



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, October 10, 2018 at the Hillcrest Jewish Center, 183-02 Union Turnpike in Flushing, New York.

Attendance:

Board Members Present:

Dilafroz Ahmed, Jagir Singh Bains, Edward Chung, Susan D. Cleary, Maria DeInnocentiis, Florence Fisher, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, Bhithihara-Martha Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Tami Hirsch, Paul S. Lazauskas, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Mitch Lisker, Mary Maggio, Jennifer Martin, Dilip Nath, Rabbi Shlomo Nisanov, Tammy Osherov, Simon Pelman, Seymour Schwartz, Douglas Sherman, Harbachan Singh, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Jacob Weinberg, Stanley Weinblatt, Albert Willingham.

Board Members Absent:

Carolyn Baker-Brown, Dr. Allen J. Bennett, Robert H. Block, Kenneth Cohen II, Monica Corbett, Allen Eisenstein, Carolann Foley, John Gebhard, Joshua Glikman, Fakrul "Delwar" Islam, Steven Konigsberg, Elke Maerz, Frank Magri, Frances Peterson, Charlton Rhee, Jesse Rosenbaum, Rachele Van Arsdale.

Others Present:

Susie Tanenbaum representing Borough President Melinda Katz, Davinder Paul Singh representing Councilman Barry Grodenchik, Henry Yam representing Councilman Rory Lancman, Daniel Blech representing Assembly Member Daniel Rosenthal, Hudy Rosenberg representing Assemblywoman Nily Rozic, Anthony Iuliano from the Department of Buildings, Marie Adam-Ovide, CB8 District Manager, Jatna Reyes, CB8 Staff Member and Izabela Szczepanska, CB8 Staff Member.

Call to Order:

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

Public Participation:

Paul Lazauskas – Mr. Lazauskas spoke on behalf of St. John's University to invite everyone to an event. The University is partnering with the Borough President's Office to present a salute to Italian heritage and culture. The Borough President has selected 600 honorees for this year. The event is on Monday, October 22nd at 7:00 p.m. and registration starts at 6:30 p.m. They ask for a \$5 donation to cover the cost of food and entertainment.

Davinder Paul Sing representing Council Member Barry Grodenchik – He announced that the groundbreaking ceremony for the Redwood Playground will be held on Tuesday, October 23rd at Noon. Pictures will be taken. They will meet at 193rd Street and Aberdeen Road and everyone is invited.

Harold Dasque - Mr. Dasque represents HAUP (Haitian-Americans United for Progress) which has been in existence for over 40 years. They were stationed in Cambria Heights; due to compliance they moved to

Hollis. We provide immigration services, while we also assist those with special needs. They have another site in Brooklyn. They are looking to assist the Community Board.

Henry Yam representing Council Member Rory Lancman – Announced that Masis Sarkisian will no longer be working with the Office of Councilman Rory Lancman. Henry will be the new acting Budget and District Director. He will continue to attend the Community Board 8 Meetings.

Daniel Blech representing Council Member Daniel Rosenthal – There will be two events this month. There will be an E-Waste Recycling event on Sunday, October 14th from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in front of the Young Israel of Kew Gardens Hills (150th Street between Jewel Avenue and 70th Road). There will also be a Free Civil Legal Services event on October 15th from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. There will be a Mobile Van stationed at 159-06 71st Avenue in Flushing. Everyone is eligible to receive free legal services, regardless of immigration status. Anyone interested should contact the office.

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 September 12, 2018, seconded by Marc A. Haken.

Count in favor 29 **Opposed:** 0 **Abstained:** 0

Chairperson’s Report – Martha Taylor:

- The Board received a memo from the Law Department informing Community Board Members what is appropriate when speaking about the ballot proposals. A copy of the Conflicts of Interest Law prepared by the NYC Conflicts of Interest Board is included in your information packets.
- All Community Board 8 staff have participated in the online Sexual Harassment Prevention Training as mandated by the City.
- Best wishes to Carolann Foley and Carolyn Baker-Brown who are recuperating from surgery. Get well soon Dr. Allen Bennett who is in rehab and Michael Hannibal who is undergoing physical therapy.
- Congratulations to Carolann Foley who is being honored by the Saul Weprin Democratic Club. She will be the recipient of the Community Leader Award on Sunday, October 21, 2018.
- Carolann Foley will be the Chair of the Public Safety Committee. The Board checked with the Conflict of Interest Board and there is no conflict of interest with holding her position as the Precinct Council President.
- Jim Gallagher was in charge of the Sunshine Fund and he has resigned. Elke Maerz has graciously accepted to take on the responsibility. Chairperson Taylor will be collecting money for the sunshine fund this month and Elke Maerz will do so at the November meeting.

