



Chairperson, Martha Taylor

*The City of New York
Borough of Queens*

Community Board 8

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District Manager, Marie Adam-Ovide

Minutes of Community Board 8 Board Meeting held on Wednesday, April 14, 2021 via [Zoom Webinar](#).

Attendance:

Board Members Present:

Jagir Singh Bains, Heather Bennett-Idels, Robert H. Block, Carolyn Brown, Susan D. Cleary, Kenneth Cohen II, Solomon Davydov, Maria DeInnocentiis, Allen Eisenstein, Florence Fisher, Carolann Foley, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, Bhithihara-Martha Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., John Gebhard, Wendy Gennaro, Ahsan Habib, Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Tami Hirsch, Paul S. Lazauskas, Mitch Lisker, Mary Maggio, Jennifer Martin, David Mordukhaev, Rabbi Shlomo Nisanov, Alan Ong, Tamara Osherov, Hersh Parekh, Simon Pelman, Frances Peterson, Charlton Rhee, Jesse Rosenbaum, Seymour Schwartz, Deepti Sharma, Douglas Sherman, Harbachan Singh, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Jacob Weinberg and Tamika Williams-Moore.

Board Members Absent:

Dilafroz Ahmed, Edward Chung, Joshua Glikman, Steven Konigsberg, Elke Maerz, Dilip Nath, Frank Magri and Mohammad Rahman.

Others Present:

Max Weprin representing Borough President Donovan Richards, Susan Seinfeld representing Honorable Council Member Barry Grodenchik, Honorable Council Member Jim Gennaro, Ashley Nelly Johnson representing Honorable Council Member Jim Gennaro, Ashley Lin representing State Senator John Liu, Hudy Rosenberg representing Assembly Woman Nily Rozic, Scott Solomon from City Planning, Ms. Joyetta Gordon representing Transitional Services for New York (TSNY), Marie Adam-Ovide, CB8 District Manager and Jatnna Reyes, CB8 Staff Member.

Call to Order:

Chairperson Martha Taylor called this Board Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Elected Officials' Announcements:

Susan Seinfeld representing Council Member Barry Grodenchik – Councilman Grodenchik’s Office is currently working on budget items. They continue to work remotely. If anyone has any questions or concerns, please call their District Office at 718-468-0137.

Hudy Rosenberg representing Assembly Member Nily Rozic – Assemblywoman Rozic’s office along with NYC Health + Hospitals are hosting a self-swab COVID-19 testing site on April 26th from 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Those who attend will get the results within 48 hours. They will send the flyer once it’s finalized.

Ashley Lin representing State Senator John Liu – They continue to assist individual via telephone. If you have any questions/concerns, please call their office at: 718-765-6675 or email her at: Ashley@johnliusenate.com

The order of the agenda was changed by Chairperson Taylor.

Chairperson’s Report – Martha Taylor:

- Chairperson Taylor introduced our new Board Members: Ahsan Habib, Deepti Sharma and Tamika Williams-Moore. She asked them to introduce themselves to the Board.

Ahsan Habib – Mr. Habib lives in Jamaica and has two businesses on Hillside Avenue. We will learn more about him as time goes by.

Deepti Sharma – Ms. Sharma lives near Queens College. She is the founder of two food companies. One is Food to Eat. They do corporate catering for immigrant women minority on restaurants. Last year they focused on food and security. They fed over 150,000 meals. They continue to do so. The second company is a food software company. She is excited to be a part of this Board and looks forward to working with everyone.

Tamika Williams-Moore – Ms. Williams-Moore is the President of the Pomonok Houses. She also sits on the DYCD Board as well as.

- She informed every one of the passing of Deputy Inspector Denis Mullaney. He wasn’t here very long and because of the pandemic few of us got to meet him. He will be missed. She asked for a moment of silence in his memory.
- Congratulations to Board Member Susan Cleary who has been re-appointed to the Queens Solid Waste Advisory Committee by the Borough President Richards.
- Congratulations to Board Member Kevin Forrestal who will representing Community Board 8 at DEP’s Sustainable Rate Structure Analysis Advisory Committee

Chairperson Taylor mentioned the presence of Honorable Councilman Jim Gennaro. He was asked to address the Board.

Honorable Council Member Jim Gennaro

- Honorable Councilman Gennaro welcomed our new Board Members. He acknowledged the good work Deepti Sharma has done in the community as well as Ms. Tamika Williams-Moore who is the head of the resident’s association at Pomonok and Mr. Habib who is a businessman on Hillside Avenue. He was really happy to work with the Borough President on these appointments. He also mentioned that he did not participate on the re-appointment of his wife Wendy Gennaro as he is prohibited from doing so. She was re-appointed solely by the Borough President. He thanked all Board Members for all the work they do for our community. He introduced Ms. Johnson as one of his newest additions. She will be attending our meeting to represent him in the future.

