



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, June 20, 2018 at the Hillcrest Jewish Center, 183-02 Union Turnpike in Flushing, New York.

Attendance:

Board Members Present:

Dilafroz Ahmed, Robert H. Block, Edward Chung, Susan D. Cleary, Allen Eisenstein, Florence Fisher, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., John Gebhard, Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Tami Hirsch, Fakrul “Delwar” Islam, Steven Konigsberg, Paul S. Lazauskas, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Mitch Lisker, Elke Maerz, Mary Maggio, Dilip Nath, Tamara Oshero, Simon Pelman, Frances Peterson, Charlton Rhee, Jesse Rosenbaum, Seymour Schwartz, Douglas Sherman, Harbachan Singh, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Jacob Weinberg and Albert Willingham.

Board Members Absent:

Jagir Singh Bains, Carolyn Baker-Brown, Dr. Allen J. Bennett, Kenneth Cohen II, Monica Corbett, Maria DeInnocentiis, Carolann Foley, Joshua Glikman, Mark J. Lefkof, Frank Magri, Jennifer Martin, Rabbi Shlomo Nisanov, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Rachele Van Arsdale and Stanley Weinblatt.

Others Present:

Susan Seinfeld representing Councilman Barry Grodenchik, Henry Yam representing Councilman Rory Lancman, Hudy Rosenberg representing Assemblywoman Nily Rozic, Marie Adam-Ovide, CB8 District Manager and Alma Karassavidis, CB8 Staff Member.

Call to Order:

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

Public Participation:

Harbachan Singh – He praised Mr. Kalicharran for being a community activist for the many years that he knew him. He encouraged the board to vote in favor of the co-naming.

Ashook Ramsaran – He spoke of Mr. Kalicharran’s outstanding accomplishments and community activism. He asked that this request be approved.

Jesse Rosenbaum asked if he was in order to ask the speaker a question. Chairperson Taylor suggested that he could ask after the meeting or in private at the back of the room. Mr. Rosenbaum stated that at the Transportation Committee Meeting the location that was agreed upon was up to Homelawn Street where it comes into 169th Street not as far as Highland Avenue as stated by the last speaker.

Kevin Forrestal stated that this will be addressed later in the meeting.

Romanee Kalicharran – She spoke of her father’s impact on the community. This street co-naming would show that her father’s humanitarianism, philanthropy and activism did not go unnoticed; it would mean a great deal to her family.

Seopaul Singh – He spoke in support of the co-naming. He knew Mr. Kalicharran for over 29 years who showed humanitarianism to everyone regardless of their religious beliefs.

Anup Ganpat, President of the Trinidadians and Tobagonians USA, stated that Mr. Kalicharran spent most of his life helping the community and was the cornerstone of the Caribbean community. He asked that the street co-naming be approved.

Sam Verstandig – (*Kew Gardens Hills representative for Senator Addabo*). He announced that Senator Addabo has introduced a bill to create a tax credit for small businesses who hire disabled employees. Under the legislation, businesses with under 100 employees would be able to receive a \$5,000 tax credit for each disabled person hired up to \$25,000. This legislation has passed the Assembly and the Senate and now awaits the Governor’s approval. He wished everyone a safe and enjoyable summer on behalf of Senator Addabo.

Sonia Ivany – Ms. Ivany represents the New York State Nurses Association (*NYSNA*). She thanked the CB8 Executive Committee for agreeing to review the Safe Staffing Resolution which is being proposed by *NYSNA* (*Resolution included in Board Member’s packets*). She stated that she looked forward to the Board’s acceptance of this Resolution.

Rose Green – Ms. Green stated that she has been a Nurse for 18 years and has worked in Emergency Rooms for 16 years. She stated that since City hospitals do not turn away anyone, at times they were caring for 15-16 patients alone. It is not quality care. She urged the Board to accept this Resolution.

Zina Zimmerman – Spoke about the initiative called “*Every Vote Counts*” which was started by her colleague, Susan Cleary. It assists seniors and the disabled to file an absentee application for an absentee ballot. They will be at the Kew Gardens and Briarwood Libraries in July and August.

