



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, January 15, 2025, at the Hillcrest Jewish Center at 183-02 Union Turnpike, Queens, NY 11366.

**Attendance:**

**Board Members Present:**

Saaif Alam, Edward Chung, James Gallagher Jr., John Gebhard, Wendy Gennaro, Joshua Glickman, Ahsan Habib, Michael Hannibal, Elke Maerz, Caitlin Marziliano, Nikolas Michael, Dilip Nath, Alan Ong, Tammy Oshero, Hersh Parekh, Israel Peskowitz, Simon Pelman, Frances Peterson, Mohammad Rahman, Jesse Rosenbaum, Aliyah Salim, Seymour Schwartz, Deepti Sharma, Douglas Sherman, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Amy Tse, Rabbi Mayer Waxman and Jacob Weinberg.

**Board Members Absent:**

Dilafroz Ahmed, Tobias Paris, Kenneth Cohen II, Maria DeInnocentiis, Marva Dudley, Allen Eisentstein, Howard Fried, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, Neeta Jain, Mary Maggio, Jennifer Martin, Jenna Citron Schwab, Heather Bennett-Idels, Mohammed "Delwar" Islam, David Mordukhaev, Harbachan Singh and Steven Villaran.

**Others Present:**

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz, Shubhra Datta representing Borough President Donovan Richards, Ruocheng Chen representing Council Member Linda Lee, Peter Paulo representing Councilman James F. Gennaro, Scott Sieber representing Senator John Liu, Juan Palare representing Senator Toby Stavisky, P. O. Kristen Holloran, Sgt. David Nunez, Captain Mo Tsang, Captain Khan, P.O. Kevin McCarthy representing NYPD – 107th, Denise Downing representing Queens Public Library, Susan Suarez, David Kupferberg, Rachel Shulman and Maryam Sheikh representing DA Katz, Rabbi Manes Kogan, 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 a roll call*

*DM Adam-Ovide announced we have a quorum*

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**Public Participation:**

David Kupferberg shared his opinion about the Queens bus redesign.

The MTA released the Queens Bus Network Redesign Proposed Final Plan Addendum on December 17th, 2024. The MTA is slated to approve it at their committee meetings on January 27th and the board meeting on January 29th. The possible implementation in June 2025. Bus Stop Balancing continues to be pursued by the MTA. The

MTA refuses to acknowledge independent analyses presented during the Public Hearing in July 2024 that demonstrate Bus stop balancing would neither significantly reduce bus speed nor travel times in Queens. Bus stop balancing was done in the Bronx; bus speed increased by only 2%. He went on to elaborate on approximately 9 bus routes all through Queens.

**To the Community Board 8:** Don't allow the MTA to shove the Addendum down your throats. Tell them that the project must be delayed until it is done right. **To the MTA:** The Addendum is not better bus service. Go back to the drawing board.

*Chairperson Martha Taylor invited Rabbi Manes Kogan to say a few words.*

**Rabbi Manes Kogan, Hillcrest Jewish Center**

He introduced himself and wished everyone a Happy New Year. He thanked the community board for all of the hard work that's being done in the community. He went on to share that he joined the US Army and National Guard as their Chaplain. He is now an Officer. His new home base is the Armory in Jamaica. He said it's never too late to start something new.

**The Honorable Councilmember Jim Gennaro**

He brought everyone up to date with the latest community news.

Main Street - DOT made a decision to close off an area in front of Wasserman's Supermarket for loading and unloading. Monday - Friday, the parking will be reduced from 12:00 p.m. - 8:00 a.m. All restrictions will be removed from Friday - Sunday. There will be traffic changes on Vleigh Place by the Kew Gardens Hills Library. This was presented to the community board in April. DOT will go out to do a study of the area on how to make it safer. A lot of accidents are happening, and people are getting killed. The dialogue continues. He has donated more than a Quarter Million dollars to deal with graffiti, spray painting, garbage receptacles etc. If you see any unsightful conditions in the community, call his office and they will take care of it.

**Guest Speaker:**

**The Honorable Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz**

She thanked Martha Taylor, Marie Adam-Ovide, CB8 and Captain Mo Tsang, 107th precinct, for the work they are doing in the community. She is starting another round of community board meetings. She feels it's important that the community gets to know the District Attorney and the people in her office. She hired two new Assistant District Attorneys to work with her. Queens is a very diverse borough. According to the Census, 49% of our borough is born somewhere else in another country. They chose not to make the US or New York City their home, they chose to make Queens County their home. Her two ADA's who will be going out into the community are: Rachel Shulman and Maryam Sheik. They chose to come out to Community Board 8 tonight.

Crime is down. It seems worse but it's not.