Chairperson Martha Taylor introduced Guest Speaker Alex Kipp, Director of Education and Engagement from NYC Conflict of Interest Board.

Guest Speaker:

Alex Kipp: - Mr. Kipp gave a presentation on the Conflict of Interest Board. He defined conflict of interest specifically under the NYC Conflict of Interest Law which is contained in Chapter 68 of the City Charter. There is a section that specifically covers Community Board Members mostly in relation

to conflicts in voting. It will be reviewed today. These are some of the main highlights of his presentation:

- Conflict of Interest Board gives confidential, legal advice to Community Boards and Committees; provides one on one answers when there are questions about when someone can vote and when one cannot.
- The office is open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and can also be reached by telephone at: (212) 442-1400.
- Voting covers basic categories. Behavior that we have to enact where we have a conflict of interest is always the same.
- This can be referred to as the three D's. I disclose my conflict of interest, agree to discuss the issue at hand and last I do not vote.
- A Community Board Member is not allowed to vote on any matter that may result in a personal and/or direct financial gain to the member, any person, or firm with whom the member is associated with (spouse, employer, debtor...etc.).
- Before the vote, the member is required to disclose his or her interest and is then permitted to take part in discussion on the matter.
- A Community Board Member who is a City employee is not entitled to vote on any matters concerning the agency but may always take part in discussion.
- A Community Board Member who serves on the Board of Directors of a not-for-profit organization is not entitled to vote or recommend funding by City agencies for that organization, or other resolutions that could result in a direct financial gain for the not-for-profit in question.

Susan Cleary – What if I work for a not-for-profit?

Answer: [Alex Kipp] – Then see Area 1 of the law. Anytime where we are talking about a direct benefit to your employer, business you own, where you work, or the business that your spouse owns then you disclose that you work there, discuss, and do not vote.

Florence Fisher – What if you are an advisor on a not-for-profit?

Answer: [Alex Kipp] – The question will turn upon whether or not you are deemed in your advisory capacity to have a position with the not-for-profit. If you don't know what your fiduciary obligation is as an advisor then contact us and we will let you know.

- *Example:* A Community Board Member served as a paid president for a not-for-profit and an issue came up for vote at his Community Board that did not directly affect his not-for-profit; however, the not-for-profit had only two sources of funding. The Community Board Member is not entitled to vote on the issue because he was closely associated with the outside entity.
- When you contact the Conflict of Interest Board regarding provisions, opinions and procedure, or need advice about possible conflicts, a written response will be given to the person inquiring.
- Whenever counting votes, the majority of the members who can vote of the Community Board shall constitute a quorum. Whenever any act is authorized to be done or any determination or decision made by any Community Board, the determination or decision of the majority of the members present and entitled to vote during the presence of a quorum, shall be held to be the determination of decision of the Board.
- A Community Board Member who is a City employee may serve on a committee. He/she cannot be the Chairperson of a committee that regularly considers matters that have come or may come before the member's agency.
- A Community Board Member who is chair of a committee and has a conflict of interest at the meeting where the committee would vote, the Community Board Member cannot be the chair for the entire meeting and someone else has to be the chair.

- A Community Board Member may not chair a committee that is likely to have matters before it that concern the member's private interests or employment.
- A Community Board Member who is also an attorney may not represent anyone who has a matter before the Community Board. If the firm that you are from wants to represent the client then you need to contact the Conflict of Interest Board for legal advice. A waiver will be needed from the Conflict of Interest Board. In writing, it will state that the board understands your firm will represent your client and as a Community Board Member you cannot partake in the matter at all or do any of the work behind the scenes. You can; however, disclose your conflict of interest, discuss the issue, but you do not vote.
- The Conflict of Interest Law states that all full-time, part-time, or Community Board Members are not supposed to take "valuable gifts" from people doing business with the City. When people offer gifts because you are a Community Board Member and solely because you are a Community Board Member you don't take it.

Marc A. Haken – Is there a dollar figure on "valuable gifts"?

Answer: [Alex Kipp] – In the City of Interest Conflicts Law Section 2604(b5) it states I should not take a "valuable gift" from somebody doing business or seeking to do business with the City. A "valuable gift" which has a value of \$50.00 or more.

- The handout provided to Community Board Members includes the telephone number and information to contact the Conflict of Interest Board. He encouraged all members to speak to the Conflict of Interest Board. They are friendly people who are lawyers and will help in any way they can to get you the advice you need. Do not fear reaching out to the Conflict of Interest Board.

