

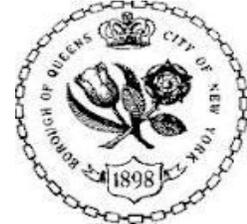


Chairman, Alvin Warshaviak

*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, January 13, 2016 at the Hillcrest Jewish Center, 183-02 Union Turnpike in Flushing, New York.

Attendance:

Board Members Present:

Jagir Singh Bains, Dr. Allen J. Bennett, Robert H. Block, Susan D. Cleary, Monica Corbett, Maria DeInnocentiis, Mary Maggio Fischer, Carolann Foley, Kevin Forrestal, James Gallagher Jr., Joshua Glikman, Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Sylvia Hernandez, Tami Hirsch, Fakrul “Delwar” Islam, Steven Konigsberg, Paul S. Lazauskas, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Mark J. Lefkof, Frank Magri, Tamara Osherov, Frances Peterson, Steven Sadofsky, Douglas Sherman, Michael F. Sidell, Harbachan Singh, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Alvin Warshaviak, and Jacob Weinberg.

Board Members Absent:

Dilafroz Ahmed, Carolyn Baker-Brown, Edward Chung, Kenneth Cohen II, Allen Eisenstein, Florence Fisher, Howard A. Fried, Mitch Lisker, Elke Maerz, Jennifer Martin, Rabbi Shlomo Nisanov, Simon Pelman, Charlton Rhee, Samuel Rodriguez, Jesse Rosenbaum, Seymour Schwartz, Stanley Weinblatt and Albert Willingham.

Others Present:

Jessica Douglas representing Mayor Bill de Blasio, Alexander Bennett representing Congresswoman Grace Meng, Susie Tanenbaum representing Borough President Melinda Katz, Stephen Everett representing the Department of City Planning, Steve Behar representing Councilman Barry Grodenchik, Councilman Barry Grodenchik, Stephanie Campanha representing State Senator Tony Avella, Amir Abbady representing State Senator Leroy Comrie, Aaron Siegel representing Assemblyman David Weprin, Scott Wolff representing Assemblyman Michael Simanowitz, Joseph Marziliano CB8 staff member.

Call to Order:

Chairman Warshaviak called this Board Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Public Participation:

Aaron Siegel- Assemblyman David Weprin will be holding a Food Drive from January 7th until February 18th, which will benefit the River Fund. We welcome a variety of nonperishable foods like canned fruits, vegetables, beans, dry pasta, and grains. The goods can be dropped off at our Fresh Meadows or Richmond Hills Offices.

Salute to the Flag

Chairman Warshaviak led the salute to the flag.

Approval of Minutes:

Dr. Allen Bennett made a motion to approve the minutes of December 9, 2015 seconded by Mike Sidell.

Count in favor 32 Opposed: 0 Abstained: 0

Board Members who approved the minutes:

Jagir Singh Bains, Dr. Allen J. Bennett, Robert H. Block, Susan D. Cleary, Monica Corbett, Maria DeInnocentiis, Mary Maggio Fischer, Carolann Foley, Kevin Forrestal, James Gallagher Jr., Joshua Glikman, Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Sylvia Hernandez, Tami Hirsch, Fakrul “Delwar” Islam, Steven Konigsberg, Paul S. Lazauskas, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Mark J. Lefkof, Frank Magri, Tamara Osherov, Frances Peterson, Steven Sadofsky, Douglas Sherman, Michael F. Sidell, Harbachan Singh, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Alvin Warshaviak, and Jacob Weinberg.

Board Members who did not approve the minutes:

None

Chairman’s Report – Alvin Warshaviak:

- Our fellow Board Member Sam Rodriguez is quite ill. We sent him a basket from the Sunshine Fund for which he has thanked us. Sympathy cards are welcomed but please do not call him. I am sure we will all keep him in our prayers and wish him a speedy recovery.
- We sent a letter to the Department of Homeless Services regarding Par Central Inn located on 82-85 Parsons Boulevard. We were not notified that this location was being used as an emergency homeless shelter. We were notified after the fact and we expressed our displeasure in that letter.
- Cornerstone Facility on the corner of 164th Street and Union Turnpike made a request for a letter of support for two additional beds. The Executive Committee decided to send a letter to state that the history with them has been quite good.
- With the start of the New Year it is my hope that everyone is in good health and that 2016 will bring us greater success and happiness than last year.

Chairman Warshaviak introduced the Councilman Barry Grodenchik to address Community Board 8.

