



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, October 22, 2014 at the Hillcrest Jewish Center, 183-02 Union Turnpike in Flushing, New York

Attendance:

Board Members Present:

Dilafroz Ahmed, Jagir Singh Bains, Dr. Allen J. Bennett, Robert H. Block, Edward Chung, Susan D. Cleary, Kenneth Cohen II, Mary Maggio Fischer, Florence Fisher, Carolann Foley, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, James Gallagher Jr., Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Fakrul "Delwar" Islam, Steven Konigsberg, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Paul S. Lazauskas, Mark J. Lefkof, Elke Maerz, Frank Magri, Rabbi Shlomo Nisarov, Tamara Osheroov, Charlton Rhee, Samuel Rodriguez, Jesse Rosenbaum, Steven Sadofsky, Seymour Schwartz, Michael F. Sidell, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin and Jacob Weinberg.

Board Members Absent:

Carolyn Baker-Brown, Monica Corbett, Maria DeInnocentiis, Brian DeMasters, Allen Eisenstein, Joshua Glikman, Tami Hirsch, Mitch Lisker, Jennifer Martin, Simon Pelman, Frances Peterson, Annie Salvatore, Harbachan Singh, Alvin Warshaviak, Stanley Weinblatt and Albert Willingham.

Others Present:

Kelsey Durham representing State Senator Tony Avella, Courtney Cariello representing Assemblywoman Nily Rozic, Jaime Cho representing Councilman Mark Weprin, Daniel Rosenthal representing Councilman Rory Lancman, Pesac Osina representing the Comptroller, Susie Tanenbaum representing Borough President Melinda Katz, Don Capalbi representing Congresswoman Grace Meng, Helen Ho representing Mayor Bill DiBlasio, District Manager Marie Adam-Ovide and Alma Karassavidis, CB8 Staff Member.

Call to Order:

2nd Vice Chair Martha Taylor called this Board Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Public Participation:

Cathy Makris – No show

James Gallagher, Jr. – Wanted to make everyone aware of the three proposals that will be on the ballot when voting in two weeks. When you turn the ballot over there are the three referendums. In the past, the print was very small. Mr. Gallagher left flyers to help make voters better evaluate these proposals. The flyer was supplied to him by the League of Women Voters in a larger printer which is easier to read. Copies were left for everyone.

Salute to the Flag

2nd Vice Chair Martha Taylor led the salute to the flag.

Approval of Minutes:

Dr. Allen Bennett made a motion to approve the minutes of September 10, 2014 seconded by Mark Lefkof.

Board Members who approved the minutes:

Dilafroz Ahmed, Jagir Singh Bains, Dr. Allen J. Bennett, Robert H. Block, Edward Chung, Susan D. Cleary, Kenneth Cohen II, Mary Maggio Fischer, Florence Fisher, Carolann Foley, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, James Gallagher Jr., Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Fakrul “Delwar” Islam, Steven Konigsberg, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Paul S. Lazauskas, Mark J. Lefkof, Elke Maerz, Frank Magri, Rabbi Shlomo Nisarov, Tamara Osherov, Charlton Rhee, Samuel Rodriguez, Jesse Rosenbaum, Steven Sadofsky, Seymour Schwartz, Michael F. Sidell, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin and Jacob Weinberg.

Board Members who did not approve the minutes:

None

Chairman’s Report:

Seymour Schwartz – Submitted CB8 Aviation Committee report regarding airplane noise, for informational purposes. Report is self-explanatory.

Martha Taylor presented CB8 board member, Carolann Foley who introduced our new Precinct Captain.

Carolann Foley- I would like to introduce our new 107th Pct. Captain Paul Valerga.

107th Pct. Captain Paul Valerga – Capt. Valerga thanked everyone for showing up on this wonderful night. Yesterday he attended his first Civic meeting at the Fresh Meadows Civic Association. He enjoyed his time there. He is delighted to be a representative of the NYC Police Dept. and the 107th Pct. Capt.Valerga received a phone call two weeks ago telling him that he was coming to the 107th Pct. He is very happy about the transfer.

Capt. Valerga stated that for the past 15 months he was at the 101 Pct. in Far Rockaway. There are definitely a lot of different issues than what we have here. Before he became a Captain, he was a Squad Commander at the 13th Pct. at Grammercy Park in Manhattan for about 2 ½ years. The problems he faced in Manhattan Precincts were grand larceny and burglaries. Those are some of the same problems experienced in CB8. Capt. Valerga is sure that is one of the reasons he was selected to be here. Prior to that, he was a Squad Sgt. at Midtown North Detective Squad, handling some high profile cases. He states that in visiting his office one would find news articles about him hanging on the walls. He was a Police Officer for 5 ½ years at Manhattan South. The Captain’s goal is to meet and communicate with every member of the community. He has an open door policy and welcomes anyone who wants to come to his office and say hello. The concerns and problems of the community are his concerns and problems. If there is any way that he can help, let him know and if he can do it, it will happen.

