looking up their information on <https://npd.pentester.com/>
- Trevon Blondet, District Attorney Darcel Clark Office
  - Phone: 917-946-3438
  - Re-entry Employment Resource event on August 20 at Webster Police Athletic League
  - October 26: 5K Run Walk Roll to End Domestic Violence, Borough President and the Urban Resource Institute will also participate.

### **Committee Reports**

- Meetings start in October. Chairs will share the agenda with the office to share with the board.
- Nanette Matthews, Chair of Housing Committee
  - City of Yes went ahead of the CPC
    - Most Borough Presidents had conditions- Vanessa Gibson did a comprehensive review of plan and included modifications in her vote.
    - Displacement risk in the Bronx is concentrated in Community Boards 4,5,6
      - Wants to invite Department of City Planning (Wendy Shinn) to discuss how to mitigate displacement risk
      - First meeting: Oct 17 at Housing Committee, 6:45pm
      - Racial Equity Report is supposed to be submitted with developer plans over a certain size, but Nanette has never seen one submitted during her time here
      - NYS Allocation of Opioid Settlement Funds- a portion should be a source of funds for housing
        - Will be meeting on her own behalf

### **Old Business**

- No old business

### **New Business**

- Member Beverly Smith announced plans to honor Aurelia Greene, former Assemblymember and Deputy Bronx Borough President
  - Possible renaming Edward L. Grant Highway/179 Street portion will be discussed during future meetings.

**Meeting Adjourned: 7:48 pm**