Susan Cleary – Ms. Cleary announced that the Board of Elections is recruiting for poll workers. Applications and job description were left on the table.

Paul Lazauskas – Mr. Lazauskas announced two (2) events coming up at St. John’s University: E-waste event hosted in conjunction with the Lower East Side Ecology Center and Senator Comrie’s office on Sunday, July 15th at 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the main lot. The 20th Annual Free Summer Concert on Tuesday, July 24th at 7:00 p.m. on the Great Lawn (*flyers were left on the table*).

Susan Seinfeld – Ms. Seinfeld announced that Council Member Barry Grodenchik has secured funds in the 2019 City Council Budget for P.S. 26 to receive technology upgrades in the amount of \$115,000 and for P.S. 178 to receive tech upgrades and internet bandwidth upgrades in the amount of \$125,000. (*Newsletters and flyers for events in Cunningham Parks were left on the table*)

Hudy Rosenberg – Ms. Rosenberg announced the *Family Fire Safety Event* hosted by Assemblywoman Nily Rozic, Council Member Barry Grodenchik and others. At the event there will be a Fire Truck and Smokehouse. The Red Cross will also be there to register individuals for free smoke detectors. The event is on Friday, June 22nd from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at P.S. 46, 64-45 218th Street (*flyers left on the table*).

Salute to the Flag

Chairperson Martha Taylor led the salute to the flag.

Approval of Minutes:

Kevin Forrestal made a motion to approve the minutes of May 9, 2018, seconded by Marc A. Haken.

Count in favor 34 **Opposed:** 0 **Abstained:** 0

Chairperson’s Report – Martha Taylor:

- The Community Board’s budget has been increased by approximately \$43,000 this year. The funding is only for Fiscal Year 2019. These funds can be used for technology and to sponsor Community Events. They cannot be used for salaries. We will do things a little differently next year.
- Local Laws 245 and 247 of 2017 came into effect on June 15, 2018. District Manager, Marie Adam-Ovide will serve as the agency’s Privacy Officer. She will be in communication with Allan Swisher, Queens Borough President’s Assistant General Counsel for any privacy request that needs special consideration. Our Board will be working with the Borough President’s Office to insure that we are in compliance.

Chairperson Martha Taylor asked District Manager, Marie Adam-Ovide to elaborate on this a little bit.

Marie Adam-Ovide – It’s a little bit complicated. We are going to meet at the Borough Board with the District Managers and the Chairs in July when they will explain things in detail. If someone wanted to get information from us that we consider private, there is a procedure that is going to be in place. I will have to make a decision in coordination with the Borough President’s Office as to whether or not we can give that information. For example; anyone who comes to us to file a complaint, we do not share their information. It will have to do with privacy and what type of information we will be allowed to give, even if it’s done through a FOIL.

Chairperson Martha Taylor – It also has to do with giving out contact information, correct?
Marie Adam-Ovide – Right.

- Congratulations to Board Member Kenneth Cohen II who had a son about a week ago and named him Kenneth Cohen III.

District Manager’s Report, June 2018

DSNY – Now that we have organics collection, the sanitation trucks are split on the days when they are being collected. Remember to place bulk items on the alternate days when organics are not being collected. They encourage residents to cut their grass more frequently to prevent litter from getting caught on their lawns when the wind blows. This would prevent the receipt of Sanitation summonses for dirty area.

DOT – There were eighteen (18) locations removed from our tentative resurfacing list. The DOT Representative cited three reasons: streets done within the last five (5) years, utility company work and future capital projects. We looked into our files and found that these locations were not done within the last five years: therefore, we requested that they re-evaluate their responses.

Finally, DOT started working on our street marking requests. If there are any locations that need to be refurbished, please contact us.

