



**THE CITY OF NEW YORK
BOROUGH OF THE BRONX
COMMUNITY BOARD 7**



VANESSA L. GIBSON, BOROUGH PRESIDENT

YAJAIRA ARIAS, CHAIRPERSON

KARLA CABRERA CARRERA, DISTRICT MANAGER

GENERAL BOARD MEETING

Chair:	Yajaira Arias
Meeting Date:	October 22, 2024
Meeting Time:	6:30 PM
Meeting Location:	Monroe College's King Hall 2501 Jerome Ave, Bronx, NY 10468
Minutes done by:	Helene Hartman-Kutnowsky

Minutes:

I. Meeting Guidelines & Code of Conduct were read

II. Public Hearing/Public Session

A. Council Member Eric Dinowitz:

1. The Council Member Allocated \$10 million to the Williamsbridge Oval for park improvements such as lighting, structural work and the Knights Football team.
2. The Council Member discussed the importance of voting and reminded everyone to turn over the ballot and suggest that proposition 1 be yes. However, propositions 2-6 are designed to give more power to the mayor and give the public less input. Therefore, he is not supportive of propositions 2-6 and suggested a no vote.
3. The Council Member also allocated funding to West Bronx Housing who is a great organization. They will be at the Kingsbridge office on 11/19/24. Please call ahead to make a reservation.
4. For the City of Yes, CB7 voted Yes with conditions, but he does have concerns about certain provisions. This proposal changes zoning everywhere in NYC and parts of the proposal are not nuanced enough. There are concerns over lack of parking in new buildings, especially in our area where people often travel to work in Westchester where a car is

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needed. Our community wants 2 & 3 bedroom apartments, as well as affordable housing. The concern is that the local community will not have enough of a say in what happens.

5. The community is invited to complete the office's internal survey on the City of Yes. Link below.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdKHUZTX-iqUCU6Vr0FNqqDImReI2WokqDyvZ9PVHWMB_0LHQ/viewform

B. State Senator Gustavo Rivera:

1. The State Senator reported that he has a WhatsApp Channel. Link below is for Spanish <https://bit.ly/3VJlxxE> and the English newsletter link is here <https://conta.cc/31q2Ee2>.
2. Both links contain a list of activities and events that they are having.
3. Friday, October 25, there will be a flu shot or covid booster session at Mt. Carmel Pharmacy. Located on Arthur Avenue.
4. On November 18th and November 22nd, there will be immigration consultations and housing consultations offered in their office.
5. Office location is at 187th Street and Grand Concourse, the fifth floor of the Poe building.
6. The office is offering naloxone nasal spray and fentanyl testing strips and recommends the community to pick up items, which can save a life.
7. A multi-colored handout was offered that has the Kingsbridge Underpass Syringe Providers daily schedule. These organizations provide syringes to individuals. The State Senator hosts monthly Kingsbridge Underpass Roundtable Meetings with harm reduction providers.
8. Everyone was advised to vote. Remember to flip the ballot over and the Senator shared his opinion to vote yes to proposition 1 and no for 2-6.

C. 52nd Precinct Officer Echevarria:

1. Overall, crime in the 52nd precinct is up

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2. On Thursday, 10/24 at 7 PM, their meeting will be held at Tracey Towers
3. Recruitment has begun for the Spring Citizen's Police Academy and Board member Jean Hill is a recent graduate of the program. Congratulations to her!
4. Recruitment is open for a Youth(s) Council Representative (age 14-21). The meetings are held at the 42nd Precinct but the youth will be transported there and home after the meeting. This is ideal for students interested in Law Enforcement or Community Relations.

D. Nancy Luciano, community resident:

1. "She will speak in English and in Spanish. She came to today's meeting as a woman, a wife and also as a mother. In the area where she lives, they are planning on putting a shelter. She is aware that it is a human right, a right of life, a right of living and a right of wellness; however, without affecting other human beings. In their case they will be affected by the shelter at 2586 Bainbridge. As a woman and as a mother she is scared; recently in front of my building at 3:00pm There was an attempted rape of a young girl. Thanks to God and to Their neighbors nothing happened. So now if they put a shelter for only Men; you can imagine the fear as a mother, let alone as a woman she has. They understand that it's a human right to live. She also runs a Daycare and the mothers of the children she cares for, are also scared. So, she asks that we please take into account that the residents from Bainbridge are opposed to this shelter being placed in their neighborhood. Also, States that because they vote they should have the right to give their opinion also."

