

**Community Board No. 4**  
Public Hearing and Monthly Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, October 21, 2020 6pm

Via Webex

Chairperson: Mr. Robert Camacho  
District Manager: Ms. Celeste Leon

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Meeting Start: 6:12pm

**Public Hearing Items**

1) **Public Hearing Item - Preston Niblack, Deputy Comptroller for Budget Office of New York City Comptroller Scott Stringer** - Providing an overview of the City's Budget FY 2021 and the Impact of COVID

2) **CB4 Annual Budget Meeting Overview**

How is the overall budget determined?

How are the agency budgets determined?

How is this year's budget impacted by COVID 19?

What cuts were made to agency services?

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**Public Hearing Item #1:** Mr. Niblack reviews how the budget operates:

- Budget has to be balanced
- Budgeting is incremental and
- Projections of spending and revenues are the baseline
- Revenues equals spending and the budget has to be balanced.

The budget for FY 2021 is \$88.19 billion dollars, which is a decrease from last year. 2021 will have a budget gap of \$4.2 billion dollars. Revenues are about  $\frac{2}{3}$  taxes;  $\frac{1}{2}$  of revenue comes in from Real Estate Taxes; Personal Income Taxes, Sales Tax, Business Tax, income.

- Revenues go up and down depending on the economy
- Spending is more automatic
- By law, the budget must be balanced; in theory spending and revenue can be adjusted
- We tend to treat revenues as a "given"
- Reserves (money already in place) by previous budget years

The City can increase revenue also from property taxes. Property taxes are relatively stable. The City raises revenue by increasing property tax, income tax, business tax, and other taxes.

Homeowners know that their assessments tend to go in one direction only, which is up. Other taxes tend to be much more stable compared to economic activity. So, in 4-6 weeks before the beginnings of the shutdowns in March 2020, and the end of April, the City lost 900,000 jobs. That means that peoples' incomes were not what they had been, and people were not spending so that is taxable income that was lost and taxes that were not getting paid. As I said previously, balancing the budget is a legal requirement. Spending tends to be a little more stable though as there are no changes in the spending, which tends to continue a straight line from one year to the next. So, in theory, to balance the budget, we tend to treat the revenues as a given.

The process is that (a) the City Council decides how much money they will be spending for a given year; (b) the Mayor gives a final estimate of all taxes and revenue (besides the property taxes) that are available; so, there is a difference and then (c) the City Council decides how much that difference is and how the difference is going to be made up of higher taxes and revenues sufficient to cover the full budget that they adopted. Needless to say, Council members do not like to raise property taxes and they generally do not like to lower property taxes because they will have to cut the budget, so property taxes will remain consistent and so we base our revenue on that. A lot of action on balancing the budget takes place on the spending side. The tax revenue gap was \$8.3 billion dollars. Tax revenue fell by \$1.3 million dollars. We had some areas where we were able to draw down on in the form of education, new spending that has to be paid for, surplus funds, reserves, savings programs, stimulus funds. The Mayor included funding from labor union savings. The Mayor wanted to borrow money which was an unresolved issue.

Agency budgets had to be cut due to the pandemic, i.e., Education, Pre-K to high school; Medicaid, Public Assistance, Health & Hospitals, Social Services, DHS, DOA, DCP, Parks, PD, DOC, Libraries, Major city services, Agency Budget Cuts. Also, Senior Centers, Day Care, Rikers Island population decreases, (large savings); summer school programs, Beacon Programs, summer schools, Summer Youth Programs cut but some funds restored, school busing programs for the summer (some of the Bus companies even got reimbursements) other programs that were not done this year, Sanitation, litter basket collections, 740 routes to pick up, 60% of litter basket routes cut, staff cuts taken through attrition (people who retired, resigned, those positions were left vacant), Arts and Excellence programs in the DOE, and the NYPD enforcement to Placards for windshields and parking enforcement were cut; Beaches and pools that were delayed opening or cut back; hazardous waste cut back. The Police Department budget: \$295 million in police over time. Historically, the City has not been able to control overtime by the NYPD. (There is very little savings there as Police overtime is basically impossible to control). The transfer of School Safety to DOE, (has not completely happened yet). The future of federal aid from Congress has not taken place yet. The Federal Government has their own problems. Most hopeful for funding when election is decided and change in the Senate. We are not in a position yet to consider layoffs. The State made their budget and cut funding to the City particularly in the areas of education and we had some other new areas where we had to somehow pay for. There is a small area of uncertainty, but the State has their own budget gaps, we may be able to get Federal aid after the election and hopefully a change in the Senate, there are other areas of revenue. Not in a position to have to

consider layoffs, no need to achieve labor savings right now. We are still in decent shape but there is that \$4.2 billion dollar gap out there that needs to be addressed for next year.