Mr. Kipp thanked everyone for their time (everyone applauded). Chairperson Martha Taylor invited Kevin Forrestal to address the charter revisions.

Kevin Forrestal – Good Evening everyone! Today the Charter Revision Commission posted the dates of various public hearings, and discussions on the three propositions that are being pushed forward. More information will be sent out tomorrow. The proposition that we are most concerned with is number three, the term limits for board members. Community Board Members who are appointed this year will have seven more years and the people who are appointed next year will have eight more years. We would lose a huge number of Board Members and the older Board Members can agree that it can take a while to understand what is going on in the Community Board. It would take the completion of a term or more before new Board Members would be able to knowledgeably participate in, and with expertise and institutional knowledge, to correctly apply and make a difference as Committee Chairs and Executive Board Members before being retired from the Board.

There are concerns about Community Board's not being able to fill all fifty positions. A lot of people may not be willing to come out and do a lot of work for no monetary rewards. Many of us believe there are subjective reasons why this Proposition is being proposed, and that it is to cut the Community Boards influence or role in City government. The question is what we do about it.

As the President of the Queens Civic Congress; one of the things we spoke about and advocated our members to do is to go out and spread that message that we oppose this and what the reasons are. I will be having a Queens Civic Congress meeting next Thursday. We are going to come up with a statement and it will be sent to Marie to send out to you for your information. People who are civic association leaders or representing other groups may take the notice and speak out. Spread the word to your neighbors, civics, anyone and tell them this is a bad idea. We will send more information on how to support that.

Kevin Forrestal opened the floor for questions/discussion from the Board Members.

Dilip Nath – Yes, I have a question. I understand that you expressed the matter that being on the Community Board is important. At this same time we have an obligation to the City, if I am not mistaken, it is to make sure that diversity is included. The Community Board’s first thing is to engage the community. Our demographic has changed and if you don’t open up for new members, how well would they engage the community. I don’t think we can advocate at the board but privately we can.

Marth Taylor – Exactly right.

Dilip Nath – These boards can express what people are for or against; although, personally I believe that change is a good thing. It brings opportunity for others, and brings diversity in the community.

Kevin Forestal – Thank you that is a good point. If you take a look around the room and go further, take a look at the fullness of our Community Board you will see that there is a reasonable diversity with different ethnic backgrounds. It may not match the exact ratio, but I think it does. When new ethnic candidates come into the area and vote you will see that the complexion of the board and other things will change. You are now on the board and your similar ethnic groups are also on the board sitting next to you. This board is not perfect but reasonably matches the community. The solution is not to put term limits.

Marc A. Haken - Sorry to paraphrase you [*directed at Kevin Forrestal*] but the diversity on this board is really impressive. How do you count diversity by numbers? It is very hard to do that. Right now this is on the table because of the City Council not because of Bill de Blasio. It’s not for the good of people, it is for their own personal advantages. I don’t really think that is a valid point. The diversity on this board is determined by the Council people, the Borough President, people who appoint to the Board. To go and to put term limits; I would stand in front of your house with a sign protesting.

Marth Taylor – Okay thank you, if you read it carefully it doesn’t say you can’t ask people to vote against this proposal but it says you cannot on behalf of the Community Board. So you are perfectly free to ask people to vote against this proposal.

District Manager’s Report, October 2018

City Planning – No new requests were received for Community District 8.

DSNY – The agency asked that residents place their refuse and recyclables for collection the night before – starting 4:00 p.m. This would prevent missed collections.

DFTA – There will be a Public Hearing on October 26th at 10 a.m. at the Sunnyside Senior Center located at 43-31 39th Street.

We are now in hurricane season. Make sure to have a “Go Bag”.

Access-a-Ride hired additional drivers and is testing a new GPS system. In the past, the GPS system used was the same as the one for the bus routes. This new system, hopefully, will shorten the travel time for our seniors and others who use this service.

DOB – There was an increase for work without a permit and work contrary to plans filed in CB8 for the month of September. If you have any questions about a property, you can go to the Homeowners Night on Tuesdays at the Department of Buildings from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. All pertinent staff will be there and ready to assist you. Homeowners, tenants, small business owners and building managers are welcome!

Our Department of Buildings representative attended the dialogue group and there were some complaints regarding homes occupied by students. If there are more than four unrelated individuals/students living in a one family home, in addition to contacting the college or university, you should file a complaint with the Department of Buildings.

NYPD – Crime is down overall; however, there has been an increase in grand larceny (*theft of \$1,000 or more*). They still have an issue with mail phishing in the precinct. Whenever possible drop your mail at the post office or in the new post office boxes that has a mail slot.

