



The City of New York
Borough of Queens

Community Board 8

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Chairperson, Martha Taylor

District Manager, Marie Adam-Ovide

Minutes of Community Board 8 Board Meeting held on Wednesday, April 10, 2019 at the Hillcrest Jewish Center, 183-02 Union Turnpike in Flushing, New York.

Attendance:

Board Members Present:

Dilafroz Ahmed, Jagir Singh Bains, Carolyn Baker-Brown, Robert H. Block, Edward Chung, Susan D. Cleary, Allen Eisenstein, Florence Fisher, Carolann Foley, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., John Gebhard, Joshua Glikman, Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Tami Hirsch, Fakrul “Delwar” Islam, Steven Konigsberg, Paul S. Lazauskas, Elke Maerz, Mary Maggio, Jennifer Martin, Dilip Nath, Tamara Osherov, Frances Peterson, Wendy Phaff, Mohammad Rahman, Charlton Rhee, Jesse Rosenbaum, Seymour Schwartz, Harbachan Singh, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Jacob Weinberg, Stanley Weinblatt and Albert Willingham.

Board Members Absent:

Dr. Allen J. Bennett, Kenneth Cohen II, Maria DeInnocentiis, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Mitch Lisker, Frank Magri, Rabbi Shlomo Nisanov, Simon Pelman, Douglas Sherman and Rachele Van Arsdale.

Others Present:

Susie Tanenbaum representing Borough President Melinda Katz, Davinder Singh representing Council Member Barry Grodenchik, Henry Yam representing Council Member Rory Lancman, Pierre Millien representing State Senator Leroy Comrie, Muhammad Rahman representing Assembly Member David Weprin, Honorable Assembly Member Daniel Rosenthal, Daniel Blech representing Assembly Member Daniel Rosenthal, Hudy Rosenberg representing Assembly Member Nily Rozic, Marie Adam-Ovide, CB8 District Manager and Jatna Reyes, CB8 Staff Member.

Call to Order:

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

Public Participation:

John Amato – Mr. Amato thanked the Parks Department for the good work they do and submitted complaints for several dead trees.

James Gallagher, Jr. – Mr. Gallagher announced a number of events that are going on in the district.

Marc A. Haken – Mr. Haken distributed the list of spring/summer events that Friends of Cunningham Park are sponsoring this year.

Davinder Singh – Mr. Singh announced a number of events that will be sponsored by Honorable Barry Grodenchik.

[Chairperson Martha Taylor welcomed Assembly Member Daniel Rosenthal and invited him to say a few words.](#)

Assembly Member Daniel Rosenthal – Assembly Member Rosenthal stated that he came back from Albany today. They just wrapped up his second budget season. This is the first year that the State Senate, the State Assembly and the Governor were all in the same party. People were expecting a lot of big changes this year. They were disappointed by some of the progress. He explained that this year, the State faced a really large budget deficit. A lot of the money that was coming in for revenue, didn't come in as expected. A lot of folks were disappointed by some of the final numbers. He voted no on the part of the budget which included the increase for foundation aid for schools that everyone had campaigned for and didn't come through. They also have congestion pricing on this year's budget which he knows is a controversial issue. While he doesn't oppose congestion pricing personally, he didn't feel there was a lot of reassurances by the way the plans were drawn out. It would give a lot of power to a committee that they had very little oversight over it. They didn't know how much they were going to toll, if they were going to do on/off peak hours. It was very hard to get solid answers from the MTA. For this reason, he voted no on this as well. The Budget is over nine (9) different bills. They started voting at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday and finished at 7:45 a.m. on Monday. On Sunday, April 14th, there will be an E-waste Recycling event in front of the Young Israel of Kew Gardens Hills [150th Street between Jewel Avenue and 70th Road] from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. This event is done every April for residents of our District to be able to recycle electronics. This is being done in conjunction with Council Member Rory Lancman and the Lower East Side Ecology Center.

Salute to the Flag

Chairperson Martha Taylor led the salute to the flag.

Approval of Minutes:

Carolann Foley made a motion to approve the minutes of March 13, 2019, seconded by Mary Maggio.

Count in favor: 40 Opposed: 0 Abstained: 0

[Chairperson Martha Taylor called on Mary Maggio, the Chair of the Community Board 8 Nominating Committee to begin the Nominations for Offices.](#)

Mary Maggio – Ms. Maggio presented the Executive board slate of nominations for officers of the board.

Chairperson – Martha Taylor

Nominated by Marc A. Haken, seconded by Harbachan Singh.

Tammy Osherov: How do we do the “No” vote?

Marc A. Haken: We are not voting now, that is in May.

Mary Maggio: This is nominations only.