Councilman Grodenchik- I came from City Hall not that long ago where there was a hearing today on hunger. That was quite an eye opener for me. I was shocked to learn that only \$12 million is allocated for hunger emergency services. That is about \$1.60 per New Yorker, which is very little money. We sent a message today to HRA and the Mayor’s Office about that. Unfortunately we have a lot of hungry people in the wealthiest City in the Nation and that is unacceptable. I’d like to welcome back Mr. Warshaviak, it is good to see you. Tonight my Participatory Budget Meeting is going on at St. Francis Prep. You have to live in my district to participate, which here encompasses the Fresh Meadows and Holliswood areas. The first Bill that I have co-sponsored is a Bill that would allow the City to place security guards in private schools where there are over 300 students. It will cost the city approximately \$2.50 per New Yorker per year. It will start to take place on April 1st and it was approved overwhelmingly. My feeling is that all the children of the City of New York are our children regardless of where they go to school and should be protected as such. The real worry to me is people that should be in our schools who try to sneak in. These security guards will be fully trained and unionized. I know some of you may have read reports of homeless people at Creedmoor. I know Creedmoor is not in this District, but you should know that is not going to happen. I have been meeting with all of the NYPD Commanders in my District. I am very pleased with the Commander of the 107th Precinct. Also, your voices have been heard loud and clear on the efforts to rezone large parts of our City. It will influence how I vote in the City Council. I’d like to finish by thanking you all for your service and wishing you a happy and healthy New Year.

Mark Lefkof- There was an issue last year about term limits for Community Board Members, how do you stand?

Councilman Grodenchik- I am absolutely and unalterably opposed to that. That bill has not gone anywhere as far as I am aware. I believe the Borough President is against it as well. Some of our Board Members here tonight have been with the Board many years, and we don’t want to throw you wonderful people away. I conducted an analysis for the Borough President, which showed that the average turnover of Community Board Members was 12 years, which is what is being proposed.

District Manager’s Report, January 2016

DOB

During the last four weeks of 2015, the Department of Buildings has been dealing with the applications for foundation work for buildings that were applying for the 421A Tax Abatement version that was due to sunset in December 2015. They also have been dealing with applications for properties that will be used for the Pre-K programs. They also received applications for DHS/HRA homeless facilities and long term housing.

The Department of Buildings has started its campaign to educate the public about renting illegal/unsafe apartments by going to transportation hubs and giving information. That information was included in CB8’s January 2016 Newsletter.

The following are some initiatives that the Department of Buildings has taken to improve efficiency:

- They recently launched their “Inspection Ready” initiative that was discussed at a previous meeting. This allows for architects/engineers/homeowners to request a final inspection online. Those who have requested inspections will be sent a confirmation within 24 hours.
- They are also looking to move to virtual buildings applications where the plans are submitted electronically. Currently, architects only have 20-minute appointments to meet with plan examiners to review their applications. With the virtual applications, plan examiners would get a chance to review the application and write “notes” on the actual submission, as to where modifications need to be made before DOB would approve an application. This would be instead of the list of objections that they receive on their applications.

Good news! Five Plan Examiners were recently hired.

HRA

The Human Resources Administration has been tasked with overseeing the issue of homelessness. The two agencies have not merged at this time. Commissioner Banks of HRA will be reviewing the DHS procedures and make a final recommendation in early 2016. They anticipate a response in late January or early February.

The DHS Cluster Program whereby the agency sought apartments through the assistance of non-profit organizations to find housing in buildings throughout the City was found not to be cost effective. The City is paying higher rates to landlords to house the homeless in apartments that were often not well maintained. The City will phase out this program within 3 years. They will be using the existing funds to relocate clients into permanent housing with the assistance of the Rapid Rehousing Team. There are currently about 3,000 cluster sites.

The Commissioner is in receipt of our letter regarding the hotel being used as a shelter on Parsons Boulevard and will send us a response.

FDNY

There was an increase in the number of calls made to the FDNY of about 1,000 from 2014 to 2015. Residents often call in for issues that are not emergencies. There is a need to re-educate the public on what constitutes an emergency. Many drivers do not yield to the emergency vehicles and seem perplexed as what to do when emergency vehicles are approaching [This may be a topic for one of CB8’s upcoming Newsletters].

DEP

DEP received over 800 calls to 311 for CB8 for the month of December. There were 270 calls relating to noise from car alarms. This is unusual [Our liaison will look into any specific pattern or if they came from a cluster and update us]. There were also many calls for dirty water, as there was an issue with a pipe at Utopia Parkway near Union Turnpike. The issue was resolved within 24 hours.