Perpetrators are breaking in cars near Cunningham Park. There has been some increase in police presence; however, do not leave your pocketbooks and/or valuables in your cars.

FDNY – There will be a graduating class on October 19th and they anticipate that about 10 -12 new recruits will be sent to CB8 fire house. Since the FDNY has been hiring, the fire houses have been adequately staffed. There was a total of 5,770 incidents.

Structural Fires	447
Non-Structural Fires	263
Suspicious Fires	12
Emergencies	2,726
Medical Emergencies	2,415

Parks – There was a clean-up done by 40 -50 St John’s University volunteers. They cleaned 73rd Avenue, the area under the bridge. They also painted the bridge.

As of September 25th the barbecue area was turned over to the Department of Parks and Recreation. It has been open to the public. This area was made ADA accessible. The Farmer’s Market is at Cunningham Park every Sunday until November 18th. The Christmas tree vendor will be there the following weekend starting on November 23rd.

DOT - The agency announced a new pilot program for wide one-way streets – Chicane Pilot Program. It uses rubber speed bumps, advisory signage, and thermoplastic markings to calm traffic by creating a curvy road. There is no loss of parking involved. This will be implemented in five areas throughout the City of New York. One of these location is in CB8 on 71st Avenue between Kissena Boulevard and 150th Street - adjacent to P.S. 165. Once implemented, they will collect data from all areas to evaluate its effectiveness. Based on the data NYC DOT will determine whether to expand this treatment to other areas.

Daylight savings time will end on November 4th and there will be more pedestrians and drivers on the road at dusk. The agency urges everyone to be extra careful when they travel. The number of accidents usually increase around this time of year due to poor visibility.

DOH – The deadline for current Hookah lounges to apply for a permit to continue operation is October 22, 2018. No applications will be accepted after this date.

The department encourages New Yorkers to get vaccinated for the flu. The mosquito season ends on October 31st. Standing water complaint (s) will not be accepted after this date.

For the maintenance of unkempt vacant properties, DOH has enlisted the assistance of HPD (*no representative attended the meeting from HPD*). HPD has been working with the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance. Unfortunately, the state agency only has 10 inspectors dedicated to these issues.

DEP, DHS and HPD did not attend the District Service Cabinet.

Happy Birthday to Board Members Susan Cleary, Howard Fried, Bob Harris and Rachele Van Arsdale who are celebrating their birthdays this month! Happy Birthday to Susie Tanenbaum as well!



Marie Adam-Ovide

Borough President’s Representative – Susan Tanenbaum

- Ms. Tanenbaum wished everyone who was present a Happy Birthday.
- She congratulated Community Board Members Kenneth Cohen II (*not present*) and Dr. Allen Bennett (*not present*) for receiving service awards from Borough President Katz that were distributed at her Community Board Members Service Awards Ceremony [in June].
- A reminder to all Community Board Members that tomorrow night the Department of City Planning is providing a training on zoning and land use issues. All Community Board Members are invited and encouraged to attend this informative meeting. It will take place in our office in Room 213 from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Refreshments will be served. Handouts were given out.
- The U.S. Homeland Security published a proposed rule change in the Federal register. Borough President Katz to date issued a press statement strongly apposing this Public Charge rule change [*the proposal to penalize immigrants through the public charge test (in addition to being low-income/working class, under 18 or over 62 years of age, and having a health condition that might require some medical treatment) is lack of college education*]. She will distribute the statement and will also distribute information on the Public Charge. Starting from today there is a 60 day public comment period you can go to the website www.protectingimmigrantfamilies.org.
- The U.S. Constitution mandates that our government counts the entire population every ten years. Borough President Katz is committed to ensure a complete count in 2020. We are going to begin discussing this issue now and come up with strategies to make this work. In November before the next Community Board Meeting Borough President Katz will be hosting a 2020 Census Town Hall meeting. An email with more information will be sent to Marie so she can let you all know and you are all invited and encouraged to attend.
- Along with Paul we hope to see everyone on October 22, 2018 at the Italian heritage month. It will be an amazing celebration.

Anthony Iuliano, DOB liaison was in attendance. Chairperson Martha Taylor invited him to address the Board.

Anthony Iuliano –

- The agency is still experiencing a tremendous backlog. He asked for everyone’s patience as the agency is trying to accommodate everyone’s request and address them in a timely manner.
- He reminded everyone that Homeowner’s Night at Borough Hall is every Tuesday from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. It is a very helpful source for both the constituent and the agency, they are able to solve issues on hand instead of waiting a certain amount of time for inspections to happen.
- The agency is trying to assist the Fresh Meadows Civic Association in obtaining the records of a survey for the Brinckerhoff Cemetery. They went to the agency for assistance last week on Homeowner’s Night at Borough Hall. Brinckerhoff is currently considered an inactive cemetery.