1st Vice Chair – Stanley Weinblatt

Nominated by Martha Taylor, seconded by Seymour Schwartz.

2nd Vice Chair – Seymour Schwartz

Nominated by Allen Eisenstein, seconded by Stanley Weinblatt.

[During the nominations Chairperson Martha Taylor mentioned that it has come to her attention that during the meeting there is a lot of cross conversations. She stated that if someone is in a desperate need to speak to anybody they can go to the back and do so. No cross conversations will be allowed during the meeting out of respect. This is one meeting only.](#)

3rd Vice Chair – Michael Hannibal

Nominated by Carolyn Baker-Brown, seconded by Carolann Foley.

Treasurer – Harbachan Singh

Nominated by Kevin Forrestal, seconded by Dilafroz Ahmed.

Secretary – Carolyn Baker-Brown

Nominated by Michael Hannibal, seconded by Jagir Singh Bains.

Mary Maggio closed nominations for all categories. Next month will be the vote for these candidates.

Chairperson Martha Taylor introduced Guest Speaker Jahnavi Aluri, Program Manager of the Jamaica Center Business Improvement District (BID).

Guest Speaker:

Jahnavi Aluri – Ms. Aluri gave a presentation on the Downtown Jamaica BID. She spoke about the Avenue NYC program. This program is a competitive grant program that funds and builds the capacity of community-based organizations operating in low to moderate income neighborhoods to execute commercial revitalization initiatives.

Ms. Aluri opened the floor for questions from the Board Members.

Marc A. Haken (MAH) – Mr. Haken mentioned that Ms. Aluri stated that the BID went onto Hillside Avenue on the north side which is CB8.

Answer: *[Ms. Aluri]* – Yes.

MAH – He stated that between 161st Street at 169th Street the entire community there is the Bangladesh community (having restaurants, food stores, etc.). On 169th Street south, there were about three stores north of Hillside Avenue. He wanted to know if they can assist them also since they are not exactly on Hillside Avenue.

Answer: *[Ms. Aluri]* – They are hoping to help the community at large. If they are not exactly within this boundary, maybe there are not [offered] assistance. I am sure they will also benefit from all of this.

MAH – He asked about this because somewhere down the line there will be some money coming in for beautification etc. He just wanted to know if these stores will be eligible to use these funds. Will they be included in the Jamaica BID?

Answer: *[Ms. Aluri]* – Ms. Aluri stated that the BID only supports business on Jamaica Avenue between Sutphin Boulevard and 169th Street.

MAH – But not Hillside Avenue?

Answer: *[Ms. Aluri]* – No. This is from the Avenue NYC grant. This is a different funding stream which is through the NYC Small Business Services and that’s why the consumer data is much larger.

Chairperson Taylor – She asked if this funding stream will benefit the stores that Mr. Haken mentioned.

Answer: *[Ms. Aluri]* – Yes, if they are on the corner. They do get the first ones that are on the map. If they are not, they will benefit from more people coming into the area.

Dilip Nath – Mr. Nath stated that what Ms. Aluri means is that although the stores are not directly benefited but indirectly they would benefit because there will be more people attracted to the area and by part everybody would benefit.

DM Adam-Ovide – DM Adam-Ovide stated that she understands that this is only for stores on Hillside Avenue but then we think of zoning, about 100 ft. or so, it can even be 150 ft. going north is actually part of that commercial overlay. She thinks it makes sense to include those stores. She knows that Council Member Lancman gave funding for extra pick-ups on garbage but she still thinks that there is more that needs to be done. Maybe working with the businesses to get them more involved in helping sanitation as well so that everything is cleaner and more attractive. People is not going to come if it is not clean.

MAH – Mr. Haken asked about the partners that the Jamaica BID has partnership with.
[Ms. Aluri] – They are partnered with the Association of Women Construction Workers of America, Inc. (AWCWA) and the Jamaica 165th Street Mall Improvement Association. Some of the community partners are: The Greater Jamaica, JCAL and A Better Jamaica, etc.

Chairperson Martha Taylor thanked Ms. Aluri for her presentation.

Chairperson’s Report – Martha Taylor:

- Chairperson Taylor announced that we have two new CB8 Members from Briarwood: Ms. Wendy Phaff and Mr. Mohammad Rahman. Welcome aboard!
- She announced that Board Member Monica Corbett is no longer on the Board. She thanked her for her eight years of service and wished her well.
- She informed everyone that we learned that the Department of City Planning certified the ULURP for siting a jail in Kew Gardens was certified on March 25, 2019. That location is in CB9; however, it is very close to private residences in Briarwood. The Executive Committee discussed the matter and came to a consensus that our Board should have a say. We sent a letter to City Planning requesting that CB8 take part in the review process.
- Best wishes to Board Member Bright Limm who is unable to attend this meeting this evening due to a medical procedure. They wish him the best.
- She also announced that it was a consensus of the Executive Committee that we create an Ad Hoc Committee for Census 2020.
- She also welcomed former Council Member Jim Gennaro.

