



Chairperson, Martha Taylor

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 Meeting held on Wednesday, April 9, 2025, at the Hillcrest Jewish Center at 183-02 Union Turnpike, Queens, NY 11366.

Attendance:

Board Members Present:

Dilafroz Ahmed, Saaif Alam, D. Lavelda Davis, Sheleeza Deen, Maria DeInnocentiis, Armando Echeverry, Howard A. Fried, Bhitihara Martha-Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., John Gebhard, Wendy Gennaro, Joshua Glickman, Ahsan Habib, Michael Hannibal, Mohammed "Delwar" Islam, Caitlin Marziliano, Doretha Mcfadden, Alan Ong, Tammy Osherov, Simon Pelman, Marisol Perez, Israel Peskowitz, Mohammad Rahman, Aliyah Salim, Kelly Sexton, Douglas Sherman, Harbachan Singh, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Amy Tse, Steven Villaran, and Jacob Weinberg.

Board Members Absent:

Heather Bennett-Idels, Edward Chung, Kenneth Cohen II, Marva Dudley, Allen Eisenstein, Neeta Jain, Roger Joyner, Elke Maerz, Jennifer Martin, Nikolas Michael, David Mordukhaev, Dilip Nath, Hersh Parekh, Frances Peterson, Jesse Rosenbaum, Seymour Schwartz, and Rabbi Mayer Waxman.

Others Present:

Kevin Morris representative of Mayor Eric Adams, Shubhra Datta representative from Borough President Donovan Richards, Keith Felsenfeld representative from Council Member Linda Lee, Peter Paolo representative from Council Member James Gennaro, Rokeya Akhter representative from District Attorney Melinda Katz, Scott Sieber representative from Senator John Liu, Waael Abdallh representative from Senator Toby Stavisky, Ryan Alwi representative from Senator Leroy Comrie, D.M. Marie Adam-Ovide, and CB8 Staffer Nettie V. Norris.

Call to Order:

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

Chairperson Taylor requested all the new board members to introduce themselves.

Armando Echeverry

Mr. Echeverry introduced himself to the community. He is a resident of Fresh Meadows.

Sheleeza Deen

Ms. Deen introduced herself to the community. She is a resident of Briarwood.

Marisol Perez

Ms. Perez introduced herself to the community. She volunteers at the Center for Woman of New York.

Dr. Lavelda Davis

Ms. Davis introduced herself to the community. She has been ordained into faith ministry.

Kelly Sexton

Ms. Sexton introduced herself to the community. She works for the International Union of Operating Engineers.

Chairperson Taylor informed the board members to be on time when attending board meetings.

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Public Participation:

Michael Hannibal

Informed the community about events taking place at the Jamaica Center for Arts and Learning (JCAL). Rufus King Park has their annual Queens International Children's Festival.

Elected Officials' Announcements

Scott Sieber representing Senator John Liu

Informed the community of the various events their office is hosting. Flyers were available.

Keith Felsenfeld representing Council Member Linda Lee

Informed the community of the various events their office is hosting. Flyers were available.

Peter Paolo representing Council Member James Gennaro

Informed the community of the two events their office is hosting. Flyers were available.

Rokeya Akhter representing District Attorney Melinda Katz

The District Attorney recently charged an accused mail thief with grand larceny and other crimes for stealing checks meant for a union benefits fund. This defendant allegedly used a forged ID to put a hold on the mail at the post office and then returned days later to collect the mail that had accumulated. If you have a mailbox at your home that could easily be accessed by anyone walking to your door, install a lock and do not leave your outgoing mail in the mailbox for the mail carrier to pick up.

The DA's office has prioritized removing anyone who enters a home without permission. They have a Housing and Worker Protection Bureau that investigates and prosecutes those who seek to take someone else's property unlawfully. They want to encourage anyone who is a homeowner to also register with ACRIS for alters, just in case anyone files a deed or other legal paperwork with the New York City Department of Finance. For questions or concerns, call the Housing and Worker Protection Bureau at (718) 286-6673. There were also three companies that stole three properties. One of the properties is in Jamaica Estates. Ms. Akhter will forward the information to Martha.

