

Community Board 7 Monthly Meeting Minutes

May 18, 2022

6pm-8:48pm

Minutes submitted by Cynthia VandenBosch

Opening of the Meeting

Chairperson Cesar Zuñiga officially opened the May 18, 2022, Board Meeting.

Agenda adoption

Zuñiga amended the agenda to include the Nominating Committee under Committee Reports and also added a vote that the board must take on the declaration on the State of Emergency so that the board can continue to meet virtually. 1st Vice Chairperson Julio Peña made a motion to adopt the amended agenda. Joan Botti seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous consent.

Declaration on State of Emergency

Zuñiga read the declaration on the State of Emergency so that the Community Board can continue to meet virtually. There was discussion on the declaration. Zuñiga made a motion to adopt the declaration. Second Vice Chairperson Patricia Ruiz seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous consent.

Adopt minutes of April 20, 2022 board meeting

1st Vice Chairperson Julio Peña made a motion to adopt the minutes of April 20, 2022 Board Meeting. Samuel Sierra seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous consent.

First Public Comment - Regarding items on the agenda

Felix Vazquez spoke on the sanitation and health issues he is having because he resides next to a building that burned which is located at 702 44th Street that has not been repaired. The District Manager encouraged Vazquez to contact the board office.

Cynthia Gonzalez inquired about returning to in-person meetings. There was a discussion on this matter and the preparations that are underway to host hybrid meetings.

Committee Reports

1. **Sanitation Committee** - Committee Chairperson Joseph Canale referred the board to the committee report.
2. **Health Committee** - Zuñiga referred the board to the committee report.
3. **Executive Committee**
 - a. Chairperson Zuñiga reported on community planning, hybrid meetings and non-board members' participation on committees.
 - b. Questions/comments on meeting format moving forward:

- i. Cynthia Gonzalez commented that there is more participation at board and committee meetings since the board has been holding meetings on zoom. There was a discussion on this.
- ii. VandenBosch commented on how hybrid meetings give people with disabilities an opportunity to participate at meetings.
- iii. Ruiz commented that with all the board members, elected officials and public, we do not have the space to socially distance and have people 6 feet apart.

4. Special Subcommittee on Last Mile Trucking Facilities

a. Report on proposed zoning text amendment: Committee Chairperson

Katherine Walsh reported on the following:

- i. Discussions among committee members on recent meetings, proposed legislation, and remaining gaps;
- ii. Department of City Planning presentation in response to CB7 letter;
- iii. Department of Transportation presentation in response to CB7 letter;
- iv. Presentation from DH Property and Bridge Development Partners on their plans to develop a four story last mile trucking distribution center on 3rd Avenue from 19th to 21st Street;
- v. Review and discussion on text for Last Mile Warehouse Special Permit Requirements; and
- vi. The committee voted unanimously to support legislation for a special zoning text amendment pending legal review.
- vii. On the day of the monthly board meeting (May 18, 2022), Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation submitted a letter expressing concerns about the process and potential impact of the zoning text amendment in its current form.

b. Discussion:

- i. Committee members Zachary Jasie, Nicholas Azadian, and John Fontillas all expressed support for delaying the vote to allow for additional review, including legal review, engagement of industrial stakeholders and employers, and review by board members.
- ii. Community Board Members Gloria Rodriguez Novoa reminded board members that the underlying reason for this amendment is to address environmental and health issues.

c. Vote:

- i. Chairperson Zuñiga made a motion to table the vote for one month to carry out legal review and a meeting and listening session with industrial and other stakeholders in the community.
- ii. Justin Collins seconded the vote
- iii. The motion to table the vote carried by unanimous consent

5. Nominating Committee

a. Chairperson Zachary Jasie stated the committee met on May 17, 2022 and voted on a slate. They will present a slate this evening and then take nominations from the floor and explained the process.

- i. The slate that the committee presented was:
 - 1. Chairperson – Julio Peña III
 - 2. 1st Vice Chairperson – Cynthia VandenBosch
 - 3. 2nd Vice Chairperson – Patricia Ruiz
 - 4. Secretary – Karen Rolnick
 - 5. Assistant Secretary – John Johnston
 - 6. Treasurer – Nicholas Azadian