Salute to the Flag

Chairperson Taylor led the salute to the flag.

Chairperson Taylor announced that all Board Members observing Ramadan that cannot make it to the meeting will receive an excused absence for Religious Observation.

Approval of Minutes:

Mitch Lisker made a motion to approve the minutes of March 10, 2021, seconded by Kevin Forrestal.

Count in favor: **41** Opposed: **0** Abstained: **0**

Chairperson Taylor called on Kevin Forrestal, Chair of the Community Board 8 Nominating Committee to begin the Nominations for Officers.

Kevin Forrestal – Mr. Forrestal presented the Executive Board slate of nominations for officers of the board. In accordance with the By-Laws of CB8, the meeting in April is a nomination meeting. The procedure is that

in April we nominate candidates for the various officers that are available. Then at the May meeting, there is a vote. In accordance with the By-Laws, I now open the floor to nominations.

Chairperson – Martha Taylor

Nominated by Marc Haken, seconded by Kevin Forrestal.

1st Vice Chair – Michael Hannibal

Nominated by Mary Maggio, seconded by Marc Haken.

2nd Vice Chair – Seymour Schwartz

Nominated by Mary Maggio, seconded by Carolyn Brown.

3rd Vice Chair – Mary Maggio

Nominated by Marc A. Haken, seconded by Steven Konigsberg.

Treasurer – Harbachan Singh

Nominated by Mary Maggio, seconded by Michael Hannibal.

Secretary – Carolyn Baker-Brown

Nominated by Harbachan Singh, seconded by Seymour Schwartz.

Kevin Forrestal closed nominations for all categories. Next month will be the vote for these candidates.

Guest Speaker:

Dr. Joyetta Gordon – Transitional Services for New York (TSINY) – Ms. Gordon gave a presentation on Mental Health Services followed by Q & A. Here is a brief summary of the presentation:

- Transitional Services for New York is a Mental Health organization. They are located in Queens. They have other locations: Braddock, Park Avenue and Jamaica. They also have a bookstore in Bayside.
- The organization has been around since 1975. They provide services for a dimension of people with serious mental illness. They have residential programs; they have a clinic where they have people who have lived with a serious mental illness until they are able to move on to work in the community.
- She spoke about their mobile outreach program. TSINY’s Mobile Outreach Program provides case management, services linkages, and referrals for essential services to adults with mental illness. Recipients are trained to identify and manage their symptoms and initial contact with appropriate treatment and self-help services. Mobile outreach provides a timely intervention for adults who are first entering behavioral health treatment or have become disengaged from treatment and other essential services to support them in the community.
- The program aims to minimize inpatient care and emergency room usage by strengthening a person’s community-based support. They include families and friends when desired. The program employs a rapid response to a referral where a case manager completing an initial assessment of needs via telehealth. Virtual counseling and support is then delivered on a weekly basis.
- They also have an Adult Protective Services (APS) program for residents who have serious mental illness.
- Since this is a community outreach program, they are on afterhours. They are open from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Mondays. From Tuesdays through Fridays, they are open until 7:00 p.m. On Saturdays, they are open from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Since the pandemic started, they have been seeing patients remotely via (telephone, zoom, etc.).

Chairperson Taylor opened the floor for questions from the Board Members.

Chairperson Taylor – *[to Ms. Gordon]* – Is the bookstore open to the public?

Answer: *[Ms. Gordon]* – Yes, it is. It is located on Bayside. My colleague Ave McCracken will send information via email for distribution to the Board Members.

Ave McCracken – The bookstore is temporarily closed. We should be re-opening it again soon. She will email us some information.

Marc Haken – Other than the housing sites within the Cunningham apartments in CB8. How many other housing sites does TSINY have in CB8?

Answer: [Ms. Gordon] – We have housing pretty much throughout all Queens. We have over 300 apartments. We have some single-side buildings. We have a building in Jamaica. We also have a few buildings on the grounds of Creedmoor.

You didn't answer my question. How many sites are there in CB8?

Answer: [Ms. McCracken] – I can send you that information. We are in every zip code in Queens. We have a breakdown. I will send that over.

Susan Cleary – Where are you located? How does one get in touch with you?

Answer: [Ms. Gordon] – We are located in Jamaica at 90-27 Sutphin Boulevard on the 5th Floor.

Wendy Gennaro – I have known TSINY for a long time. They are a great organization and their services and support are really wonderful and very contributive to our community.