District Manager’s Report, April 2019

HRA – The agency has a new initiative named “Skip the Trip” whereby applicants are encouraged to download the HRA app. They can now recertify their SNAP benefits through the App; however, they must continue to apply for the first time in person.

DDC – There are now two projects in CB8:

- **QED1047** is nearing completion. There will be one more nightly water shutdown scheduled. A meeting was held last week to make a determination on what date. We are waiting for a date certain; which will be after the holidays.
- **HW0100FJM** – This project includes locations in the Bronx and Queens. The Select Bus Service project for Main Street started on/around March 21, 2019 in CB7. DDC will be in CB8 at Reeves Avenue soon (date TBA). They plan to work Monday – Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

DFTA – The agency announced that a Newcomers to Medicare Orientation is scheduled for April 23rd from 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. at 2 Lafayette Street in Manhattan. Our DFTA representative stated that we can request a speaker for our new retirees on Medicare in Queens.

He also mentioned that Access-a-Ride has a new app for scheduling trips. He did use this app and was quite pleased with it. The Access-a-Ride navigation system will be changed – the current system uses bus routes and is inefficient. Access-a-Ride is planning to expand its use of taxis as well. We will have more information about this in the future.

DOT - The agency started refurbishing street markings and should get to our streets soon. The representative informed us that 186th Street between 73rd Avenue and 75th Avenue will have a trench restoration. The project is in the preliminary design stage and has been funded. It is tentatively scheduled for FY2021.

QPL – Queens Public Library wanted the residents to know that they have improved their website [www.queenslibrary.org] and invited us to peruse it. They are also changing their slogan from “Enrich your lives” to “We speak your language!” We are, after all, in the most diverse county in the US.

FDNY – Our CB8 stats were not available. The representative encouraged residents to make sure that they have working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. It only takes a few minutes for everything in your home to go up in flames.

DEP – We had 662 DEP complaints for the month of March. The top five categories from highest to lowest are as follow: noise, leaks, water main break, running hydrant and sewer back-up.

Parks – Great news! The comfort station at Cunningham Park is now working and has hot water. “*It’s My Park Day*” event will be on May 18th. The Redwood Playground is still under construction. Parks is working on getting the shade structure for the dog run. The funding was provided by Councilman Rory Lancman.

There will be several movies at Cunningham Park this spring and summer. The first two will be on May 23rd and May 30th. The Philharmonic Orchestra will return on June 13th for a concert at 8 p.m. [Please see the list of events – courtesy of Friends of Cunningham Park].

DSNY – Our Superintendent wanted to make us aware that there are many drop offs of refuse on Clover Hill Road adjacent to the construction site [*former Holliswood Hospital campus*]. He has brought this issue to the attention of the contractor who has not done any clean-up.

Chometz Burning Stations and Special Passover collection. Everything has been arranged to have the Special Passover pick-up and burning stations. Only three of the locations we had last year agreed to have it this year. As a result, a *new* location has been added in front of the Young Israel of Holliswood on Francis Lewis Boulevard. We thank all the agencies for their work and the synagogues for their participation in ensuring a safe holiday season.

Community Board 8’s Health Fair will be on Friday, June 28, 2019 at Cunningham Park from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Please contact our office if you would like to participate as a vendor.

Happy Birthday to Carolyn Baker-Brown and Dilafroz Ahmed who are celebrating their birthdays this month!



Marie Adam-Ovide

Chairperson Martha Taylor informed all Board Members that included in their packet was a letter regarding a group picture of all Board Members that will be taken during the May 8, 2019 Board Meeting. They will also receive a polo shirt. In the letter is a form to be filled out for their sizes. She asked that everyone fill it out and return it to DM Adam-Ovide.

Kevin Forrestal asked Chairperson Martha Taylor if he could make a brief report on the Census 2020 by the end of the meeting. She agreed.

DM Adam-Ovide – DM Adam-Ovide stated that we do not have a burning station at the Torah Center this year because when we reached out to them, they opted out from participating this year. The Board is working to have another location near Hillcrest next year.