Mayor DiBlasio and Governor Cuomo are reducing the speed limit from 30 mph to 25 mph on New York City streets. Although 5 mph may not sound like a big deal, it is. Capt. Valerga speaks from firsthand experience. He was hit by an automobile in 2003, while assigned to a car-jacking. He was sideswiped but was lucky, his arm and knee took the brunt of it and he was able to walk away. Vision Zero is something the Captain agrees with and applauds the Mayor for implementing. Capt. Valerga brought some flyers with information on the speed limit changes. He states there will be a lot of educating on traffic issues. He is open to any good ideas and/or advice and will try and incorporate them into his Vision Zero Traffic Plan.

He mentioned that parking issues near schools were brought to his attention. He will be addressing those issues with the Principals of all the schools. He has already sat down and talked with a couple of them and plans to meet with more of them sometime at the end of the week.

Captain Valerga took a few questions:

Marc Haken: *I saw on the NW corner of Francis Lewis Blvd. and Hillside Avenue that a security camera was installed, an NYPD camera. Is that a speed camera, a red light camera, or is it a street security camera?*

Captain Valerga: *It is probably an Argus camera. If it says NYPD Security it is an Argus camera.*

Marc Haken: *What is an Argus camera?*

Captain Valerga: *An Argus camera is part of our security system. I can't tell you what direction it is pointed in. That is secure information.*

Marc Haken: *I can see which direction it is pointed in.*

Captain Valerga: *That is there in case a crime happens in that area. Through the 107th Pct. I can now view it. The camera records in whatever direction it is facing. If a crime occurs there, I will be able to view it and zoom in on it and hopefully be able to identify and capture any perpetrators.*

Marc Haken: *Is that going to be there permanently or is that one of the moving cameras like the speed cameras?*

Captain Valerga: *If it's an Argus camera, it will be permanently affixed. They are all over the city. I think we have 18 of them in this Precinct. They are fantastic tools, especially for street robberies, pick pockets, grand larceny, cell phone snatcher, etc.*

Marc Haken: *That's great!*

Samuel Rodriguez: *I received a ticket near Edison H.S. for going 32mph in a 35mph zone. Since then I have been going 25mph.*

Captain Valerga: *The school cameras are only operational during school hours. From 6 a.m. to 7 a.m. and it is a 20 mph zone around all schools, whether there is a camera there or not. All schools in Nassau and in NYC are all 20 mph right now. If there is a camera there it will only go off if you are going 10 mph or more over. Those cameras were installed to help the children when crossing and to slow down traffic. Rather than installing speed bumps and other measures. That is one of the things that the Mayor got pushed through and Governor Cuomo signed it.*

James Gallagher Jr.: *There is a 3rd camera by the Service Road of the GCP by Thomas Edison H.S. A number of my co-workers received tickets there.*

Captain Valerga: *This was part of the Mayor's initiative. Every school in NYC is a 20 mph zone in front of it right now. I think they were able to get 40 cameras for NYC. Any dissatisfaction would be an issue that has to go to the Mayor's office. The NYPD has nothing to do with them. We can't even place them where we want to place them. As Precinct Commander I am going to be looking at the cameras to see if they are in the right spots. If not I will try my best to place them in areas where they will be most effective to prevent any child from getting struck.*

Martha Taylor: *So if the school zone is 20 mph, will there be signage put up to let people know that?*

Captain Valerga: *There is supposed to be signage. DOT is responsible for that aspect of it. We share the education part of it. At every meeting that I go to I will be bringing some literature with me and hopefully everyone will take some to bring back to their communities to make sure that the message gets across to everyone.*

District Manager, Marie Adam Ovide: *I just want to add that near Peck, people are getting summonses for going 41 mph and up. Over there it is 30 mph, getting off the expressway. I spoke to the Deputy Commissioner about it. It is actually 41 mph for that particular area. There is no excuse that you didn't know. If you don't see anything, you are supposed to know its 30 mph. If you go 10 mph over 30 mph and then 1 more, then you will get a ticket.*

Carolann Foley: *My son got two tickets over there at that camera, 38 and 39 mph.*

District Manager, Marie Adam Ovide: *According to Deputy Commissioner Garcia, it is 41 mph plus. If you can, send me a copy of the summons.*

CB8 Intern, Jared: *If you have these long strips with signage far in between, people are of the mindset to get there quick. If there are no speed signs or if it is in the early stages of this transition, is it going to be a ticket or some sort of warning?*

Captain Valerga: *A ticket. I am supposed to be out there educating people on the new laws. The DOT is responsible for all signage and the cameras. The DOT is in the forefront of this. NYPD is part of the education aspect of it. The*

Mayor's office figured out all the locations. If there are issues with them, I have a good pipeline with the Commissioner of the DOT. I am going to try my best to get the proper signs placed everywhere they have to be.