Florence Fisher – Do you take donations of books?

Answer: [Ms. McCracken] – We do. They have to be gently used. We are not taking donations right now, but this should resume soon probably by the summer.

Chairperson Taylor thanked Ms. Gordon for her presentation.

Carolann Foley thanked everyone for their thoughts for the men and women at the 107th Precinct during this rough time. Things are starting to come back as everybody knew during the funeral. They will be having a memorial service for the Deputy Inspector within the next two weeks. Everybody will be notified by email. It will be candlelight vigil. It will be just an actual prayer. She encouraged everyone to attend.

District Manager's Report – April 2021

NYPD

They discussed the pop-up event that took place a few weeks ago at the Kohl's parking lot and Cunningham Park. The NYPD did respond and had the vehicles disperse. They also met with the sheriff for assistance. We learned today from Sergeant Burke that speed bumps have been installed in Kohl's Parking lot.

Department of Parks and Recreation

The Cunningham Park's personnel are there for maintenance and not enforcement. When the event occurred, they contacted Park Enforcement Patrol (PEP). By the time they arrived the officers from the 107th Precinct had already addressed the issue. DPR has already installed speed bumps as a deterrence.

There is an issue with the Captain Tilly Park's aerator system which is not working. They put in a repair request. Additionally, many donations and revenue that are generated by Cunningham Park unfortunately do not remain in the park. Cunningham is getting a lot of use but not enough resources. If Cunningham Park had an administrator, it would be able to keep some of the revenue that it generated.

NYC Emergency Management

They are giving presentations about preparedness for flood events. They teach residents what items they should have in their go bags if they must leave their home etc.

Sanitation

Night Plow schedule has ended. Due to the pandemic, they must continue to keep social distancing. To this end, the staff come in at a staggered schedule. They can no longer have row call in the morning with 70 employees. They are on a staggered schedule. As a result, the recycling collection is still being done on the 4 p.m. to midnight shift.

They continue to ask that all refuse be put out for collection by 4 p.m. on the night before to avoid missed collections.

The regular Sanitation Chief Roger Leahy is away due to an injury. The superintendent made several requests to the stand-in Chief Salavino for assistance (additional staff) to address Grand Central Parkway service road to no avail.

Queens Public Library

The Queens Public Library continues to administer “To-Go” sites. You can either reserve your books online or call 718-990-0714/0728. They encourage residents to go to their website to learn about virtual programming.

NYSDOT

They started on Hillside Avenue and the Van Wyck Expressway and sent us information that we shared in our Newsletter. You can sign up for our Newsletter by contacting our office or you can read it on our website.

NYC Commission on Human Rights

The agency continues to have by-stander intervention training. They are now in multiple languages. They’re held for an hour to one hour and a half.

NYS Comptroller

Their website has many reports on the state of the City and its budget. They offer virtual Unclaimed Funds Presentations. They are available to come to the CB8 meeting if they are invited.

NYC Planning

The Department of City Planning has several Text Amendments that Community Boards will have to review. This information was included in our April Newsletter.

FDNY

The Fire Department will be going door to door to inoculate bed bound residents. If you know of anyone needing a COVID vaccine, please contact us with their name and information so we can have them reach out to the resident.

Happy Birthday to Board Members: Dilafroz Ahmed, Carolyn Brown and David Mordukaev



Marie Adam-Ovide

City Planning Representative – Scott Solomon

- There are several text amendments coming to the Community Board for review. Text amendments are always non-ULURP. They still get referred to the Community Board for 60 days. Four of them have ranged applicability for CB8. The first one is zoning for accessibility. This is an application, co-applicant with MTA and DCP. For CB8, the way it is treated, there are certain bonuses for floor areas for certain districts, except that it does not apply to CB8. It is only for certain transit stations that are R9/R10 districts. This is only seen in Western Queens and Manhattan. It is a re-equipment for developers that within R5 and above districts.
- On May 3rd, a Citywide special permit for hotels is being proposed. More information can be found at: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/planning/plans/citywide-hotel/citywide-hotel-overview.page>.
- There will also be an “Open Streets Text Amendment” and a “Health and Fitness Text Amendment”. As materials become available for these amendments, he will forward them to Marie. If you have any questions, you can contact him at ssolomon@planning.nyc.gov.

Chairperson Taylor acknowledged the presence of U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer and invited him to address the Board.

