

2015

Community Board Initiative

NYC Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO

The New York City Central Labor Council, along with 300 affiliates, has launched the Community Board Initiative. Attached you will find information on the Initiative and an outline for how to become more involved in your community through applying to your local Community Board.

For more information or questions on the Community Board Initiative,
please contact the NYC Central Labor Council at 212-604-9552 or
Info@nycclc.org





Dear Brother/Sister:

On behalf of the 1.3 million working men and women of the New York City labor movement, we sincerely thank you for all you do for our city. Now more than ever, we must stand in solidarity to continue the fight to ensure that all workers receive fair pay, benefits, and the right to have a voice in the workplace. Part of helping to secure these rights includes ensuring that workers also have a voice in their local communities. It is for this reason that we have joined with our affiliates to launch the NYC Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO Community Board Initiative (CLC CBI).

Community Boards are the most grassroots level of government, and they provide advisory recommendations on key issues to our City officials and City agencies. Through the CLC CBI, we will work together to raise the voices of everyday working people to ensure that we are building stronger communities.

As part of the CLC CBI, we will provide training to help our brothers and sisters navigate topics like the City budget, Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP), zoning and land use, and a number of other issues of importance to our members. We are committed to ensuring that important issues like high quality public education, access to high quality and affordable healthcare, affordable housing, and the creation of union jobs are framed in a way that helps working families.

Again, thank you for your commitment to your community, and for standing up to be the voice of your community.

In Solidarity,

Vincent Alvarez
President
NYC Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO

Structure of Community Boards¹

Membership– Each of the 59 Community Boards, comprised of 50 unsalaried members appointed by Borough Presidents and local district Council Members, serves as a local representative body of City government. *Board members must reside, work, or possess a specific interest in the community they represent.*

Meetings– Monthly Board meetings provide a public forum for members to address items of concern to the community, and give residents the opportunity to express their opinions. Boards also regularly conduct public hearings on the City’s budget, land use matters, and other items of concern.

Committees– Committees within Community Boards are charged with following up on the issues raised at Board meetings. Each board establishes its own structures and procedures for committees; non-Board members may apply to join them.

Boards play an important advisory role in dealing with land use and zoning matters, the City budget, municipal service delivery, and many other matters relating to their community’s welfare.

Land Use and Zoning Matters– Community Boards are consulted regarding placement of most municipal facilities in communities, and may initiate their own plans for growth and improvement. The board reviews any application for a change, or variance from zoning regulations; their position is considered in the final determinations on these applications.

City Budget– Community Boards assess the budgetary needs of their own neighborhoods, and meet with City agencies to make recommendations in the City’s budget process.

Other Community Concerns– Any problem affecting all or part of a community, from traffic to deteriorating housing, falls within the purview of the Community Board.

Limitations- While the Community Board, its District Manager, and its office staff serve as advocates and service coordinators for a community of residents, they lack authority over City agencies and officials. Nevertheless, Boards are usually successful in achieving resolution through dialogue with other government entities.

District Manager and District Office- The District Manager and Board staff are chosen by the Community Board and serve at the Board’s discretion. District Manager is a salaried position overseeing an office and a staff. The District Manager is responsible for implementing procedures to improve the delivery of City services to the district.

Monthly commitments from Community Board Members include:

- Attending one General Board Meeting (Approximately 1.5 – 3 hours)
- Attending your two Committee meetings (Approximately 1.5 hours/each)
- Attending Community Board hearings (not every month, but as projects arise)
- ** Appointments to the Community Board entail a minimum commitment of approximately five hours each month. ***The time commitment can exceed five hours a month.***

¹ http://bronxboropres.nyc.gov/communityboards/know_your_community_board.pdf

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Community Board Application Process

Appointment to a Community Board is an incredible opportunity to be active in your local neighborhood, and requires a serious time commitment. In preparation for submitting your application, your union and the NYC Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO, have prepared a list of steps that will be useful for preparing your application.

A critical component of preparing for the application is attending a General Board meeting and Committee Meeting. Attending these meetings will offer a firsthand experience of the topics and issues Community Boards deal with, and the structure of their meetings. To help process all of the information provided at the meetings and to help our unions stay up to date of the happenings we have prepared a Report Back Form. Please complete and submit the report back form within three to five days. You can find the Report Back Form attached.

The application deadline differs for each Borough. Applicants can submit their application to the local Council Member or to the Office of the Borough President. Within weeks of submitting your application you will be notified of your interview date. Appointments for the Community Board are made in April.

Checklist for Prospective Community Board Applicants

- Resident of New York City (all applicants must be NYC residents & at least 16 years of age ²)
- Attend NYC Central Labor Council Community Board Training 101
- Attend General Board Meeting and submit Report Back Form
- Attend two committee meetings and submit Report Back Form
- Attend Executive Board meeting and submit Report Back Form (optional)
- Build/update resume for Community Board application
- Draft Community Board application
- Complete final application
- Send application to your local or the NYC Central Labor Council (Fax: 212-604-9550 or email Mrosa@nycclc.org)
- Submit Application to Office of Borough President or City Council Member
 - [Bronx Deadline:](#) February 6, 2015
 - [Brooklyn Deadline:](#) January 31, 2015
 - [Manhattan Deadline:](#) January 31, 2015
 - [Queens Deadline:](#) January 22, 2015
 - Staten Island Deadline: TBD

² Beginning in 2015, individuals 16 years of age and older can apply to Community Boards.