E. Evette Calderon, community resident:

1. "States the community of Bainbridge is opposed to the shelter being placed there. States there are four Shelters on that block. Right now, they have several issues with derelicts and drug users. She also mentions that

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a young lady was almost being raped there on Thursday. They are constantly fighting with the derelicts and homeless people dumping garbage in their community and they are not getting help from the government; especially on Poe Place because it is a private street. They have to pay people to clean the street. They also have needles on the street where the children can see. Especially with the daycare, the children cannot play outside. She would like to see what the city can do so that the shelter does not get placed in her neighborhood.”

F. Rene Caraballo, community resident:

1. Rene is accompanied by three young children.
2. “States it is rare that you see kids coming to a General Board Meeting but there is a purpose. The purpose is that they have concerns. He runs a Daycare and agrees with both Evette and Nancy. He asks the young children. “What do you see when you go to the back of the house?” To which the first child responds: “Needles,” The second responds, “Drug Addicts” and the third responds “Criminals.” He states he opposes the transition housing at 2586 Bainbridge Avenue because he believes it will bring a new wave of crime to the area that is already experiencing quality of life issues. He states they are trying to avoid them sneaking in another shelter like they did on 194th st Between Marion Avenue and *Decatur Avenue*. He hopes that we can put a stamp of approval on this motion to make sure it is not done.”

G. Augustine Ontro, community resident:

1. “States he is going to speak in Spanish because it is the easiest language for him to speak in. He speaks in opposition of the shelter being put in our community. He owns a Daycare in the neighborhood and he is asking the Mayor's office to reassign the location. He doesn't think it's a good idea to put a shelter with people from many walks of life and different characteristics in this area. He states that putting this shelter in his community will affect the public safety quality of life.”

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H. Lusbety Pena, community resident:

1. “She also owns a Daycare in the neighborhood. She states they have ongoing issues with the homeless in their backyard and in the front of their homes. She opposes the shelter being brought to her neighborhood. Stating they are already facing quality of life issues and public safety. She also mentioned that her kids are very scared. They don't want to play at the park because of open drug use, needles being left everywhere and others allowing their dogs to defecate in the park. Her children have come with poop-stained clothes and sneakers after playing at the park.”

I. Kim Troncoso, Oyate Group:

1. Non-Profit organization, www.oyategroup.org. Their mission is to alleviate poverty by creating sustainable and holistic solutions that empower underserved communities.
2. Beyond Rising is a paid internship program for undocumented youth in New York City run by Oyate Group; They offer \$100 stipends weekly and placements are held at different institutions, such as Fordham university and Columbia University. Applications open on February 13.
3. There is a scholarship program for two students from the Dominican Republic who can come study on a full ride. They must be high school seniors in the Dominican Republic and if selected, their room and board will be paid. The program gives students a chance to go to City College for free.
4. Community Capital is a program for small business owners. They have a Shark Tank panel which picks three businesses, and first place wins a \$50,000 prize. The second and third place winners will receive money but less than the first place. This program also offers mentorship to these business owners.
5. Rising Restaurateur helps small business owners from anyone who is selling out of a cart to a new restaurant owner. Small business owners can reach out for help with micro grants.

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J. Christian Ramos, Kingsbridge Merchant Association:

1. The association represents more than 200 businesses from Fordham Road to Sedgwick Avenue. He states to the public that they do not have to wait for a community board meeting to voice opinions. He informs everyone that they can also reach out to community boards 8 and 11. The next public safety meeting at these boards are on the following dates: Community Boards 8 on October 15th and 52nd Precinct Meeting on October 24.
2. He states his disappointment that the precinct cannot do anything about the drug use in front of the businesses and urges people to show up to the meetings.

K. Sefam Aspinall, community resident:

1. She lives around the Fordham Road area and is asking for more support regarding the noise pollution in her area. She states that a church in her area makes a lot of noise on Saturdays outside the building from 12PM to 6PM.
2. She also voiced her opinion about the food truck on Creston Avenue and her concerns about the food freshness.
3. She is asking for the board's support on her calls to 311 and DOH.