DFTA – Our DFTA Representative informed us that there will be a training for newcomers to Medicare on Thursday, June 28th at 2 Lafayette Street in Manhattan from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Please call (212) 602-4180 to register. Hurricane season started on June 1st; however, for New York City we start on

August 1st and ends on October 31st. He recommends changing the water in our “go bags,” keeping a list of your prescription drugs in a plastic bag along with your doctor’s name and information. DFTA will raffle a “go bag” at our health fair.

DOB –CB8 complaints decreased in April by 19% and in May by 11%. Of the total complaints made by the five boroughs, 51% came from Queens followed by Brooklyn. The Buildings Department has been invited to make a presentation to the Borough Cabinet next week about curb cuts. I will have more information on that at the next Board meeting.

For complaints about SRO with college students, DOB will wait until August to inspect. Most of these students are no longer there and do not return until mid-August. For advertised illegal apartments/SRO, they have been referred to the Mayor’s Office of Special Operations. I have a copy of the Curb Cut Presentation given at the Borough Cabinet. It will be emailed to the members. If you wish a hard copy, please contact the office.

FDNY – The Fire Department had open houses on Saturday, June 16th and Sunday, June 17th for the public. All of our fire houses had their events on Saturday. I did request that we have at least one location within our boundaries with a Sunday open house so that everyone can participate. FDNY replied that it will be taken into consideration for next year. There was one open house being held on Sunday, June 17th in Queens. It was in Forest Hills at 111-02 Queens Boulevard from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

We were informed that we are up in all categories for last month and the year. A breakdown was not available.

PARKS – The installation of synthetic turf at Joe Austin Playground will be completed in August. After inspection by Parks it will be re-opened. We have a list of Cunningham Park events (see attached).

DEP – Noise complaints for car alarms have gone up significantly last months. We questioned the timeframe that it takes for DEP to do certain repairs (*i.e. missing curb piece from catch basins*). Everything is taking a lot longer than they usually do. This will also be addressed at our District Budget Consultation.

We’ve been informed that the study of 188th Street in regards to the broken pipes has been completed. They will have information for the Elected Officials and the Community Board soon.

DHS – There will be a meeting with Briarwood Community Residence’s administrative staff about addressing our request for air conditioning for the family shelter. I will keep you posted once I have more information.

HPD, NYPD & DOH&MH - These agencies did not attend the District Service Cabinet.

We look forward to seeing everyone at our health fair on Friday, June 29th from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. at Cunningham Park. We will have 39 vendors this year. That is more than we’ve ever had. District Manager Marie Adam-Ovide commended staffer, Izabela Szcepanska for doing a great job with the planning of this year’s Health Fair.



Happy Birthday to Board Members John Gebhard, Mohammed Tohin and Elke Maerz.

Chairperson Martha Taylor announced that Borough President's Representative, Susie Tanenbaum was unable to attend the meeting tonight. She did send a note which was read out loud by Chairperson Martha Taylor:

Tonight is Borough President Melinda Katz's Celebration of Jerusalem Concert in MacDonald Park, featuring Yoel Sharabi.

I am coordinating the event, so regrettably, I will not be able to attend tonight's rescheduled Community Board 8 meeting.

(Chairperson Martha Taylor explained that due to religious observances the meeting was scheduled on the 3rd Wednesday of June rather than the 2nd Wednesday)

Please send my apologies to the Board members.

I would also appreciate it if you reminded the Board that Borough President Katz's annual Community Board Awards Ceremony is scheduled for next Wednesday, June 27th in the Helen Marshall Cultural Center at Borough Hall.

Reception is at 5:00 PM and the formal program begins at 6:00 PM. The Borough President looks forward to recognizing Community Board members who are celebrating milestone anniversaries on their Boards this year.