Martha Taylor: We need to take one more question from a Board Member.

Marc Haken: You said by every school, so that means by Jewish Yeshivas, Catholic Schools, Pre-Schools, or are you just talking Public Schools?

Captain Valerga: I know all public schools are, I have to check for the others. We have 48 schools in the 107th Pct.

Marc Haken: 28 are public and all the rest are private of various sorts.

Captain Valerga: I am going to say yes to all schools right now, but I will go the DOT and confirm.

Thank you for having me and I look forward to working with every person in the community. Please let me know what is going on, because you are the eyes and ears of the community.

District Manager's Report

Police Department They arrested six individuals in connection with the car thefts within our precinct. Otherwise they are down in all categories. Residents should still watch out for callers asking them to buy prepaid cards to pay their bills – it is a scam. Commanding Officer Paul Vallergera replaced Captain Frederick Grover who has been reassigned to the 113th Precinct.

Parks & Recreation Parks announced that they will be moving to the fall/winter schedule. This means that the parks will now close at 5:00 p.m. instead of 9:00 p.m. Starting on November 4, 2014, the comfort stations will close at 4:00 p.m.

Sanitation They are monitoring the issue of baskets on Hillside Avenue. I agreed to send letters to businesses encouraging them to adopt a basket and will work to follow-up with a visit from DSNY. Night plow will start on November 10th.

DOB If there is a commercial vehicle with a residential address, this information can be used to pad lock the location for having a business in a residential zone.

Q: What if the van has the address but it is parked in that person's garage?

A: If it is not visible from the street, they won't be able to do anything, unless someone is willing to file an affidavit to state that they know for certain.

Q: Are you saying that they can't have a commercial business out of a residential address?

A: For instance, if you are a plumber, have a van with commercial plates and you actually put your address on that van and park it in your driveway, the DOB can use that information to padlock your home.

Department of Transportation A workshop was held recently in Jamaica to improve bus service from north to south in Queens and vice-versa. This is through the SBS or Select bus Service initiative. They are looking at Main Street and Parsons Boulevard corridors that directly affect Community Board 8. They are looking to hold a similar workshop in Flushing. Residents may observe that sidewalk repairs are being done by DOT contractors for select locations. They are being done through the Expedited Repair Program. Upon inspection, the homeowner is given up to three days to decide to have it done through this program and not wait for the regular DOT's sidewalk repair program. More information is available on the DOT website.

- The Department of Transportation studied and approved speed humps for 68th Avenue between Fresh Meadow Lane and 174th Street. Postcards were mailed by our office to the affected residents.
- The Department of Transportation studied and approved speed humps for 183rd Street between Union Turnpike and 73rd Avenue. Postcards were mailed by our office to the affected residents. So far, we received only one response in favor. All the others were against the installation of the speed humps.

Fire Department They were down in all categories except for structural fires. They were up by 11

incidents as compared to last year. There were 122 incidents in total.

The third cause of fire is from the use of candles. The FDNY recommends that flameless candles be used instead. The FDNY found that people often remove batteries from the smoke/CO detectors. The City Council passed legislation that requires that all smoke and CO detectors sold in NYC have non-removable batteries. In addition, the batteries must last for the life of the unit which is at least 10 years. When you purchase a new detector make sure that you purchase the correct one, especially if you purchase it in Nassau County.

Q: *When my battery is in, it screeches and when I take it out, it stops. Does that mean my detector is broken?*

A: *You should get a new one. Also read the instructions, different beeps mean different things. You might think that it is the battery. Then you remove the battery and it turns out to be CO (carbon monoxide).*

Q: *Is this effective immediately?*

A: *Yes, we had a meeting with the Borough President’s Office yesterday.*

Q: *Is there a grace period for the apartment buildings?*

A: *I will have to check on that and give you that information.*

The Fire Dept. is willing to go to your apartment building or co-op and actually speak to your residents on fire safety. If you in a building on the 6th floor and there is a fire on the 3rd floor, the Fire Dept. does not want you to leave your apartment and go down. You must wait for the instructions of the Fire Dept. You may end up dying trying to escape and walk right into the fire. They will come to you for free and speak on Fire Safety. That is something that we should take advantage of, especially the Civic Associations. Contact me at CB8 office for the information.