### **Discussion**

**Question:** (from Andrew Choi): How and when will the Mayor decide to evaluate the Budget in November? **Answer:** It is in the City Charter. Scheduled in the City Charter. The Mayor has to update the financial plan once a quarter. The First Quarter update has to come in November. It is traditional but you can't push it beyond that first quarter.

**Question:** (from Desmond Monroe): I know the Mayor has been talking about affordable housing before the pandemic and now with so many people out of work, and how will the budget cuts affect Affordable Housing in the City? Capital Planning for the next four years? **Answer:** I did not look at the Capital Budget, but when the Mayor presented his Executive Budget, he also put in an updated Capital Budget Plan that pushed about \$1 billion dollars for affordable housing out to 2022, 2023, and 2024. We have had a continuing dialogue with the Mayor about putting the capital program out right now does not make sense. Interest rates are low, it is a good time to borrow and we have plenty of needs and it creates construction and other jobs. On the affordable housing front, given the Mayor's affordable housing plan, it was a little surprising that he moved so much of the plan out into future years. But I cannot tell you right now off the top of my head, but I just do not know what the impact was for affordable housing construction for the fiscal year that ended on June 30th, and I can pass that along and I can look it up.

**Question:** (Louisa Chan): What adjustments have you had to make regarding the changes that have been made regarding taxes, etc. companies not renewing their office space leases, people working from home, etc. How has that affected your revenue projections for next year? **Answer:** The biggest decline so far is in the sales taxes. And shutdowns of stores, hotels, restaurants, theatres. Sales tax really crashed for a couple of months and the great deal of restrictions on suburban people, who normally would come into the City on a workday, are not coming into the City and who would spend a great deal of money are not commuting on a daily basis and that is a cause of a loss of a lot of revenue. Income tax has been down some. Property tax, commercial office space works through an assessment process, and that has been our biggest revenue producer. Normally, it takes about 5 years to work its way down fully through to what the taxpayer pays. But I really don't know. I know we read stories every day about people not renewing their leases and Google packing up thousands of feet of commercial space, but you really don't know, and it is not clear yet. We will have to do an updated forecast in a couple of months then.

**Question:** (Jose Guzman): What are the projections for program cuts to CBO's? Homeless prevention, legal services, school programs, cuts to social service, the kinds of contracts that the City has with providers of social services. especially in North Brooklyn? **Answer:** Specifically, what happened this year with the cuts that specifically went to social services and non-profits: The

City, with our help by urging, tried to make matters as whole as possible. They tried to make some big changes here, so the SYEP, they assumed that it was not going to happen at all, and they cut off the funding for contractors and left them sitting high and dry and that was a mess. It took a while to sort out so in the future, and I don't know. I think it is inevitable there will be some sort of cuts to the budget, how much and where it will be hard to say. We talk very often to the non-profit community and we hear all the time about the issues they are having with the City, we try to help where we can, but it has certainly been a difficult situation, it has been several months, but we just have to wait and see what happens in the budget update.

**Question:** Debra Hicks: (Non-Board Member): Did the Mayor take a look at the Police Budget and redistribute the funds for non-militarized police to community services? **Answer:** There is really no change to policing *per se*. The budget permits the hiring of new police officers and brings the number of uniformed officers down somewhat. There are no fundamental changes at all as to how the police operate. So, the answer is no, the Mayor made no changes on that front.

**Question:** What is the update on the City buyouts? **Answer:** As far as I have heard, there are no buyouts, no retirement programs.

**Question:** (Mary McClellan): Before, they were talking about staff having to give up days, including the Mayor. Has that come to pass? **Answer:** It was announced that all City Hall staff was to take five days from October through March including the Mayor taking furlough days. I happened to speak to a City Hall staffer the other day, who said she could not talk to me right now as she was on a furlough day. So, there are some City Hall Staffers taking furlough days right now. It was also announced that some Managerial employees would also be taking furlough days and honestly, I don't know how many days it was, but I think it affected about 9,000 employees altogether. Also, I spoke to another senior person in the Department of Sanitation, and he said can he answer the question on Monday because he was taking a few furlough days as well. So, people are taking furlough days, but it is really not much money. The furlough has saved about \$860,000.00 but we are looking at a budget gap for next year of \$8.2 billion dollars. I suppose that it has some intrinsic value, but it cannot do much in terms of making a dent in the gap.

