

DRAFT - Brooklyn Community Board 7 Meeting Minutes

February 16, 2022

Meeting hosted over Zoom

Opening of the Meeting

Chairperson Zuñiga officially called the meeting to order.

Agenda adoption

Pat Ruiz made a motion to adopt the board meeting agenda. It was seconded by Marilyn Melman. Motion was approved by unanimous consent.

Adopt minutes of January 19, 2022 board meeting

Pat Ruiz made a motion to adopt the minutes of the January 19, 2022 board meeting. It was seconded by Joan Botti. Motion was approved by unanimous consent.

Public Comment

Byron Todman spoke on behalf of a local not-for-profit that has two new programs. One program assists property owners with property management services and the other is working in partnership with Enterprise Community Foundation to recruit small property owners with vacant units for emergency housing voucher placements. Todman sent the flyers to the community board for distribution.

George Cardona stated concerns regarding homeless shelters coming into the neighborhood.

Committee Reports

1. Public Safety Committee (No vote required)

Cynthia Felix gave brief highlights on the meeting. Cynthia Felix thanked the Sunset Park 5th Ave BID for serving as a nonprofit to collect and distribute funds to assist local residents affected by recent fires. FDNY provided safety tips and information at the meeting to prevent the spread of fire. The Red Cross distributes free smoke alarms. Flyers were provided in three languages. Referred everyone to the committee report.

2. Executive Committee (No vote required)

Chairperson Zuñiga referred everyone to his report.

Elected Officials and Representatives

Senator Brisport spoke on updates regarding remote meetings, redistricting, and what their office is working on in the state budget.

Assemblymember Mitaynes spoke on the fiscal year 2023 Executive Budget; ERAP Moratorium; Excluded Workers Fund and her Bi-Weekly Fireside Chats.

Anastacia Yaskova from CAU stated they were present and listening.

Edward Cerna from Councilmember Aviles' Office highlighted the Councilmember's tour of NYCHA facilities and focus on the agency's budget.

Borough President Antonio Reynoso introduced himself and stated Sunset Park needs attention. They asked for patience as Borough Hall is staffed, discussed what they expect from the Boards and stated they will bring resources.

Questions and Comments for the Borough President:

- Kenny Guan asked about housing for certain city workers. The Borough President was not familiar with that proposal, but the Mayor had just discussed today repairing NYCHA and affordable units to make sure people can move in and converting hotels to affordable housing.
- Cynthia Felix asked if the Community Board application would be available in other languages. The Borough President stated they were not able to do it this year. They recognized the problem, but did not have the capacity this year without a full staff. Moving forward it will be in other languages.
- Cynthia VandenBosch encouraged engaging people within the disability community and mentioned the technology improvements CB 7 has made in its board room. They stated all meetings should have accessibility language for meeting notices. The Borough President agreed and stated they need to learn more about the issue and will reach out to the various boards about technical needs. They stated they would look into resources for boards. Cesar Zuñiga stressed the importance CB7 places on transparency and accessibility. The Borough President stated that CB7 may do more than other boards in this respect and they will lean on CB 7 as discussions with the boards take place.
- Pat Ruiz asked about staff and resources from the BP's office and if information could be shared with the board. The Borough President stated they know more about northern Brooklyn than CB 7 's district so they will be leaning on the local elected officials to help with understanding the local issues and organizations, such as Boricua Festival, and how they can be supported.
- Barbara Lee thanked the BP for cleaning up the area around Borough Hall.

Chairperson Report

Cesar Zuñiga answered questions from board members regarding his report.

District Manager's Report

Jeremy Laufer reported that he met Brooklyn Borough President Reynoso at the BP Borough Service Cabinet meeting and mentioned the following items that should be a priority for all the community boards: budget, training, and technology.

Laufer reported that he and Chairperson Zuñiga met with Councilmember Alexa Aviles to discuss some longstanding issues with the Department of Transportation, brainstorm on providing more access to CB7 meetings and mentioned the technology, budget and training needs for community boards.

Laufer met with Live On NY, a not-for-profit that advocates organ donation in NYC. Live On NY provided the following stats: Within the 4 zip codes that CB7 covers (11232, 11220, 11215 & 11218) for 2021, 102 people are waiting for organ donations. In our four main zip codes in 2021, 91 of the 102 need kidney donations, 71 identified as Hispanic or Asian, 7 received organ transplants and 6 passed away. This was to promote organ donation.

Laufer announced that the Department of Design and Construction is digging test pits along the 4th Avenue median in the CB7 district for the upcoming Department of Transportation median and cement project. This project is focused on safety improvements for pedestrian crossings, bike lanes, and will also include the installation of planters on the 4th Avenue median. Full project will start this spring and hopefully there will be a presentation soon.

Laufer was asked to look into the project on the 7th Avenue side of Sunset Park where they are digging up a portion of the entrance area. That is a telecommunications project that will support upgrades to the Sunset Park Rec Center.

Mr. Laufer reported that 8 new/renewal liquor licenses were received for the month of February.

Old Business

There was none

New Business

Grisel Amador thanked Councilmember Alexa Aviles for distributing at home COVID-19 test kits, face masks and hand sanitizer to the seniors at the United Senior Citizens of Sunset Park. Ms. Amador stated that she was attending the board meeting remotely from Puerto Rico.

Antoinette Martinez announced the next Housing Committee for March 1 on Zoom - Department of Homeless Services and Samaritan Village will be presenting on the shelter set to be opened at 5113 2nd Avenue in March.

David Estrada reported that the Sunset Park 5th Avenue BID will be providing additional supplemental sanitation services through Block by Block.

Public Comment

Peter Desrocher from 41st Street and 6th Avenue spoke about a quality of life issue stemming from groups using the park entrance area for an exercise program and blasting amplified music as early as 6:30 a.m. daily.

Gabino Morales Escanmillo asked for an update on the Weir Greenhouse welcome and education center across from Greenwood Cemetery on 5th Avenue and 25th Street.

Maria Roca from the Friends of Sunset Park reported that mobile COVID-19 vaccination buses are parked on 5th Avenue without license plates.

Eduardo Jimenez spoke about the 5th Avenue Committee affordable housing development portion for 737 4th Avenue

Chris Schneider shared their concern for the changes made on 6th Avenue between 20th and 24th Streets. He stated that the traffic isn't following the rules and makes it extremely unsafe for pedestrians and people are parking illegally everywhere.

Meeting was adjourned

Pat Ruiz made a motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 7:50pm