7. Community Outreach Coordinator – Cesar Zuñiga
 8. Sergeant-At-Arms – Victor Swinton
 9. Assistant Sergeant-At-Arms – Samuel Sierra
- ii. Nominations for each role:
1. Chairperson
 - a. For the position of Chairperson, Julio Peña accepted the nomination.
 - b. No additional nominations were offered from the floor. Cesar Zuñiga made a motion to close nominations. Joan Botti seconded.
 2. 1st Vice Chairperson
 - a. For the position of 1st Vice Chairperson, Cynthia VandenBosch accepted the nomination.
 - b. Barbara Lee nominated Patricia Ruiz. Patricia Ruiz declined the nomination.
 - c. Patricia Ruiz nominated Nicholas Azadian. Nicholas Azadian accepted the nomination and turned down the nomination for the position of Treasurer.
 - d. Antoinette Martinez nominated John Fontillas. John Fontillas declined.
 - e. No additional nominations were offered from the floor. Patricia Ruiz made a motion to close nominations. Joan Botti seconded.
 3. 2nd Vice Chairperson
 - a. For the position of 2nd Vice Chairperson, Patricia Ruiz accepted the nomination.
 - b. No additional nominations were offered from the floor. Joan Botti made a motion to close nominations. Sam Sierra seconded.
 4. Secretary
 - a. For the position of Secretary, Karen Rolnick accepted the nomination.
 - b. No additional nominations were offered from the floor. Patricia Ruiz made a motion to close nominations. Julio Peña seconded.
 5. Assistant Secretary
 - a. For the position of Assistant Secretary, John Johnston accepted the nomination.
 - b. Antoinette Martinez nominated Joseph Lara. Joseph Lara declined.
 - c. Cynthia VandenBosch nominated John DeLooper. John DeLooper accepted the nomination.
 - d. No additional nominations were offered from the floor. Patricia Ruiz made a motion to close nominations. Julio Peña seconded.
 6. Treasurer
 - a. For the position of Treasurer, there are no nominees as Nicholas Azadian accepted a nomination for a different position and cannot run for two positions.
 - b. Patricia Ruiz nominated Cynthia Felix. Cynthia Felix accepted.

- c. Cynthia VandenBosch nominated Sandra Alfonzo. Sandra Alfonzo accepted.
 - d. No additional nominations were offered from the floor. Julio Peña made a motion to close nominations. Patricia Ruiz seconded.
 - 7. Community Outreach Coordinator
 - a. For the position of Community Outreach Coordinator, Cesar Zuñiga accepted the nomination.
 - b. Antoinette Martinez nominated herself and accepted the nomination.
 - c. No additional nominations were offered from the floor. Julio Peña made a motion to close nominations. Patricia Ruiz seconded.
 - 8. Sergeant-at-Arms
 - a. For the position of Sergeant-at-Arms, Victor Swinton accepted the nomination.
 - b. Cynthia VandenBosch nominated Cristina Lem. Christina Lem declined.
 - c. Antoinette Martinez nominated Joseph Lara. Joseph Lara accepted.
 - d. No additional nominations were offered from the floor. Julio Peña made a motion to close nominations. Patricia Ruiz seconded.
 - 9. Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms
 - a. For the position of Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms, Samuel Sierra accepted the nomination and resigned from the Nominating Committee.
 - b. Cynthia VandenBosch nominated Jimmy Li. Jimmy Li accepted.
 - c. No additional nominations were offered from the floor. Patricia Ruiz made a motion to close nominations. Julio Peña seconded.
- iii. **Final full slate** - The District Manager read the final full slate:
 - 1. Chairperson – Julio Peña III (unopposed)
 - 2. 1st Vice Chairperson – Nicholas Azadian, Cynthia VandenBosch
 - 3. 2nd Vice Chairperson – Patricia Ruiz (unopposed)
 - 4. Secretary – Karen Rolnick (unopposed)
 - 5. Assistant Secretary – John DeLooper. John Johnston
 - 6. Treasurer – Sandra Alfonzo, Cynthia Felix
 - 7. Sergeant-at-Arms – Joseph Lara, Victor Swinton
 - 8. Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms – Jimmy Li, Samuel Sierra
- iv. Procedures and questions about voting process:
 - 1. The District Manager gave a brief description on how the election will work online using the app “Election Buddy.”
 - 2. Rovika Rajkishun asked if members need to be present to vote. The District Manager explained that members are only eligible to vote if they are in attendance.
 - 3. There was a discussion about how many reminders board members will receive.
 - 4. Karen Rolnick asked if those in contested elections will get a chance to speak beforehand. The District Manager stated that

was the practice in previous elections and each candidate will be given one minute to speak at the next meeting.