**Public Hearing Item #2: CB4 Annual Budget Meeting Overview – Chairperson, Mr. Robert Camacho, and District Manager Celeste Leon summarized the requests for Fiscal Year 2021.** The board's annual budget meeting was held on October 15, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. For a copy of the Budget Requests, please contact the board's office.

**FY 2021 Adopted Budget Register:** Please note that this is public information that can be found in a variety of different ways through the OMB website and by reaching out to our office. Also, the Department of City Planning issues a full report every year that includes these requests.

Mr. Camacho read the following from the Fiscal Year 2021 Capital Budget Register:

- 1) Providing more housing for low-income households: We put that as one of our first priorities recommended within existing resources. As you know, with what is going on, we want to make sure that we leave that in so that we make sure that we have the proper housing for extremely low-income families especially with the moratorium that we have. I do not know what is going to happen especially now that there is the rent moratorium on housing extended to January 2021. We do not know if this is going to go in effect or not. We want to make sure that we leave that there and that we have the proper housing for especially extremely low housing. Department: Housing and Preservation Development.
- 2) Provide more housing for Special Needs Households: The second request we had is to provide for special needs housing and for the formerly homeless. As you can see what is going on with HPD with regards to truly affordable housing, this remains a citywide crisis and they will accommodate within existing city resources. Department; Housing and Preservation Development.
3. Reconstruction of Streets: Request reconstruction of streets from Broadway to Flushing Ave. back to Eastern Parkway. Broadway was one of our major requests. Broadway no longer is the major commercial strip that it once was. Department: Dept. of Transportation. Roadbed is in deplorable condition and needs to be addressed. They said that supporting agencies will supply the follow-ups and funds are available for the project and we recommend that it be brought to the Borough President and elected officials. The way the budget is, it is our No. 3 request.
4. Reconstruct and upgrade Maria Hernandez Park Comfort Station: The comfort station needs to be repaired and upgraded. Pooling of water, poor maintenance, the availability of funds is uncertain, as with the problems with the budget for the City.
5. Forestry Services: Parks Department.: Pruning of trees and taking care of old trees. Agency will try to accommodate requests within existing resources.
6. Provide New Lights under Elevated Structures: MTA funding. Broadway El and Myrtle Avenue El. OMB - MTA - Supported by Wyckoff Heights Medical Center.
7. Creating and renovating Brooklyn Public Library: DeKalb Library in need of Repair. Agency: Brooklyn Public Library. Basement, exterior windows in need of repair. We put that as our 7th priority.
8. Reconstruction of Wyckoff-Myrtle Transport Hub: Need of upgrade due to delivery, EMS vehicles, lots of traffic and all types of vehicles. Responsible agency: Department of

Transportation. Sponsored by Audrey Johnson and the cross streets are Flushing Avenue to Cooper Street. This request has already been funded.

9. New construction in Irving Square Park; new comfort station in Irving Square Park. Agency: Parks and Recreation. Capital funding project. We were told to ask our elected officials of CB No. 4 for funding.

10. Repair and upgrade Wilson Ave. L Line Station: As you know what is going on in Transit, restore L Line DeKalb Station including install new elevators. The station has increased community value but, as you know, the station has gone down and contract status unknown. We left that as our “10.”

11. Repair and Upgrade Wilson Ave. Station: The “L” Line. We also indicated that we wanted ADA accessible to the Rockaway Parkway bound side. You know what is going to happen with that.

12. Department of Education Pre-K Programs: We requested establishment of Pre-K Programs for all schools in the neighborhood and DOE Early Learn Centers in the neighborhood. Consider existing childcare centers as host sites. Capital funding is needed, and it goes under further study. As you know, DOE has other issues with no children attending school as it is.

13. Reconstruct Streets from Myrtle to Wyckoff Avenues: Myrtle Ave. directly links Queens to Brooklyn. It is a major corridor with the M Train and the Bus lines. Two lane bus traffic makes it potentially hazardous as a main corridor. DOT has in-house repair plans. Whatever money they have will be just to rehab Broadway to Wyckoff Ave. Agency: DOT.

14. Make Investments in Local Business District - Broadway, Myrtle Avenue, Knickerbocker Economic Development: Most of the stores are closed down there and we want to make sure that they do something as far as economic development. We want to make sure we can get the businesses to come back. They said that further investigation is needed and to contact the Agency.

15. NYC Police Department Equipment Requests: As you can see, OMB does not take any position on this issue despite historic low crime rates in Bushwick, statistics show increases in grand larceny and quality of life concerns. Request is made for a mobile command center. Further study and analysis are needed.