Chairperson Taylor called on Shubhra Datta to speak.

Shubhra Datta – representing Queens Borough President Donovan Richards

This year, the Borough Presidents office had a pool of 916 total applicants who filed to join the Community Board. Of that total, 361 were appointed. Mr. Datta informed the community of the various events their office is hosting. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to their office at 718-286-3000.

Chairperson called on Captain Tsang to speak.

During the 28-day period, the two major categories that went up were burglaries and grand larceny auto. Grand larceny auto went up about one or two percent. The cars that are being affected are Hondas, Acuras, and Infinitis. Burglaries are up by eighty five percent. There were nine burglaries in Sector A, nine in Sector B, seven in Sector C, and four in Sector D.

DM Adam-Ovide announced we have a quorum

Approval of Minutes: Howard A. Fried made a motion to approve the minutes of Wednesday, March 19, 2025, seconded by Harbachan Singh. The motion passed unanimously.

33 Yes **0 No** **0 Abstentions**

Chairperson's Report – Martha Taylor

Welcome to all the new CB8 Members who are here. You all have a Committee Selection Form in your packet. You must serve on at least two committees. Please select your committee and return the form to Marie. Once you have made your selections, please make every effort to attend all your committee meetings. Most of the Board's work is done through the committees.

You also have the updated contact list for your fellow CB8 Members. This is private information. Please, do not share that information with anyone outside of the Board under any circumstance. We had that happen a couple of times and it is a very bad thing to do. I am urging you to not share this information.

April 21-27 will be celebrated as National Volunteer Week. It turns out that volunteering is actually a very healthy activity. Major medical institutions, from the Mayo Clinic to Harvard and more, have been publicizing the health benefits of volunteering for years. Volunteering is associated with improved mental health. Reduced levels of anxiety and depression characterize those who routinely volunteer.

The direct physical benefits of volunteering include lowering your risk for heart disease by improving your circulatory system, improving cholesterol levels, and blood glucose (sugar) levels. Volunteering seems to help the brain shift its focus from pain, which results in relief because you are deeply involved in activities that have

meaning and purpose for you. Social connectivity helps prevent feelings of isolation and we know that isolation is associated with poorer health outcomes

District Manager's Report, April 2025

Department of Design and Construction

- DDC Project#HWTRQX1 – Trench restoration Project for 186th Street will be completed by the end of the month of April.
- DDC Project #HBPED800Q – On April 1st, the city contractor initiated the bridge closure, which included installing detour signs, implementing traffic maintenance and protection measures, and constructing the pedestrian walkway. In parallel, the contractor will proceed with water main work and commence asbestos abatement efforts. An advisory was sent to our office, and it was in the April Newsletter.

Queens Public Library

It is tax season, and you can do Tax Prep and E-Filing at QPL with AARP Foundation Tax Aide. AARP Foundation Tax-Aide provide in-person tax assistance to anyone, free of charge, with a focus on taxpayers who are over 50 and have low to moderate income. Tax-Aide volunteers are trained and IRS-certified every year to make sure they know about and understand the latest changes and additions to the tax code.

Taxpayers must pick up an AARP packet of information and instructions before calling the number listed in your packet for an appointment. By appointment only - no walk-ins accepted. April 7 and April 14 from 10 a.m.- 2 p.m. at the Briarwood Library (85-12 Main Street).

Registration is now open for Prom x QPL Attire Giveaway for teens who are attending prom this spring. Will take place at our Cambria Heights Teen Center (218-13 Linden Boulevard) the week of April 12-18. Registration is required.

Department of Buildings

Local Law 97 requires certain buildings to meet new GHG [greenhouse gas] emissions limits. The online portal for Local Law 97 compliance report is now open. Buildings that exceed 25,000 gross square feet, two or more buildings on the same tax lot that together exceed 50,000 square feet and two or more condominium buildings governed by the same board of managers and that together exceed 50,000 square feet must comply with the law.