Here are the CB 8 members celebrating milestones and receiving Community Service Awards from the Borough President this year (please note that the Borough President presented the award to Mark Lefkof at his lovely CB 8 farewell dinner):

- | | | |
|---------------------|----|-----------------------|
| ◦ Mark Lefkof | 40 | Rory Lancman (24) |
| ◦ Dr. Allen Bennett | 20 | Rory Lancman (24) |
| ◦ Charlton Rhee | 20 | Rory Lancman (24) |
| ◦ Jesse Rosenbaum | 20 | Barry Grodenchik (23) |
| ◦ Kenneth Cohen II | 10 | Rory Lancman (24) |
| ◦ Tamara Osherov | 10 | Barry Grodenchik (23) |

Thanks very much. Have a productive meeting and see you at the Community Board 8 Health Fair next week!

Regards,
Susie

Committee Reports:

Kevin Forrestal, Area 3 Chair

169th Street Co-naming – Request for Co-naming of 169th Street between Hillside Avenue and Homelawn Street in honor of Ramesh Kalicharran: Ramesh Kalicharran "Kali" Way – A Public Hearing was held on Monday, May 14, 2018. At the Public Hearing there was a large turnout of public testimony in support of this request. The minutes are quite extensive. This was a very significant and well prepared application. It was a very emotional meeting for many of the individuals and family members testifying as they are still grieving. Mr. Forrestal does not see any controversy surrounding this request. He addressed the issue that was brought up by Jesse Rosenbaum regarding the exact location of the street co-naming. When the motion was made to accept this proposal it was a little more generic than what the Transportation Committee had recommended. He asked Marc A. Haken to put forward a motion naming the exact location of the streets involved in this co-naming.

Marc A. Haken made a motion to approve the Co-naming of 169th Street from Highland Avenue to where Homelawn Street intersects with 169th Street, (approximately six (6) stores from Hillside Avenue) as Ramesh D. Kalicharran "Kali" Way, seconded by Jesse Rosenbaum.

Chairperson Martha Taylor opened the floor for questions/discussion from the Board Members.

Mohammed Tohin – Mr. Tohin stated that he has a business on Hillside Avenue and he knew Mr. Kalicharran for a long time. He agrees that he was a great man who did a lot for his community. He was questioning why the street [169th Street] from Hillside to Highland Avenue was chosen, if his business address was 169-12 Hillside Avenue (*the other side of Hillside Avenue*)?

Marc A. Haken – Mr. Haken pointed out that CB8 has no jurisdiction south of Hillside Avenue. That would be Community Board 12.

Mohammed Tohin – Mr. Tohin stated that the street should then be co-named on the other side of Hillside Avenue (*CB12 jurisdiction*) not our side (*CB8 jurisdiction*).

Kevin Forrestal – Mr. Forrestal advised that we are only dealing with the application that was submitted to us. The application was for a certain area. He stated that we cannot get involved with another board's area.

Dilip Nath – Mr. Nath explained that this is appropriate since Mr. Kalicharran lived on the north side of Hillside Avenue, even though his business was on the south side.

Chairperson Martha Taylor – Interjected saying that if it was the south side it would not be in our jurisdiction and we could not vote on it.

Kevin Forrestal – Added that if anyone wanted to submit an application through Community Board 12 to extend the co-naming to the south side of Hillside Avenue, they can do that. In that case, Community Board 12 would handle that request. That is beyond our jurisdiction.

Mohammed Tohin – Commented that it doesn't make sense to him.

Kevin Forrestal – Granted that some regulations don't make sense but they are what they are.

Fakrul "Delwar" Islam – Advised that he has four (4) businesses on Hillside Avenue for over a decade. He stated that although Mr. Kalicharran was a great businessman and was well respected in the community, he has never personally encountered him at any community event or witnessed his help with any community or business issues. He stated that the community on that part of Hillside Avenue deserve to know about the street being co-named. He stated that they should have been notified before making any decision.

Kevin Forrestal – Mr. Forrestal advised that there was notification sent out and the time to discuss this was at the Public Hearing and the Transportation Committee Meeting.

Dilafroz Ahmed – Stated that she has lived in this area since 1981. Ms. Ahmed mentioned that she knew Mr. Kalicharran and he was a great businessman. She added that although he lived in that area, he was not involved with the entire community that we are talking about. He was involved with a specific part of the community and was helpful to them. She stated that she does not remember seeing him anywhere when she was working within the community. She suggested that there be an additional hearing and asked that no decision be made tonight on this request.