The District Manager summarized: Mr. Camacho just walked everyone through the Capital Budget Requests. We remind everyone who is new to this process: Capital Requests are \$1 million dollars or over and below that amount is an Expense Request. We only get 1 request per year and this is

for FY 2021. Each year when we meet, we plan for the following fiscal year starting July 1<sup>st</sup>. I will check the chat box to see if I have any requests from the public.

**Question:** (Andrew Choi): Wants to know about tree pruning and where in particular? **Answer:** District Manager response: Trees are pruned on a seven-year cycle. Trees grow every spring. There are blocks who had the trees pruned 3 years ago, maybe 5, but they certainly need the trees to be pruned again for safety reasons related to trees or they (the trees) may be hanging closely on a property. It certainly is an ongoing issue throughout a neighborhood. Park trees are done by Dept. of Parks pruning. No private property trees are pruned.

Mr. Camacho responds: It is not only the sidewalk trees but trees in parks. As you know if it rains **heavily**, the trees grow, they also grow even in the winter. The only time is when it depends on what it is the soil gets wet and the tree blooms, that is when you see that it comes out of the ground and if you trim them, air flows through the tree and the tree stays stable. So, that is very important as you see a lot of trees toppled and we have a map that each area we go and trim the trees and they break it down. So, by the time they come around again, the trees are already starting to bloom and blossom.

**Question:** (Trina?) Who decides the priority? **Answer:** The Budget Committee reviews 311 data, calls and emails to the board's office. The committee will generally decide during their meetings by vote. The question is how they formulate the pruning in areas in a variety of ways.

**Question:** Debra, Re: Broadway, Myrtle, Eastern Parkway. **Answer:** This is a promise not kept since 1977/1978. Myrtle to Flushing got the money and Broadway to Eastern Parkway got nothing. If I am not mistaken, this has been ongoing for decades. **Answer by Mr. Camacho:** Yes, and this has been requested for some time. And they all come back that they have no money. Broadway has not been revitalized since 1977. I imagine people have been doing what they can. Remember, it is two sides; one side is Bedford-Stuyvesant, and one side is Bushwick. **Answer by Ms. Leon:** And for context, we have been advised by the Brooklyn Borough Commissioner that we have to find a way to organize all the elected officials from both sides in order to get support for funding for that project. **Answer by Mr. Camacho:** You can do one side and not the other. So, it has to be one side on Bed-Stuy and our side too. All the elected officials.

Ms. Leon thanks all the committee members who attended the budget meetings.

### **Regular Meeting Agenda**

#### **1. Roll Call**

**Board members in attendance:** Robert Camacho, Rev. Grace Aytes, Joshua Brown, Raul Brown, Gardea Caphart, Luisa Chan, Melissa Carrera, Andrew Choi, Daniella Davi, Elvina Davis, James Fitzgerald, Freddy Fowler, Egaudy Gomez, Anne Guiney, Rev. Magdalena

Gutierrez, Jose Guzman, Tenisha Honeygan, Barbara Jackson, Christian Jock, Luisa Jose, Mary McClellan, Desmond Monroe, Sammy Nemir, Christine Peking, Cheryl Jones, Acire Polight, Gladys Puglia, Raul Rubio, Julio Salinas, Vernedeaner Shell, Dustin Sonneborn, Annette Spellen, Jerry Valentin, Carlotta Williams, and Odolph Wright

**Excused:** Melissa Carrera, Andrew Choi, and James Fitzgerald

30 Board Members present – constitutes a quorum.

2. **Acceptance of the Agenda.** Elvena Davis moves to accept the agenda for this evening and Mary McClellan seconds. Motion Moved.
3. **Acceptance of Previous Meeting Minutes: Celeste:** The minutes were sent in time but not in enough time for the district manager to review them in advance. I will send them tomorrow morning. Is there a Motion for the Board to table them? Motion made by Raul Rubio to table the minutes and seconded by Annette Spellen. Motion carried.
4. **Chairperson's Report: Mr. Robert Camacho:** Thank you all for attending. I hope all are safe. Love you all and miss you all. We are working from home and I am on the phone all day or on the web. We all must look out for each other especially in these times. The Chair further comments that if you go outside to get coffee, you have to come back in. He does not know how people can do it these days. I am trying to do the best I can with what I have and just want everybody to be safe especially our Board Members. We don't know what is going to happen to any of us, especially now. Once or twice a week I go and get some food and you should see the lines. I have never seen anything like this in my life, you know, the lines. You give and then it never ends, and you want to keep giving, giving, and giving. It is so hard, and people are not working. Some of the people who were making daily deliveries, they are now limited to what they can do. I do not know how these people can do it, but I hope that we come out alive. We have been there before in 1977, so we just have to stick together and make sure that Bushwick survives. I know that I have faith in all my Board Members, and we need to know that we can work together. I want to thank Celeste and the people in the office working. We get all our complaints and please use the phone, if someone has an issue call 311, give us the Complaint No. and we can take care of it. Let's go out there and make sure that the people are being heard. If we can't take care of it, then we will try our best to do whatever it is that needs to be done to make sure that we represent Bushwick strongly.