Elected Officials and Representatives

Senator Jabari Brisport stated there will be two primary elections this year, in June and August. They also spoke about mayoral control of the schools. Genesis Aquino asked what was being done about educating the community about two primaries. The Senator stated they aren't finalized yet, as the maps aren't final yet and then it will be up to the Board of Elections to do the bulk of the outreach. Jimmy Li asked about the legislature's plans to deal with extremism, social media and gun laws. The Senator stated there is a bill on microstamping to help trace bullets as well as an education program on anti-racism.

David Sosa from Assemblymember Mitaynes' office spoke about their office's hours.

Edward Cerna from Councilmember Aviles' office spoke about legislation concerning last mile facilities and the Administration's announcement of an industrial working group and a letter their office is sending to Deputy Mayor Torres-Springer. The office is also accepting book donations. They also spoke about their mobile office hours. Jimmy Li asked about the arrest of a street vendor in the subway the prior week. They asked if there was legislation to add additional vendor permits and lower the fee. Edward Cerna stated there was legislation in the previous Council but they will have to follow up to see where that is currently. The Councilmember was upset by that arrest. Cynthia VandenBosch asked about the composition of the industrial task force.

Edward Cerna said this was the Mayor's announcement, but it hasn't been convened. The Councilmember's letter calls for a broad group.

Cynthia Gonzalez stated that the community is already saturated with vendors. How is litter from the vendors being addressed? Rovika Rajkishun asked how she knows the litter comes from the vendors. Cesar Zuñiga stated this is not the time for a debate.

John Watkins from the District Attorney's office stated the DA is focused on the subway shooting at the 36th Street station. They announced the DA's gun buyback program. John J. Watkins from the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office answered questions from board members.

District Manager's Report

Jeremy Laufer announced that the MTA is hosting a virtual town hall meeting to discuss the Interborough Express on May 19 from 6pm to 7:30 pm. Laufer gave an update on a request submitted to DOT from CB7 and the 72nd Precinct to conduct a lighting survey in CB7. DOT will conduct the survey and be completed by August. Laufer that Councilmember Shahana Hanif and Transportation Alternatives will host a Prospect Park Family Fun Bike Ride on June 4. Laufer reported that the 59th Street train station staircases will undergo reconstruction for the next six months. Laufer reported that there is a delay in the 4th Avenue project. Laufer reported that the office received 16 liquor new/renewal applications.

Chairperson's Report

Tabled

Old Business

Cynthia VandenBosch wanted to know if the Brooklyn Borough President's Office has confirmed the re-appointed board members.

Patricia Ruiz asked for clarification regarding the submission of committee reports.

Cesar Zuñiga asked for unanimous consent for support to sign onto a letter from CB7, CB's 5& 6, and Councilmember Aviles to DOT regarding the last mile trucking facilities. The motion was seconded by David Estrada. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

New Business

Grisel Amador reported that her organization, United Senior Citizens of Sunset Park, collected donations for the families displaced by the recent fires in the district. Ms. Amador extended an invitation to the board members to celebrate the upcoming Puerto Rican Day parade on June 10.

David Estrada reported that the Sunset Park 5th Avenue BID will host Open Streets over the summer starting on Saturday, June 4. He announced that the BID's Fall Festival will be held on Sunday, September 25.

Public Comment

Rachel Spector, an attorney for Earth Justice spoke about their work with the Last Mile Coalition on the Special Text Amendment for last mile trucking facilities.

Summer Sandoval from UPROSE commented on the Special Text Amendment for last mile trucking facilities

Edward Cerna from Councilmember Aviles' Office announced that the Department of Education is hosting virtual town halls meetings to discuss candidates for superintendent of school districts -District 79 and District 15 on May 19 at 7pm and District 20 on May 25 at 5pm.

Gabino Morales stated that community residents are having difficulty filing complaints against police officers at the 72nd Precinct.

Kevin Garcia, a transportation planner for the NYC Environmental Justice Alliance, spoke about their work with the Last Mile Coalition on the Special Text Amendment for last mile trucking facilities.

Eva Hanhardt, a city planner spoke about their involvement with the Last Mile Trucking Coalition.

Alok Disa from Earth Justice spoke about the challenges of getting regulations for last mile trucking facilities.

Rovika Rajkishun expressed her concerns regarding the lack of presentation from the 72nd Precinct at the board meetings.

There was a discussion among the board members regarding housekeeping rules for running virtual board meetings and committee reports.

Patricia Ruiz mentioned that meeting information and minutes should be provided in different languages.

Meeting adjournment

Nicholas Azadian made a motion to adjourn. It was seconded by Patricia Ruiz. The meeting adjourned at 8:48pm.