Penalties have increased from \$1,000 to \$5,000 for defective retaining walls. This came into effect on March 25, 2025.

Mayor's Community Affairs Unit

OMNY cards are reloadable online. MetroCards will be phased out in 2026. While you are not able to transfer the funds from your MetroCard to the OMNY cards, you can get the funds on your MetroCard refunded to you at the kiosks. Traffic deaths are at an all-time low for the first quarter of 2025.

Department of Transportation

Now that the weather is warmer, we will see more of the scooters in the street. The agency is still looking for recommendations for new locations for scooter corrals.

There has been an expansion of the red-light cameras. We used to have 150 of them in the city. Now, we are allowed to have 600 by the state. They have mobile speed cameras that can be placed where they receive complaints about speeding. Since the presence of the 24-hour/7-day a week cameras, they have seen a 30% reduction in speeding.

There were several locations in our district that received approval from DOT, as per our DOT Borough Planner.

- o 170th Homelawn Street and Goethals Avenue - Signal Modification
- o 87-41 165th Street – No Standing (School)
- o 86th Crescent/162nd Street – School Zone (15MPH Sammy’s law)
- o 137-47 Main Street – Car Share (1 to 2 parking spots)
- o Jewel Ave and 147th Street – LPI (Leading Pedestrian Interval) Modification
- o Jewel Ave and Parsons Blvd - LPI (Leading Pedestrian Interval) Modification
- o 82-25 164th Street – No Standing (School Zone)

Sanitation, NYPD and FDNY

The agencies are all set for Passover. Please see the flyers on the table. We thank all the agencies involved in assisting the community with the Passover Holiday.



Happy Birthday to: Dilafroz Ahmed, Saaif Alam and David Mordukhaev.

Marie Adam-Ovide

Nominations – Dr. Penny Stern, Chair of the Nominating Committee

In accordance with the By-laws of Community Board 8, the April meeting is a nominating meeting. The procedure is that in April we nominate candidates to serve as Officers of the Board. Then at the May meeting, there is a vote. To be eligible for nomination, a member must have served a minimum of one term [or two years]. In accordance with the By-Laws, I now open the floor for nominations:

Dr. Penny Stern

Is there a nomination for Chairperson of the Board?

Answer [Michael Hannibal] - I am nominating Martha Taylor for Chairperson of the Board.

Dr. Penny Stern

Do I have a second?

Answer [Howard A. Fried] – I second.

Dr. Penny Stern

Are there any other nominations on the floor for Chairperson?

Hearing none, Dr. Stern closed nominations for Chairperson.

Dr. Penny Stern

Is there a nomination for 1st Vice-Chair of the Board?

Answer [Martha Taylor] - I am nominating Michael Hannibal for 1st Vice-Chair of the Board.

Dr. Penny Stern

Do I have a second?

Answer [Jacob Weinberg] – I second.

Dr. Penny Stern

Are there any other nominations on the floor for 1st Vice-Chair?

Hearing none, Dr. Stern closed nominations for 1st Vice-Chair.

Dr. Penny Stern

Is there a nomination for 2nd Vice-Chair of the Board?

Answer [Martha Taylor] - I am nominating Seymour Schwartz for 2nd Vice-Chair of the Board.

Dr. Penny Stern

Do I have a second?

Answer [Michael Hannibal] – I second.

Dr. Penny Stern

Are there any other nominations on the floor for 2nd Vice-Chair?

Hearing none, Dr. Stern closed nominations for 2nd Vice-Chair.

Dr. Penny Stern

Is there a nomination for 3rd Vice-Chair of the Board?

Answer [Martha Taylor] - I am nominating Dilip Nath for 3rd Vice-Chair of the Board.

Dr. Penny Stern

Do I have a second?

Answer [Bhitihara Fulton] – I second.

Dr. Penny Stern

Are there any other nominations on the floor for 3rd Vice-Chair?