**September 17, 2020:** Met with Knickerbocker Task force. There are a lot of homeless people in the plaza, trash garbage. A lot of people are eating outside, feeding birds. We know that the birds will be around if people are eating food, so they are setting something up in regard to taking care of that plaza and cleaning and doing programming. That will be a good thing if we can get



programming and regarding the programming, the problem is getting insurance. Who is going to do the programming and where will they be getting the insurance? That could be a great problem. That is a DOT spot.

**September 18, 2020:** Attended Woodhull Medical Center where they were painting a community mural for the area.

**September 19, 2020:** Maria Hernandez Countdown for 2020 Census. Since the President eliminated the date for final census responses to be in so at that day, we collected 68 census forms. It was awesome and we did it there and we did it in Irving Square Park. They marched with the Senator and it was awesome. Our vice-chair, Joshua Brown, participated in one of them and it was great.

**September 21, 2020:** Zoom Meeting with Senator Charles Schumer and Maritza Davila regarding the funding from the President for PPE, Cares funding. No funding has come so far.

**September 24, 2020:** 4:00 p.m. Meeting with NYCPPA and Health on Pilling Street regarding Pilling Family Services requesting a Mental Health Program at that facility. (Celeste will fill you in on this matter regarding if they got the funding for the Health Education program in that facility for the people who attend there.), The clients receive family services and they want to add additional services from outside people which are some of the people in their family, so there were issues with that, and Celeste and I sat in on the meeting.

**Monday, September 21, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.:** EPTS and PRC Meeting.

**September 22, 2020: 11:00 am:** Graffiti Removal on Knickerbocker Ave. I joined the 83d Pct. with graffiti removal covering it over with fresh paint and fixing it up.

**September 21, 2020:** Attended Gala with RiseBoro Zoom Meeting Gala. I don't know how they did this, but I attended and did a "Cardi B" thing.

**September 22, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.:** I attended the East New York Association Panel regarding homes that are under tax liens. A lot of people are going to be losing their homes due to tax liens in the 37th District. They are selling the tax liens. I do not know if they have pushed it back, but a lot of people are going to be losing their one- and two-family homes basically. We have a lot of nice homes in Bushwick that are under the tax lien status. They will be sold to someone and they eventually will take title to the homes, so we need to get together and make sure that we try to help these people.

**September 23, 2020:** The 83rd Clergy met on Zoom for the first time. It was nice. A lot of people were there. We got a lot of prayers.

**Thursday, September 24, 2020:** The FY 2022 Budget Consultations: We met with DOB, HPD, EDC, SBS, NYCHA and Parks.

**September 26, 2020:** We did another countdown again on Halsey Street.

**On September 26, 2020:** The Bushwick Clean Initiative - They go out and help Bushwick clean the streets, the parks. They have their own tools and when they go out and clean the streets, you come back, and the streets look like they have done nothing. So, we want to educate our people that we need to keep our neighborhood clean by putting your trash in the garbage, cleaning the sidewalks 18 inches into the curb, and make sure we keep Bushwick clean. That was a good working group that we had.

**On Thursday, October 1, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.:** we had the Arts and Culture Committee who will report.

**Thursday, October 1, 2020 at 7:15 p.m.,** the Community Board Briefing with the Mayor's briefing with what is going on with COVID 19 in certain areas.

**On Friday October 2, 2020,** we had another Budget Consultation with DYSY, DOT, DEP, SCA, DOE, SCA, FDNY and NYPD.

**October 3, 2020; 12:00 noon to 3:00 p.m.** Hope Gardens had their Family Day. They had PPE for the kids. They gave out book bags.

**October 4, 2020:** Goodwin Place Clean-up Block. The Borough President was there. Celeste and I were there. We did a lot of cleaning and we wanted to make sure he came out and visited some of these block associations and get to know the people. We told him we needed him to come on Wednesday, October 6, 2020 to thank the people who were giving out the food. The man is a very nice man. He has a restaurant at Bushwick and Flushing. He gave out truckloads of food, gave out turkeys, and he is giving back. He is suffering because he is only doing take-outs, but he is giving back to the community.