Marc A. Haken – Mr. Haken stated that there were two (2) prior meetings on this issue; there was an Area Meeting and a Transportation Committee Meeting. At the Area Meeting, every citizen or member of the board was invited to come to this meeting to speak in favor or against this motion. He added that he was present at the Area Meeting and it was a unanimous vote in favor of the motion. The Chair of the

Transportation Committee informed him that it was unanimous at that meeting as well. Mr. Haken questioned why were people who were opposed not at those meetings articulating what they feel is the feeling of the community. He added that those who were at these meetings had no reason to believe that it was not the unanimous feeling of all members of the community, since there were people of different religions and ethnicities who spoke in favor of this request. He urged all of his colleagues to vote in favor of this motion.

Mohammed Tohin – Mr. Tohin stated that the Public Hearing was held right before Ramadan on May 14, 2018 and people of that faith cannot attend meetings during that time. He acknowledged that Mr. Kalicharran was a great businessman. He has done a lot for his community but not for the entire community.

Kevin Forrestal – Mr. Forrestal stated that he was informed that Ramadan started on May 16, 2018.

Jesse Rosenbaum – Mr. Rosenbaum pointed out that the Transportation Committee Meeting was in April and a full agenda was sent out to everyone, which included this request. A very detailed biography of the individual in question was submitted and it was thoroughly reviewed. The Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes contained bullet points of his accomplishments. There were additional pages of additional information, but only the highlights were included in the minutes. If anyone is not sure about his accomplishments, he asked that they look at the materials that were presented. It is overwhelming.

Fakrul “Delwar” Islam – Mr. Islam stated that he has lived at the same address for about 30 years and has had his business for about 25 years. He is not denying that Mr. Kalicharran was a great man who was respected by his people. He states that he was involved with the Caribbean community but he was not involved with the business community in the area where the street is being co-named. He added that he was a great business person and a wonderful man to the people he was doing business with.

Kevin Forrestal – Mr. Forrestal suggested that in the future if something is planned on a date that interferes with religious observances, please advise and it could possibly be postponed. In this case, since it was prior to Ramadan, he didn’t see that it would be a problem. He stated that our neighborhoods are multi-cultural and multi-faceted. Just because something was not in this one little section should not be a reason for that area to not be chosen. He added that he does not think it shows any disrespect to that street or any of the neighbors.

A roll call vote was taken.

Count in favor 27 **Opposed:** 6 **Abstained:** 1

Board Members opposed:

Dilafroz Ahmed, Tami Hirsch, Fakrul “Delwar” Islam, Douglas Sherman, Mohammed Tohin and Albert Willingham.

Board Members abstained:

Bright Dae-Jung Limm

Mary Maggio, Executive Committee Member

New York State Nursing Association (NYSNA) Resolution – The Resolution was presented to Community Board 8’s Executive Board by the New York State Nursing Association (NYSNA) to support safe staffing for nurses and was voted 6 in favor and 2 opposed. She explained that as a Health Care Provider, she understands that there are arguments on both sides. At one time or another we have all had a

loved one in a hospital or nursing home. It is understood that there is an expense involved but asked how can we put a price tag on a patient's life? How can we put a price tag on a patient's quality of care?

Seymour Schwartz made a motion to accept the Resolution in support of safe staffing for nurses, seconded by Howard A. Fried.

Chairperson Martha Taylor opened the floor for questions/discussion from the Board Members.

Mitch Lisker – Mr. Lisker stated that conceptually it is a great idea. He works in the healthcare industry and knows that it costs money to provide care. He agreed that if the money can be allocated, he would hire as many nurses as it takes to provide the maximum staffing ratio to take care of one patient. He states that the reality of operating every day with physical and fiduciary needs and compliance issues, there is no money being provided to hire additional nurses. The quality of care is being tied to the number of staff that we have. You can't have one without the other, you can't expect to hire additional staff without the funding. No one wants to see a patient or resident receive sub-par care but when the funds are not there, the reality is it is not going to happen.