Hearing none, Dr. Stern closed nominations for 3rd Vice-Chair.

Dr. Penny Stern

Is there a nomination for Treasurer of the Board?

Answer [Dilafroz Ahmed] - I am nominating Harbachan Singh for Treasurer of the Board.

Dr. Penny Stern

Do I have a second?

Answer [Wendy Gennaro] – I second.

Dr. Penny Stern

Are there any other nominations on the floor for 3rd Vice-Chair?

Hearing none, Dr. Stern closed nominations for Treasurer.

Dr. Penny Stern

Is there a nomination for Secretary of the Board?

Answer [Michael Hannibal] - I am nominating Bhitihara Fulton for Secretary of the Board.

Dr. Penny Stern

Do I have a second?

Answer [Saaif Alam] – I second.

Dr. Penny Stern

Are there any other nominations on the floor for Secretary?

Hearing none, Dr. Stern closed nominations for Secretary.

Dr. Penny Stern

Please be prepared to vote in May.

Chairperson Taylor introduced the Queens Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Alfonso Lopez.

Queens Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Alfonso Lopez

Commissioner Lopez started the presentation by letting members of the community know that he can be reached at queensdep@dep.nyc.gov. He then began the Flooding 101 presentation. A slideshow was emailed the next day to the office and two booklets were provided.

- The flood season takes place between June and November.
- The three types of flooding are stormwater, coastal flooding, and groundwater.
- The sewers protect us against 98% of rain events and are built to handle 1.5 to 1.75 inches of rain per hour.
- The sewer system can get overwhelmed when the amount of water produced by a rainstorm is greater than the capacity of the pipes.
- To combat flooding the city has the sewers, bluebelts, floodnet sensors, and unified stormwater rule.
- Unified stormwater rule is what new developers have to follow.
- American Water Resources (AWR) is an insurance that covers the service line to the home.
- Visit the DEP website to find evacuation zones and sign up for Notify NYC for information about emergencies.

Chairperson Taylor opened the floor for questions.

Amy Tse

Whenever there is road work, the water from the tap smells. There were two incidents that happened this year. How long does it usually take?

Answer [Alfonso Lopez] – Discoloration should not affect the taste. When you are experiencing an issue such as taste, discoloration, and smell, I recommend filing a 311 complaint. You can send an email to queensdep@dep.nyc.gov along with the 311-complaint number. When construction takes place, we shut down the water and sedimentation take place. It should not take very long after the team flushes the system from the hydrant.

Douglas Sherman

The upstate reservoirs are being contaminated from salting. Is it something you can speak to?

Answer [Alfonso Lopez] – The Commissioner recently did a press conference about that. The concern is about the salinity entering the water system. We have methods in place to make sure our waters are safe and clean.

James Gallagher

We had an issue on 73rd Avenue and Francis Lewis Blvd, and Mr. Lopez had it fixed within two to three weeks.

Answer [Alfonso Lopez] – We have good field teams.

Chairperson Taylor

You received high praise from a staff member, and I think you received high praise from us. Thank you very much.

Howard A. Fried

I get mail from AWR. Is this the company we should be looking at to get insurance on the pipes?

Answer [Alfonso Lopez] – Once you get the insurance, you will see it on the water bill. I can put together a one-pager about what it is and give it to the board.

Howard A. Fried

Are there other companies besides AWR?

Answer [Alfonso Lopez] – AWR is the one that handles from the watermain to the home relationship. I can ask.

Saaif Alam

What advice would you give to a resident whose pipes are broken and cannot receive water?

Answer [Alfonso Lopez] – We would send materials in the bill that provides steps to take. I will go back to the team and see what we have on hand to share with you.

Chairperson Taylor thanked Commissioner Lopez again and requested a motion to adjourn.

Dr. Penny Stern made a motion to adjourn, and it was seconded by Wendy Gennaro, the motion carried unanimously. The meeting ended at 9:50 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Soleil Griffin, CB8 Staff
April 16, 2025*