U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer – Senator Schumer thanked DM Adam-Ovide for the great service she does for our community. He knows our Community Board and he knows she does a great job. He rides his bike through our District all the time. This is a great district. He thanked all Board Members for their service to our Board. He is the first majority leader for New York. On January 6th, Rafael Warnock, the African American and Jon Ossoff, the first Jewish person to become Senator in Georgia. He then, became majority leader, his long-life dream. He then realized the tremendous responsibility on his shoulder.

He spoke about an ARP that passed the Senate and has tremendous benefits for everyone. First the checks, he promised people that if he became majority leader, every person below 75,000 and 150,000 will get the checks. Second the vaccines, they have enough vaccines that New York will have enough to vaccinate everybody. In about two weeks, 16 years old will have the opportunity to get vaccinated. No appointments, no questions asked. He asked that if any centers for vaccination are needed in Queens to let him know. It is expected that by June 1st, everyone in New York City will be vaccinated and by July 1st we should be able to go back to normal.

They got money for New York State and New York City. If any of the groups in our community that depend on City & State money should be able to receive the funds in needed. The City has \$6B and the State has \$23B. They have money to keep the subways running, there will be no cutbacks. There will be no layoffs of City/State workers. They just got money for the restaurants. Every restaurant is now entitled to a 6-month grant. If you need help, he asked that they could get the money. Small businesses can benefit as well. If churches, synagogues, mosques, and temples can also benefit about this. He asked that everyone could spread the word. Money is available for people to be prevented from being evicted from their homes. They got money for the museums, movie theaters. There are direct payments for unemployment insurance. Pensions have been made fully funded. He wants to make sure everyone in our Community Board benefits from these funds. Schools will also open fully. There is money available for private and religious schools as well. They are also trying to get rid of student debt. He understand that it is a burden. They are working on this. He will gather information for us. He will send a sheet with contact information of all the different programs available for our Community Board.

He also mentioned that tonight they put up the Anti-Asian American violence bill and it looks like it will pass next week.

Chairperson Taylor opened the floor for questions from the Board Members.

Chairperson Taylor – We have one question from the Principal of Thomas Edison High School. He is trying to open a junior ROTC program at Thomas Edison H.S. and they need funds. He wants to know what funding sources are available for them.

Answer: [Senator Schumer] – There may be some funding available for him. He can reach my office and speak to Steve Barton who will assist him. He will send his contact information via email.

Marc Haken – I was wondering if there are funds available to provide additional dollar for technology and career high schools who are of desperate need of funding.

Answer: [Senator Schumer] – There may be some funding available in the next bill that is about to be passed. Not this one but the next one we are working on. Call Steve Barton when this bill passes, and he will be able to assist you.

Solomon Davydov – You mentioned about the student loan forgiveness. How does one apply and/or how can I get more information about this?

Answer: [Senator Schumer] – We haven't got Biden to do it yet. We don't need legislation for it. We just need President Biden to forgive the loans. They are trying to put some pressure on this to get somewhere with this. I will get Marie and Martha the information so that it can be shared with the full Board.

Simon Pelman – Taxes, is there any chance of getting that through Congress this year.

Answer: [Senator Schumer] – Yes, we are going to take the cap off, the State and local deductibility. This was aimed as a dagger to the heart of New York. Too many New Yorkers have to pay it, it's hurting our City. I will try everything I can to get this repealed with great success.

Deepti Sharma – I work in the restaurant industry for over 10 years. What are the differences between the PPP and this relief bill?

Answer: [Senator Schumer] – This relief bill is deeper and better. It is a six-month grant and it can be used for just about anything. Call Steve Barton and he will show you how to do it. It will help you; it is very good.

Wendy Gennaro – QCP is holding a seminar next Wednesday on their business meeting. They will discuss the basics on the restaurant relief bill.

Mitch Lisker – Regarding private schools and synagogues. Are there any pre-requisites for them to apply for the funding?

Answer: [Senator Schumer] – No. There is not. I wanted to make sure all religious institutions are included. Call Steve Barton if you need more information about this.

Chairperson Taylor thanked Senator Schumer for being here tonight and speaking to us. She invited to come anytime.

Borough President’s Representative – Max Weprin

- He congratulated all three new Board Members. He is looking forward to working with them all. He wished a Happy Ramadan for all those observing.
- There will be a Job Recruitment Fair event tomorrow, April 15th at 2:00 p.m. More information is available on their website.
- There will be a fire safety and education event on Wednesday, April 21st at 6:00 p.m. In partnership with the FDNY. If you would like to RSVP, please visit: www.queensbp.org.
- They are having a virtual anti-Asian hate crime and bias town hall on Tuesday, April 20th at 6:30 p.m. On Monday, April 19th, they will be having a swearing-in and orientation ceremony for the new Board Members. It will be live streamed.
- On May 15th at 12:00 p.m., they will be hosting a Bicycle Jamboree for children ages 5 to 12 years old. The first 100 RSVPs will receive a free bicycle helmet. Children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian and must bring a bicycle with them. You can RSVP for this event at www.queensbp.org/rsvp. If anyone has any questions or concerns, he can be reached at: mweprin@queensbp.org.