L. Maria Aguilar, community resident:

1. "States that she is a community member and a mother. Her worries are around the security in this area surrounding her home. She states her husband and son come home late around 1:00 am and there is not enough Police presence to assure their safety. She understands new immigrants are not abiding by all the rules and she would like for there to be a procedure where immigrants are provided with the rules and regulations upon arrival to assure the safety of other law-abiding citizens.

M. Jane Addison-Amoya, Mosholu Library:

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1. The library is offering many programs. Please see the handout at the table. The library can be reached at (718) 882-8239

III. District Manager Karla Cabrera Carrera's Updates:

- A. Due to time constraints, please see pages 18 & 19 for the updates.
- B. Regarding noise complaints, the police regularly confiscate speakers and they do respond to noise complaints in general.
- C. Regarding concerns and complaints in general, she let the public know that the Community Board does not have enforcement powers. The board does do their best by working with the elected officials and city agencies to resolve issues.
- D. It also helps to reach out to your elected officials in your area and calling or texting 311 that can reach out to the agency for help.

IV. Chairperson Yajaira Arias Remarks:

- A. The chair has been on the board for ten years and the board hears the same issues repeatedly. They live here too however, the Board's power is limited. The answer is in your power to vote! Make your elected officials accountable by voting.
- B. The Board's Meet & Greet event will be held on November 2nd and more details are on page 19.
- C. The CEC People's Money link: www.participate.nyc.gov.
- D. The CEC People's Money- the Borough Assembly, is a six-week program that the chair highly recommends. The application link is below.
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdvgaP3euYOIGsb8j3IwSjWrln_zl7r-BMn56tqTqIxc3zM3A/viewform?pli=1.

V. Attendance (Roll Call) by Secretary Helene Hartman-Kutnowsky:

- A. Attendance taken and a quorum was met

VI. Review of Previous Month's Minutes:

- A. Minutes were reviewed and one spelling correction on page 11 was noted. Betty Arce moved to accept the minutes with the correction and Bernard Wright seconded the motion. Minutes are approved.

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VII. Motion(s)

A. Motion A:

1. **Parks, Recreation, & Cultural Affairs**, <https://bit.ly/4gYJNXB>:
Send a letter of support to the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation to express approval of the design for the renovation of Poe Park's playground.
2. Parks Chair Stronczer said that 9 trees were being removed (they were in poor condition) and that 10 trees are being added.
3. The parks department was unable to tell her whether the other construction proposed, (for the Bandshell) at Poe Park, would be done at the same time or if the work would be staggered. Construction will start for this project in 2026.
4. Motion approved with 19 Approvals, 2 Abstentions and no Disapprovals

B. Motion B:

1. **Housing, Land Use & Economic Development**, <https://bit.ly/4dIXuHi>: Send a letter of opposition to Mayor Eric Adams, the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice, and The Fortune Society regarding the proposed 83 beds of emergency and transitional housing at 2586 Bainbridge Avenue, Bronx, New York 10458.
2. Question from Board Member Andrew Laiosa:
 - a) Will this motion stop the newly proposed single males housing at this site?
 - b) **Answer:** Not necessarily but this was slated to be a family shelter, and it was switched very recently.
3. Question from Board Member Bernard Wright:
 - a) When was this change made?
 - b) **Answer:** 9/30/24 was when the Board was notified about the change from a Family Emergency Shelter to a single male shelter.

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4. Edgar Ramos asked that an addendum be added to indicate there is strong community support for this motion. It was agreed upon.
5. Motion approved with 21 Approvals, no Disapprovals and no Abstentions

6. Additional Comments:

7. Board member Alfred Grant shared a concern that Jacobi Hospital and North Central Bronx Hospital will be receiving prisoners needing medical care in the near future. This is due to the closing of Rikers Island. Board Chair Arias confirmed that this is happening due to the mandated closing of Rikers Island Prison.

C. Motion C:

1. **Executive**, <https://bit.ly/409Te0l>: Accept FY fiscal year 2026 Capital & Expense Budget Request.
2. Motion passed with 22 Approvals, no Abstentions and no Disapprovals.

VIII. Committee Reports: Due to time constraints, everyone was encouraged to read the meeting packet.

A. Environment & Sanitation – Betty Arce

1. Betty reminded the community that composting is now citywide and that brown bins are available for the buildings.
2. Next month the committee will meet at a different location and date.
3. DSNY and DEP will be presenting at the Mosholu-Montefiore Community center on Wednesday, 11/6 at 6:30PM.