Borough President’s Representative – Susan Tanenbaum

- Ms. Tanenbaum informed us that on Tuesday, April 2nd, Borough President Katz convened her monthly meeting of her Queens Complete Count Committee (QCCM). They divided for the first time into working sub-committees by geographical area. She informed us that Community Board 8 is definitely the most represented district at this point on the QCCM. It is also the most active committee today. Board Members Michael Hannibal, Dr. Penny Stern, Fakrul “Delwar” Islam, Kevin Forrestal and Carolyn Baker-Brown are on the committee. From the community they have Sherry Reisner from the Utopia Estates Homeowners Civic Association. She mentioned that Borough President Katz asked that members of the committee report to their organization on the progress of the Census.
- On Wednesday, May 1, 2019, Borough President Katz’s Queens Complete Count Committee and the United States Census Bureau will host a Job Fair for the 2020 Census. It will be held at the Helen Marshal Cultural Center at Borough Hall from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. It is a great opportunity to assist with the 2020 Census count. It is also a great chance to speak to a Census representative if you any questions. There will be a Public Hearing that same night starting at 6:00 p.m., the Governor’s Office is coming with its Complete Count Commission. This is an opportunity for anyone to deliver testimony or raise questions on the 2020 Census. Everyone was encouraged to attend!
- A Hate Crimes Forum will be held on Wednesday, April 17, 2019 from 5:45 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at The Helen Marshall Cultural Center. This will be the third time the Borough President and Queens District Attorney Richard Brown partner together to have this event. As we all know, there has been an increase in hate crimes citywide. This is an opportunity to hear from Deputy Inspector Marc C. Molinari who is the Commanding Office of the NYPD Hate Crimes Task Force. Keynote address will be delivered by Moises Kaufman. He is the creator of the Laramie project which is one of the most performed plays in America. It is a theatrical exploration of the events surrounding the 1998 murder of Matthew Shepard. Also, the murder of James Byrd who was brutally murdered the same year. This event is also being organized with the help of the Borough President’s General Assembly which is also being well represented from members of our Board: Harbachan Singh, Carolyn Baker-Brown and Jagir Singh Bains.
- She reiterated what Chairperson Martha Taylor mentioned earlier about having two new Board Members in our Board. She welcomed them as well. Borough President Katz appointed a total of 345 (borough wide) Board Members, 77 are new. (First time board members).
- On Tuesday, April 30th at 5:00 p.m. at the Helen Marshall Cultural Center there will be an installation and orientation for Board Members who were just appointed and re-appointed. She hopes to see those who were re-appointed at this event.
- She wished everyone who is celebrating holidays this month a Happy Vaisakhi, Happy Easter, Happy Passover and Happy Earth Day.

Committee Reports:

Parks Committee – Bhithara Martha Fulton, Committee Chair

- **Renovation of Captain Tilly Park's comfort station** – Ms. Fulton stated that a meeting was held on March 4, 2019. The purpose of the meeting was to review the plans to renovate the comfort station at Captain Tilly Park. She was told by former Queens Commissioner Dorothy Lewandowski that she was willing to renovate all comfort stations in our District. A presentation was made and the plans were approved. The most significant thing that will be done during the renovation is: moving the utility door to the front of the comfort station. This means that equipment can get in and out easily without having to go through the back of the building. There will also be two large windows with security features, new utility lines, new water lines etc. Heating will be changed to electric. Sooner or later it will be connected to a solar grid. A new pump to help aerate the pond water itself, a new roofing membrane. The comfort station and water fountain will be ADA compliant. A letter in support of the plans was sent. The Power Point presentation is available at the office upon request.

Queens Complete Count Committee (QCCC) – Kevin Forrestal

- **Census 2020** – Mr. Forrestal stated in the Board Member packet there was a fact sheet on the QCCC's topic: "The Changing Demographics of Queens and what's at Stake in the 2020 Census." We have people who are coming into the Borough and others who leave for the rest of the country. They are replaced through net migration from other parts of the world. Queens remains vibrant through this demographic change. They stressed the importance of self-response. There will be an identification number given. The hope is to get everyone to respond by computer using the identification number to get everyone counted. Census staff won't have to follow-up in person which takes more time. He explained that the Census defines who we are. To be identified as part of this country. He encouraged everyone to fill out the form once received. A meeting will be held on April 25th to discuss the next steps to succeed in this process and make sure everyone is counted. He asked everyone to read the fact sheet and get informed. There will be oral arguments in April at the Supreme Court and hopefully a decision in June regarding the question in the Jury Duty questionnaire - "Are you a U.S. Citizen?" Many outreach groups feel that if this question is on the U.S. Census, they cannot go out and ask people to participate. This is a very crucial issue. If it does get on the ballot they will try to overcome that activity. He will keep us posted.

Board Member Susan Cleary informed everyone that the T-Building is on the National Historical Register since January 31, 2019.

Adjournment

Carolann Foley made a motion to adjourn this meeting at 8:30 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Jatna Reyes, CB8 staff
April 17, 2019*