The Home Water Assistance program has been expanded. Customers do not have to enroll or apply for the HWAP program. Eligible customers will **automatically** receive a credit on their water and sewer bill. Property owners of one, two and three family dwellings will receive a one-time, non-refundable credit for **\$115.89** that will be labelled “NYC Home Water Assistance Credit” in the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2016. The customers must fall within the following criteria:

1. Recipient of the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) Regular Heating Benefit for the 2014-2015 heating season **or**
2. A NYC Department of Finance’s Senior Citizen Homeowners’ Exemption in the current calendar year (SCHE) **or**
3. A NYC Department of Finance’s Disabled Homeowner’s Exemption (DHE) in the current calendar year.

DFTA

The Department for the Aging will host a Medicare event on January 28, 2016 in Manhattan at 2 Lafayette Street from 10:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Please register by calling Darnley Jones (212) 602-4264 no later than January 26, 2016. Your name must be added on the list to enter the building.

NYPD

The 107th Precinct is down by 1% in major crimes. They had an increase in robberies in 2015; however, they have also increased the number of arrests. Many of these robberies were perpetrated by the same individuals. Our Community Affairs Liaison advised us to beware of anyone asking for money over the telephone. With tax season approaching, the false IRS calls would probably increase.

DOH&MH

We had a presentation from the Bureau of Maternal, Infant & Reproductive Health’s Nurse Partnership Program. Through this program low income first time mothers are paired with a nurse who serves as a mentor to these women through the child’s second birthday. The nurse visits the enrollees in their homes every one or two weeks over a two-and-a-half year period, offering support, education and counselling. This results in:

- 72% fewer criminal convictions
- 48% reduction in child abuse and neglect
- 59% reduction in arrests

This program started with four nurses in 2003. All these nurses must have at least a Bachelor’s degree and go to the national training in Colorado.

This program is located near our district and has already made a presentation to us in the past. They returned to reach out to CB8, as they have recently hired a nurse that speaks three Southeast Asian languages: Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu. This expands the reach of this program to new immigrants in our district.

Do you know a mother-to-be who needs support? Call NYC NFP at **646-364-0714** to refer first time low-income moms.

Happy Birthday to Board Members: Jagir Singh Bains, Mike Sidell, Kenneth Cohen II, Maria DeInnocentiis, Frank Magri, Sylvia Hernandez and Martha Taylor.

Borough President’s Representative – Susie Tanenbaum

- Borough President Katz has asked her liaisons to read aloud her findings against the multiple for profit companies applying to operate paid admission concerts at Flushing Meadow Corona Park [the full statement was read and is on file at the Community Board and was provided in each Board Member’s packet].

Chairman Warshaviak- I’d like to say that the Borough President was the one of the first and the loudest to speak out against this proposal.

- There was an article in the Times Ledger titled *Efforts to Buy Back Brinckerhoff Colonial Cemetery*. It reads “The Borough President allocated \$150,000 that will remain in the budget as a contingency to be

utilized as needed for the purchase of Brinckerhoff Cemetery. Borough President Katz is supportive of the effort to ensure that the Brinckerhoff Cemetery is cared for and preserved for the Community.

- The State of the Borough Address is coming up on January 21st at Queens College at 10:00 a.m. in Colden Auditorium.

Marc Haken- Will there be reserved seating for Community Board Members? [*BP Katz's Office reached out later to inform the Board that there would be reserved seating.*]

- Martin Luther King Day is coming up and Borough President Katz will be co-sponsoring an event at the Central Library this Saturday

Marc Haken- I serve on the African American Heritage Committee with Harbachan Singh. The event will take place at 1:00 p.m. in collaboration with the Queens Public Library. It is my pleasure to supply a cake for the event.

- Monday, January 25th is the annual Borough Board Budget Hearing. This is where community based organizations come to the Borough President's Office to testify on the proposed City Budget and to request funding for their organization. If you are interested you can speak to me or go directly to the Borough President's website: www.queensbp.org
- Happy Birthday to our Board Members celebrating Birthdays this month: Jagir Singh Bains, Mike Sidell, Kenneth Cohen II, Maria DeInnocentiis, Frank Magri, Sylvia Hernandez and Martha Taylor.

Stephen Everett, The Department of City Planning

- I have nothing to report tonight; however, I will wish everyone a Happy New Year and I look forward to working with you all this year.

Susan Cleary- I would like to announce that Flushing Meadow Corona Park Conservancy is having a meeting at Queens Museum on January 20th at 6:30 p.m.

Chairman Warshaviak wished everyone a healthy start to the New Year!

Carolann Foley made a motion to adjourn this meeting at 7:56 p.m., seconded by Mike Sidell.

*Respectfully submitted,
Joseph Marziliano, CB8 staff
January 20, 2015*