B. Education, Youth & Libraries – Leurys Acosta

C. Traffic & Transportation – Edgar Ramos

D. Housing, Land Use & Economic – Yajaira Arias

E. Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs – Barbara Stronczer

F. Health & Human Services – Michelle Avila

G. Veterans Affairs – Chad Y. Royer

H. Budget, Personnel & Ethics – Jean Hill

IX. Elected Officials/Elected Official Representatives:

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A. Congressman Adriano Espaillat: **Not Present**

B. Congressman Ritchie Torres: **Not Present**

C. Mayor's office: **Not Present**

D. NYC Public Advocate's Office: **Not Present**

E. NYC Comptroller's office: **Not Present**

F. Bronx Borough President's office: Kenny Agosto

1. October is the Italian-American Heritage Month
2. The Domestic Violence Awareness Month-diva Talk is coming up and 31 Days of Diva and Diva Spa.
3. On 10/26, the Halloween Parade will be held at 2049 Bartow Avenue in Co-Op City
4. On 10/26, from 12PM-3PM, the Northeast YMCA Skate Party with Councilmember Riley & Senator Bailey
5. On 10/31 at 1377 Jerome Ave, there will be a Skate Party from 2PM-4PM
6. The Bronx BP & LGBTQIA Task Force Costume Party Extravaganza will be held at Suyo Gastro on 10/31 at 6PM
7. On 11/8 at PS/MS20, the Shop for HS Fairs will be held at the Gym

G. Bronx District Attorney's office: Trevon Blondet

1. The 5K walk for Domestic Violence will be held on Saturday, 10/26 from 9:30AM-12:30PM. People should meet at Lou Gehrig Plaza.
2. On Saturday 11/9, the Youth Council age 14-20 will meet for training on Police interactions and conflict resolution.

H. NY State Senator Gustavo Rivera's Office: Sari Mendoza

1. Chief of Staff Rachel Ferrari will be going on Maternity leave; she introduced Jay Baez who will be the Acting Chief in her absence.

I. NY State Senator Robert Jackson's Office: Not Present

J. Assembly Member George Alvarez's Office: Not Present

K. Assembly Member Jeffrey Dinowitz's Office: Not Present

L. Assembly Member John Zaccaro Jr's Office: Ayana Armstrong

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1. On 10/26, the 2nd annual Fall Festival will be held at Loreda Playground from 12PM-4PM. Free food & Music.
2. On Tuesday, 10/29, there will be mammograms given at the Bronx House, 990 Pelham Parkway South from 1-3PM. These mammograms will detect early signs of cancer to save lives
3. On 12/5, the Department of Buildings will be at the office from 2PM-7PM. RSVP by calling (718) 409-0109.

M. Assembly Member Yudelka Tapia's Office: Not Present

N. Council Member Oswald Feliz's Office: George Cooke

1. The Councilman wrote a letter to the new Police Commissioner to request more Officers for the 46th, 48th & 52nd Precincts.
2. There will be a turkey giveaway on 11/25 at Rosehill Park from 3PM-5PM
3. For landlord problems, call 311 and the office at (718) 842-8100, 10AM-5PM, Mon-Thurs. They are remote on Friday.

O. Council Member Pierina Sanchez's Office: Prettystar Lopez

1. Adrian Cacho has left for another position; he is missed already.
2. On 10/25, St. James Park Healthy Bucks will be distributed for the Farmer's Market at 3PM.
3. The **J-51 tax incentive** is an as-of-right tax exemption and abatement for residential rehabilitation or conversion to multiple dwellings. The Councilmember is pushing for this important incentive. It is a huge deal and will help tenants by rescuing housing and making it more affordable.
4. The Housing Rescue and Tenant Protection Act- It fundamentally transforms the third-party transfer program.
5. The council member encourages everyone to participate in Participatory budgeting. Call to get the link at (347) 590-2874 or visit the office at 2065 Morris Avenue.

X. Next meeting date: Tuesday, November 19th, 6:30 PM at the Bronx Library Center, 310 East Kingsbridge Road, Bronx 10458

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XI. Betty Arce made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:15pm and Barbara Stronczer seconded the motion.

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