Department of Design and Construction

QED1001 – Work is currently 44% completed. They are currently working on 86th Avenue from 144th and 150th Streets. They will do 85th Road from 150th to 144th Streets. There was no update for Hoover Avenue. They are still waiting for the utility companies to mark the streets and take care of any issues before moving forward with the water main replacements in that area.

Happy Birthday to Susan Cleary, Howard Fried, Brian DeMasters and Bob Harris who are celebrating their birthdays this month!

Borough President’s Representative – Susie Tanenbaum

- I hope everyone who has celebrated Holidays this month had enjoyable and meaningful ones.
- Borough President Katz spent a lot of time in the CB8 area this week. On Monday night, she went to the Jamaica Estates Association meeting. She was warmly welcomed by President, Martha Taylor. At that meeting the Borough President talked about what has been happening in the borough.
- Last night, the Borough President went to and co-sponsored the Annual Italian Heritage and Cultural Month Event at St. John’s University. That event is organized by Joe Sciame, VP of Govt. Union Affairs at St. John’s. He is also Chairman of the Italian Heritage and Cultural Month Committee of NY. I had the privilege of serving on this committee and had the equally great privilege of working with Paul Lazauskas, Associate Director of Government Relations at St. John’s. It was such a pleasure to work with Paul. He is amazing when it comes to coordinating events. I want to congratulate you on a very successful event. There were 250-300 people in attendance. There were 7 honorees and one of them was our own Maria DeInnocentiis. Congratulations to Maria!
- After that event, Borough President Katz went to the Fresh Meadows Homeowners Civic Association. Jim Gallagher was there to welcome her.
- Borough President Katz hosted the first ever Diwali Event at Queens Borough Hall together with members of the Hindu and Sikh communities. Jagir Singh Bains is a member of the committee. I believe 150 people attended. It was very successful. The program will be aired on one of the cable stations this evening.

- Susie invited everyone to a Veteran’s Day event on Thursday November 6th in the Memorial Garden at Queens Borough Hall from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. This is the first time we are observing Veteran’s Day at Borough Hall.
- I want to wish all of my fellow October birthday babies a Happy Birthday!

Committee Report:

Fiscal Year 2016 – Capital and Expense Budget Items:

Martha Taylor, Interim Budget Chair

The Area Committees all met and discussed their budget priorities. Area chairs met and Expense and Capital Budget priorities were completed. These are the priorities that were formulated by Area chairs.

Bob Harris: *I am opposed to Item #33 on Capital Budget*

Martha Taylor: *You can’t bring it up now, it’s done. Talk to your area chair. The majority voted it to be the way it is.*

Tamara Osherov: *I am putting myself in as an objector also.*

Martha Taylor: *Tammy I just explained we are not taking objections now. If you want to vote against it, fine.*

Motion:

Martha Taylor made a motion to approve the Expense and Capital Budget seconded by Marc Haken.

Vote:

In Favor: 32

Opposed: 2

Voted for: Dilafroz Ahmed, Jagir Singh Bains, Dr. Allen J. Bennett, Robert H. Block, Edward Chung, Susan D. Cleary, Kenneth Cohen II, Mary Maggio Fischer, Florence Fisher, Carolann Foley, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, James Gallagher Jr., Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Fakrul “Delwar” Islam, Steven Konigsberg, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Paul S. Lazauskas, Mark J. Lefkof, Elke Maerz, Frank Magri, Rabbi Shlomo Nisarov, Charlton Rhee, Samuel Rodriguez, Jesse Rosenbaum, Steven Sadofsky, Seymour Schwartz, Michael F. Sidell, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin and Jacob Weinberg.

Voted against: Robert Harris and Tamara Osherov

Carolann Foley – All are invited to the Halloween Party this Sunday at the 107th Precinct from Noon to 4:00 p.m. Children should come in costume accompanied by adults. There will be refreshments and lunch available. There will also be face painting, puppet shows and balloons. Everyone is welcome.

Carolann also announced that the November 25th Council Meeting will be postponed until December 2nd. Emails will be sent.

Adjournment

Carolann Foley made a motion to adjourn this meeting at 8:12 p.m., seconded by Susan Cleary.

*Respectfully submitted, Alma Karassavidis, CB8 staff
October 28, 2014*