Albert Willingham – Mr. Willingham works in the healthcare industry and sees a shortage of emergency room nurses. He is in support of this resolution and believes there is definitely a need for more staffing in New York State.

Jesse Rosenbaum – Mr. Rosenbaum understands that the resolution is requesting a change in nurse to patient ratio from 8:1 to 4:1. This suggests that the staff would be doubled, which would double the salary expense. He stated that he would like to say yes to this proposal but would first like to know where the funding would be coming from.

Dilip Nath – He stated that he has been in the healthcare industry for many years. Mr. Nath believes that there is plenty of money out there. He states that we must eliminate the waste and put the money where it belongs. Our physicians depend heavily on nurses. He added that 45% of our population are elderly and they need care. He urged the board to vote for this very important resolution.

Kevin Forrestal – I no longer work in the healthcare field anymore but I did for 53 years. The NYC Health and Hospitals Corp. and many of the neighborhood hospitals in Queens are having great financial problems. The New York City Council created a new committee for the Health and Hospitals Corp. because it is in crisis. He does not believe that an exterior force should be coming in to tell them what has to be done. There needs to be major reorganizations. The NYC Health and Hospitals Corp. Executive Director, President and the nursing staff have to determine what is best for them using the resources they have today. He urged the board to leave the responsibility of allocating the resources that the institutions have to the people who have the responsibility and are held accountable for it.

Bright Dae-Jung Limm – Mr. Limm believes that it was a good idea for NYSNA to bring this to the attention of the Community Board. He added that the question is where is the funding going to come from? He added that if our Elected Officials were in charge of allocating the funding, seeing what a groundswell of support there is for this that is how the funding emerges. He believes that the question of funding is really a question of public support. If the public support is clearly there, the funding will be there. He states that he has been following this legislation for about 10 years. He hasn't heard any criticism about the reason or the need for this legislation. If we support this resolution, we will let the Elected Officials figure out the details. We will be showing our support for the diagnosis and that there is a need to reduce the ratio.

Mary Maggio – Just wanted to bring one monetary point across. In a small local Queens hospital it costs anywhere from \$33,000 to \$43,000 to train one nurse. She stated that they then become overwhelmed and

move on. She added that if you train a certain number of nurses each year and half of them leave, putting a proposal into effect that will retain them, there is some additional money that can possibly be re-allocated to this legislation.

Charlton Rhee – He stated that everyone is for more staffing of nurses, but it comes down to the question of where this money will come from.

Marc A. Haken – Mr. Haken pointed out that there are different categories that the term nurse could fall under; registered nurses, practical nurses, etc. He asked what type of nurses the resolution is referring to. We don't know what dollar figures we are talking about.

Kevin Forrestal – Registered Nurses.

Edward Chung – Mr. Chung stated that New York State has over \$60 billion in Medicaid funding. There is a large number of individuals who do not have health insurance to go to private hospitals and they are allocated to City hospitals. If there are enough people who want to adopt this type of resolution then it is up to the Assembly and the Senate to decide how it will be funded.

Dilip Nath – Mr. Nath believes that by having more nurses, the Emergency Room wait time will be reduced. Having an extra nurse, the patients can be discharged sooner and waiting patients could be more quickly admitted. There are ways that this proposal can be funded.

A roll call vote was taken.

Count in favor 25 **Opposed:** 9 **Abstained:** 0

Board Members opposed:

Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, John Gebhard, Steven Konigsberg, Paul S. Lazauskas, Mitch Lisker, Charlton Rhee, Jesse Rosenbaum and Jacob Weinberg.

Chairperson Martha Taylor announced that the new Chair for Area 7 is Howard A. Fried. She wished everyone a great summer!

Adjournment

Martha Taylor adjourned this meeting at 8:46 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Alma Karassavidis, CB8 staff
June 27, 2018*