**October 7, 2020:** Executive Board Meeting.

**Friday, October 9, 2020:** RAD Meeting. RAD opened their facilities already. They completed all their low-rise buildings already. The landscape, they are starting to work on, and all the cameras are up in Hope Gardens. They also are distributing food every Friday at 85 Palmetto Street. They

want the people that live in the apartments to start getting their paperwork done, their tax credits, for their apartments because they want to extend to 3,000 apartments that have not been done. Also, good news, because a lot of these are families that live in Hope Gardens with members of their immediate family, they will be grandfathered in if they have their paperwork updated. RAD will also help them apply for Section 8, so those people who have been there for so many years whose names were not on the lease can stay and keep that apartment, so we are working with them.

I also want to thank Barbara Smith because on October 10, 2020, they will be renaming Knickerbocker and Menahan after Detective Taylor after 43 years. This officer was gunned down and killed on Linden Street while answering a call.

**October 14, 2020:** I did a press conference at 114 Knickerbocker regarding teachers contracting COVID. So, I was in a press conference with Maritza Davila there and we want to make sure they get their PPE's.

**On Wednesday, October 14, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.,** we had a meeting with Maritza Davila and the MTA regarding chipping paint along Myrtle Avenue. The problem is much broader than it actually appeared, and we have to see what they will be doing about this problem.

**October 14, 2020:** The Knickerbocker Ave. Task Force met.

**October 14, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.** Annual Budget Meeting.

**October 20, 2020 at 11:00 a.m.** Met with the Bushwick Community Partnership

**October 21, 2020:** Clergy Council Meeting

#### **Introduction of Elected Officials and/or Representatives:**

- John Blasco from City Council President Corey Johnson's Office representing 37th CD
- Julio Salazar, Congresswoman Nydia Velasquez Office; Contact Information is in chat box.
- Jonathan Pomboza, Representing Kings County District Attorney Eric Gonzalez - 350 Jay Street, Brooklyn, NY, Tel. No. 718 250-2340; Cell No: 347 986-6146.
- Marcus Harris; Special Assistant to Borough President Eric Adams, Tel. No: 917 324-2680, Office 718 802-3700 call and leave message.
- Taeka Haraguchi from Comptroller Scott Stringer's Office; Tel. 917 594-2129 (email [THaraqu@comptroller.nyc.gov](mailto:THaraqu@comptroller.nyc.gov)).
- Ramon Pebenito of State Senator Julia Salazar's Office. Make an appointment to meet us at 212 Evergreen Ave. or call us at 718-573-1726.

**Representatives from Community Based Organizations:**

Nivia Butler, Children and Family Treatment Support Services, Coalition for Hispanic Family Services at 315 Wyckoff Avenue & Gates. The program offers therapeutic services for children and families in their homes and remotely. Anyone who is interested in family services, I left my number in the Q&A. (Tel.): 718 497-6060 Ext. 364. If you know of any families who would benefit from our services, please send them along.

**83rd Precinct Commanding Officer, Deputy Inspector Ronald Casazza:**

The Deputy Inspector shared that he met some Board Members already. Most of the others have not been met. He has been here for three months already; the community has been great, and I am looking forward to meeting all Board Members in the future. I can't reiterate enough how important this community is, this is your community and anything that goes on in this community you should be aware of and be a part and that is something that is very important to me. Any of your concerns and issues are also very important so I am looking forward to working with you and if I can help, I will be there for you. In my short time here, we have not seen what some of the other communities have been experiencing with the violence. Although it has been tough for these other communities, we have not seen that, and I am grateful for that and thankful for that. It is a testament to the Police Officers of the 83d Pct., and the good work that they do every day. There are some things that I have seen in my short time here, obviously some of our commercial businesses have seen an uptick in break-in's, also, cars being stolen, motorcycles being stolen, and that is also a big issue that I have seen in the community, but it is something that we are constantly working on and something that we are working to improve. I will try to do better and make the quality of life here in Bushwick better for the entire community as well. I will not take too much more of the time and I look forward to working with all of you in the future.

**5. District Manager's Report - Ms. Celeste Leon**

Good Evening. This is one of the busiest months. As you all have heard, this all happens as well as our regular business. I want to thank everyone that participated, and I want to encourage everyone and all Board Members, if you want to participate in this process, please reach me at the office.