- Mr. Iuliano also stated that he attended the St. John’s University Queens Community Dialogue meeting. One of the issues raised was with the property located at: 69-20 178th Street. The next day, there was a posting on the New York Post regarding this location which has an issue of overcrowding with fraternity students. Mr. Iuliano reiterated that when issues about illegal conversion and other issues come up, they must be reported to 311. When looking into the location’s profile on the DOB website, the last time an issue was reported for this address was back in 2013. Even though, activity is being reported for this location if is not reported to 311, the agency will not get the complaint. The agency will send inspectors to this location for inspection.
- Community Board 8 is one the most active community boards in the city of New York and yet if you look at 311 many of the complaints are not called in but you still get action because you have a very vocal and active Community Board (*applause*).
- Mr. Iuliano also mentioned that there is an issue with blocking of driveways. This issue was brought up to the attention of the NYPD. Most of these driveways are illegal (they paved over the front of the yard). The agency is working with the NYPD to make sure certain things are looked for prior to issuing summonses so that property owners don’t get hit with overcharges. They are working with the central NYPD headquarters to set up meetings to train officers on how to properly issue these summonses.
- DM Adam-Ovide mentioned that since the DOB is working on their website, they should consider including on the property’s profile whether or not there is a driveway. Mr. Iuliano stated that they had a discussion last week and they are working on that and looking into it. Anything prior to 1961, the agency has a curb cut file for it on an index card that indicates the driveway and the number of feet that the driveway is located from the nearest intersection. Anyone trying to see if it is a legal curb cut need to come to Homeowners Night.

Committee Reports:

Public Hearing – FY2020 Capital & Expense Budget Priorities:

Marc A. Haken, Budget Director: The Executive Committee met regarding Capital and Expense Budget Priorities they have not changed since last year because they are still the same. Budget Director Marc A. Haken informed everyone that included in their packets are the Expense [*green sheets*] and Capital Budgets [*peach sheets*] Priorities for Fiscal Year 2020. He asked everyone to review them before a vote is taken to approve them.

Approval of the Expense Budget Priorities

Kevin Forrestal made a motion to accept the Community Board 8 Expense Budget Priorities, seconded by Edward Chung.

Budget Director, Marc A. Haken asked if there was any discussion on the motion, seeing none, a vote was taken.

A roll call vote was taken.

Count in favor 28 Opposed: 0 Abstained: 0

Board Members who approved the motion:

Dilafroz Ahmed, Jagir Singh Bains, Edward Chung, Susan D. Cleary, Maria DeInnocentiis, Florence Fisher, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Tami Hirsch, Paul S. Lazauskas, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Mary Maggio, Dilip Nath, Rabbi Shlomo Nisanov, Tamara Osherov, Simon Pelman, Seymour Schwartz, Douglas Sherman, Harbachan Singh, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Jacob Weinberg, and Albert Willingham.

Board Members who did not approve the motion:

None

The motion was passed unanimously.

Approval of the Capital Budget Priorities

Howard Fried made a motion to accept the Community Board 8 Capital Budget Priorities, seconded by Seymour Schwartz.

Budget Director, Marc A. Haken mentioned that certain items were removed because they were already funded and are under construction. They are still listed on the bottom without a priority number; however, we still support them.

Discussion:

Susan Cleary - *On page 5, the Kew Garden Hills Branch Library is listed. Why it is still on the list when construction has been finished?*

Marie Adam-Ovide – *It is completed we should remove it.*

Marc A. Haken - *Right, okay.*

Budget Director, Marc A. Haken asked if there was any discussion on the motion, seeing none, a vote was taken.

Approval of the Capital Budget Priorities

Mary Maggio made a motion to accept the Community Board 8 Capital Budget Priorities with changes, seconded by Howard Fried.

A roll call vote was taken.

Count in favor 27 Opposed: 0 Abstained: 0

Board Members who approved the motion:

Dilafroz Ahmed, Jagir Singh Bains, Edward Chung, Susan D. Cleary, Maria DeInnocentiis, Florence Fisher, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Tami Hirsch, Paul S. Lazauskas, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Mary Maggio, Dilip Nath, Tamara Oshero, Simon Pelman, Seymour Schwartz, Douglas Sherman, Harbachan Singh, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Jacob Weinberg, and Albert Willingham.

Board Members who did not approve the motion:

None

The motion was passed unanimously.

Adjournment

Mary Maggio made a motion to adjourn this meeting at 8:07 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Izabela Szczepanska, CB8 staff
October 24, 2018*