Committee Reports:

Executive Committee Report – Kevin Forrestal, Committee Member – A letter was drafted on the change to the proposal of the Four Borough Jail to be sent to the Mayor. A copy of the drafted letter was forwarded to all the members via email prior to the meeting. Mr. Forrestal read the letter to the full Board.

Marc Haken made a motion to approve the letter as presented seconded by Mitch Lisker.

A roll call vote was taken.

Count in favor: 40 Opposed: 1 Abstained: 0

Members who voted in favor: Jagir Singh Bains, Heather Bennett-Idels, Carolyn Brown, Susan D. Cleary, Kenneth Cohen II, Solomon Davydov, Maria DeInnocentiis, Allen Eisenstein, Florence Fisher, Carolann Foley, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., John Gebhard, Wendy Gennaro, Ahsan Habib, Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Tami Hirsch, Paul S. Lazauskas, Mitch Lisker, Mary Maggio, Jennifer Martin, David Mordukhaev, Rabbi Shlomo Nisanov, Alan Ong, Tamara Osherov, Simon Pelman, Frances Peterson, Charlton Rhee, Jesse Rosenbaum, Seymour Schwartz, Deepti Sharma, Douglas Sherman, Harbachan Singh, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Jacob Weinberg and Tamika Williams-Moore.

Members who voted against: Hersh Parekh.

Committee Reports:

Health Minute with Dr. Penny Stern, Health Committee Chair:

- Dr. Stern spoke about the paused on the Johnson & Johnson (J&J) vaccine. As of April 12th, about 7 million doses of J&J have been administered in the United States. The CDC and the FDA are now reviewing data because of 6 reported cases of a rare and severe type of blood clot in individuals who received the vaccine.
- This type of blood clot is called a Cerebral Venous Sinus Thrombosis (CVST). It was seen in combination with also having low blood platelets also known as thrombocytopenia. All six cases occurred among women between the ages of 18 and 48. The symptoms occurred between 6 and 13 days after receiving the vaccine.
- Because the treatment of this specific type of blood clot is different than treatment that might typically be administered for blood clots, there are alternative treatments that need to be given and the CDC and the FDA are going to review the analysis of these cases as it investigates them and until then, the vaccine may not be administered. This is only being done out of an abundance of caution.
- They want everyone in healthcare to be able to prepare to recognize these cases and manage them if they occur. They are extremely rare, and everybody should understand that. They still think that vaccinating over COVID-19 is a top priority. She is sure that everybody in government would agree with that.
- Anyone who has been vaccinated with the J&J vaccine and develop any kind of symptom, you should contact your healthcare provider. It is kind of strange that this is only happening among women and they are looking into this.
- She hopes this does not deter anybody who has not been vaccinated to get the COVID-19 vaccine. There are no reported problems with either the Pfizer or the Moderna vaccine. If you get the vaccine and have some kind of response, that is a sign that your immune system is actually doing something. It is not necessarily a bad thing to have a response. An immune system revvs itself up which is why many people felt something after they got the second shot which is the booster shot. The J&J does not have a booster. It is a one-shot deal.

Dr. Stern opened the floor for questions from the Board Members.

Marc Haken – Within the last two months, almost every day we see incidents with people who have been incarcerated for murder and serious crimes being released. They go out and stab people and kill them. Your thoughts on this.

Answer: *[Dr. Stern]* – This has been an ongoing problem. I think that most people are aware of the fact that there is an enormous population of people who need mental health care for a variety of reasons are not receiving it or have lost the care. It is a very complex problem and I certainly don't want to minimize it. I don't have an answer except that we need to do a number of things in terms of destigmatizing mental illness. People who have high blood pressure, aren't afraid to tell people that they have that condition. Mental illness is still an incredibly stigmatize situation. Many people hide it and don't get the proper care. There are an enormous number of programs that try to work with communities and people to make them understand that getting care is not a sign of weakness but is a sign of strength. I am not sure the prison system is the best system to evaluate people on what the risk is for committing a crime when they are released. She bets that many people have an underlying mental illness that is not being taken care of. Most people with mental illness are not violent. Violence is never good.

Adjournment

Carolann Foley made a motion to adjourn this meeting at 8:56 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Jatnna Reyes, CB8 staff
April 23, 2021*