As the weather continues to get colder, I encourage everyone to take advantage of the resources that are in the neighborhood like getting a flu shot, stocking up on PPE, as well as other essentials and being prepared for the winter. As Mr. Camacho mentioned in his report as well, we must also keep in mind that many of our neighbors, friends and family members face uncertainty with the impending end of the eviction moratorium. The need for food and support for the most vulnerable community members remains high. Thankfully, with the efforts of our local elected officials and community members, and community groups, the mutual aid continues to be a lifeline for those with the greatest need. The Community Board continues to promote information about these efforts and refer those who need help and those who would like to volunteer.

I would also like to advise that October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month as well as Domestic Violence Awareness Month and the latter half of Latinx Heritage Month. Thank you to all the advocates and for survivors who continue to need outreach. And, of course, I have included in my report all the meetings that I have attended. I won't go through them line by line, but Mr. Camacho and I attend many of the same meetings, however, I will emphasize some that everyone should know more about. If you would like a copy of my report, I will gladly send it to you via email.

On Monday, September 21, Mr. Camacho mentioned that the Pilling Street Block Association had a conference with the New York Psychotherapy Center, who had submitted an application to the State OASES, which would basically allow them to provide counseling services for alcohol and substance abuse at that location as part of the services to their clients. They already see children, however, many of those children also have adult families who live with them and they basically want it to be a one-stop shop for anyone who would need help with those types of services. To date, we have yet to hear back from them, however, the Pilling St. Block Association was very firm in their opposition. They did not feel that it was necessary on their block and we await a formal response from Pilling Street Block Assn. as well as a response from NYPCC. For more information, I encourage you to attend our Health Committee Meetings, or contact me in the office.

In general, I attend many webinar sessions that are put together by many government media outlets. I attended a few of those, specifically the ones the elected officials participate in, such as "A Post-COVID Brooklyn - What Does the Future Look Like?" which was on Wednesday, September 23, 2020.

We were engaged in Budget Consultations from September through October meeting with agencies such as DOB, HPD, EDC, NYPD, SBS (Small Business Services), NYCHA, Parks, Sanitation, Transportation, Environmental Protection, FDNY, School Construction Authority.

Mr. Camacho mentioned the clean-up event. If anyone is interested in having a clean-up event. or If there are any residents interested in organizing a clean-up event, please feel free to reach out to us and we can connect you to the resources you need and help promote the event.

We also were able to attend a Wyckoff Avenue Small Business Walkthrough. Thank you to Samuel Nemir, the office of Assemblywoman Maritza Davila, the office of Councilman Antonio Reynoso, and for everyone else who was involved in the coordination of the walk-through. I know the business owners and residents who were put and about on Wyckoff were very happy to see us and Commissioner Janell Burrus(?).

We also held our District Service Cabinet Meeting. The District Service Cabinet is an opportunity for the Board to engage with all our agency liaisons. It was very well attended. I believe we had all the agency liaisons there. Those that usually participate as well as other agencies who are not necessarily mandated but continue to be close liaisons. Just so you know, if there are any

questions, whether it is a 311 question, or in the form of being related to 311, that is the forum in which we have that conversation.

And, moving us along, I was in a virtual meeting this morning with National Grid regarding Local Law 30 and Local Law 152. These are both regarding local laws that were designed to make sure that the gas infrastructure is updated to avoid any safety issues as the infrastructure ages across the City, they have very specific timelines, and they must make sure that everyone has an opportunity to make an appointment to make sure their equipment is updated.

I will conclude the meeting portion of my report. I will share that FDNY is advising folks to change your clocks and change your batteries. We all know that the end of Daylight-Saving Time is approaching, and they will be in Bushwick on October 27, from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Knickerbocker Plaza and they will be handing out additional materials, so please save the date.

## **6. Committee Reports**

### **Parks Committee:**

Green Thumb Program: (Louisa Chan). We had a Green Thumb Presentation earlier this month on September 21st. The Coordinator from the New York City Parks Department did an overview of the program, who Green Thumb is and the types of services they support. Mr. Camacho mentioned that the Park's leagues are using both Hope Ballfield and Soccer Super Kids are using the Bushwick Playground. Otherwise, that is the only update that I have. Mr. Camacho said that only 2 parks applied for the winter: i.e., Quebradillas and one was Hope Park, and the other was Bushwick L Park.

### **Arts, Culture and Technology Committee:**

The committee met with a group that was proposing a public art installation in Maria Hernandez Park earlier this year in May. It is a wooden structure that is the head of a wolf. The name of it is "Timber Wolf". It will be an eco-friendly installation and some of the materials and there are different themes and the way that it is constructed, it is not something that people can climb on. However, they went to Parks and they went to the local businesses to put it together and some local galleries and other members in the neighborhood. One of the folks is the Clean Bushwick Initiative and is also involved in the project. Earlier in the year the committee asked for them to postpone to make sure there was time for community involvement, however, they shared that due to the time frame, that the artist and two of the partners involved in the project were going to have to go out of town and they wanted to do the project this year and they did not want to wait until it was too late. At this time there are not too many people outside and the installation will only be for a year. The committee did not have a quorum however there were no objections to the project. Moving forward. Any committee members making comments. Dustin Sonneborn added that growing plants are part of the installation and they wanted it to start growing as soon as it could. We told them that we would bring it to the full board, and they could start as soon as they wanted.

## **7. Recommendations**

1. Recommend that Arts Culture and Technology move forward with the Timber Wolf Project: Blanket Vote: All members present in favor- 1 Abstention.

2. Budget Committee Meeting: Pending recommendations to approve the prior recommendations for the Budget Requests. Motion made by Robert Camacho to take the budget as is. Seconded by Mary McClellan. All in favor: AYE. No opposition, No abstentions. Motion Moved.

**8. Old Business:** None

**9. New Business:** None

## **10. Announcements**

a) Mary McClellan: Do not forget flu shot at Woodhull Hospital and it is free.

b) Crystal from North Brooklyn Coalition: announcing legal and criminal justice advocacy and there is sexual abuse counseling. Can be reached at 718 372-4073.

c) Taeka Haraguchi: COVID Works from the Comptroller's Office; employer must pay prevailing wages, public worker projects, extra measures taken to return unclaimed wages to workers. Have outreach workers to make claims. Also, Comptroller's Office proposed free tuition at all CUNY Community Colleges with a goal of overhauling New York City's Work Force Development strategy. Offering applicants tuition free college, early college high school, apprenticeships. Pandemic has upended our economy, and displaced thousands of workers and we are moving to lessen the equality gap. Since March, the Comptroller's Office has reclaimed \$2,000,000 in unclaimed wages to more than 100 workers. Are still continuing with outreach efforts, so if you are involved in an organization and want to learn more, the email is put in the chat.

d) Hercules Gardens on 87A Cooper Street: Address these issues of noise and taking over abandoned property lot with loud music and DJ's blasting music every weekend. People driving in and driving out and people biking in and biking out with loud music at Cooper Street and Evergreen Ave. The lot is supposed to be a Green Thumb, but it appears that a group is using space for weekend parties. The Owner needs to be found. Want to know if the CB can do something about it. Mr. Camacho replied that we are going to look into it. He and Celeste will go by and find out if garden is certified or not certified. We want to find out what we can do to close it down legally. We will ask the Inspector to go with us and find out who is in charge of the situation up there. Celeste advised she will check with NYC Parks Green Thumb at this location to see if there are other organizations that have oversight, and they will let us know. This space

was not registered, and it appears they are just using the space. We will go directly to the Police Department. We have to find out who owns the lot. They could be charged with criminal trespassing. Complainant is advised to follow up and respond via email.

e) Ramon Pebenito: announces that starting on November 2nd, heating and cooling applications are being accepted, secondly; there is a State Initiative to extend apple eligibility for students and seniors; previously it was tougher for students and seniors to be income eligible. To view these new programs, check out [mybenefits.ny.gov](http://mybenefits.ny.gov).

f) Marcus Harris: Borough President's Office has distributed 300,000 masks. Call if you need any assistance with PPE, just go to [brooklyn-usa.org](http://brooklyn-usa.org). Census has wrapped up.

g) Julio Salazar: Thanks to the Community Board and the partners who teamed up with us over the last few months and the census hiring events over the summer and even as far back as January. Additionally, we just wrapped up a conversation with the EPA with regards to the Wyckoff Ave., and I will send additional information to the District Manager and the Chair. Finally, and recently, we received a number of complaints with regard to the IRS Stimulus payments from people who have not received the first round, so if you have not received that, please feel free to reach out to me directly and we have been able to assist people in making sure they get their stimulus payment. So, you can reach out to me directly. Other than that, my contact information is in the chat.

h) John Blasco: wants to say that he sent out a District Council 37 newsletter to all interested parties. There is a lot of valuable informative information in the newsletter. There are about 20 pages of resource information in the newsletter. Also, CD 37 has been getting a lot of calls regarding Immigration, DOT calls, and Housing. I can be reached in the information in the chat box.

i) Samuel Nemir: advising that early voting occurs for 9 days beginning 10/24/20 in our district.

## **12. Second Roll Call**

## **13. Adjournment**

Meeting Adjourned 8:12pm