- Summer of 2024 – 60,000 arrests and 48,000 arraignments happened in Queens County for the year.
- 2,500-gun cases at once in her office
- 75 homicides in 2024
- In 1972 there were 341 murders in Queens County
- In 2024 there were only 72-75 murders

**Gangs:** A sub-section of the crips gang was taken down and 11 arrested. It's a never ending cycle with the Bloods and Crips. She doesn't want the runners on the streets, she wants the ones that are putting out the hits. When they take them down, it does calm the atmosphere in the streets.

**Squatters:** A squatter is a person who enters and remains in your home without permission or authority to be there.

**Scooters:** Scooters that are parked on the sidewalk are picked up, over 1,000 so far.

**Scams:** If you are getting telephone calls from someone asking you for money that you can't verify, don't give them your money.

**Cold Case Unit:** They investigate cases so families can get closure. To have a murder in your family and you don't know who did it or if you have someone that disappears, it's emotionally insurmountable. She has 41 cases in Queens County where they are looking for the victims' identity. They use modern DNA technology now to identify victims. It's a great day when families can get closure.

Everyone should be filed with Acris, if you own a home. Go to [nyc.gov](http://nyc.gov) and file your home. If anything ever happens or issues come up with your home, you will be notified.

She thanked Councilmember Jim Gennaro for the great job he's doing with the New York City Council.

*Chairperson Martha Taylor asked if anyone had any questions for the DA.*

**Question: Alyah Salim** – I work for a foundation that supports efforts to end the mass incarceration within the Black and Brown communities across the United States. I'm curious to hear about what your office is doing to address racial disparities and what community members, like myself, can do to help those efforts?

**Answer: DA Katz** - I assume part of that question was how do we keep people out of the justice system. I hired a team of 20-25 people. They, along with Rokeya, are all over the borough. They go to community board meetings, precinct council meetings and they work with our Youth Director, Pierre M. Loiseau. His only job is to keep young people out of the criminal justice system. Anyone having issues with their kids who they think are going in the wrong direction and they need someone to talk to, we have internship programs, explorer programs, summer programs for that. We try to take care of these issues and get you help before you go into the system. We try and get people help before they are arraigned on a Desk Appearance Ticket (DAT). We also go around to a lot of community events. I spend a lot of time in different communities and so do my DA's. The first time they see me should not be in a court room. I go out to Soccer games, Basketball games and High School Graduations. We will develop programs for different communities that will help them. Anyone who needs our help, let us know.

**Question: Alan Ong** – What happens when a homeowner is not alive and has a home. What happens if the next of kin and/or squatters are occupying the house?

**Answer: DA Katz** - If we get complaints from the community, and we do, sometimes we can do something about it and sometimes we can't. We must have a reason to go and knock on a door and ask questions. This is not what we do, we're prosecutors. If a bank has the house, we will call and work with them.

**Question: Edward Chung** – You have people in the DA's Office to keep kids out of the criminal justice system. What happened to the Police Athletic League (PAL), are they gone?

**Answer: DA Katz** - The Police Athletic League funds a lot of programs that work in the community such as non for profits. As part of us trying to keep people out of the Criminal Justice system, we have youth initiatives. We get forfeiture funds, there are restrictions with that. We put out 2 bids for community groups; One is for youth organizations, and one is for crime intervention. We have \$50,000 given for non-for-profit groups.

**Question: Jesse Rosenbaum** – We have a lot of issues in the community with e-scooters. Has it reached a point where you have to deal with them in a legal position?

**Answer: DA Katz** – If they are on an app, they are registered and licensed. If they are not, we can pick them up. Also, If they are parked on the sidewalk, which they should not be, we can pick them up.

**Captain Mo Tsang - NYPD 107<sup>th</sup> Precinct**

- Crime is down in 2024, except for grand larceny, auto and burglaries.
- People posing as Landscapers burglarizing homes targeting Asian households. If they don't have a uniform on, call the police.
- He introduced a couple of new officers: Ehtasham Khan, P.O. Kristen Holloran and Sgt. David Nunez.

**Shubhra Datta – representing Queens Borough President Donovan Richards**

The Community Board application is now open. The application window closes on February 14, 2025 by 5:00 p.m. For those interested in applying or re-applying, please submit your application at [queensbp.nyc.gov](https://queensbp.nyc.gov). Please contact our office for a paper application at (718) 286-3000. If you are a current CB member and not sure of your current status in needing to re-apply, please email Michael Carlier, Director of Community Boards at [mcarlier@queensbp.nyc.gov](mailto:mcarlier@queensbp.nyc.gov). Once an application is submitted, our office will reach out to conduct phone interviews. Notice of appointments will be made in late March.

**Upcoming events: – Borough Hall, 120-55 Queens Boulevard, Kew Gardens.**

- Thursday, January 16th at 6:00 p.m. – Haitian Independence Day Celebration
- Thursday, January 23rd from 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. – Stalking Prevention and Intervention Training
- Thursday, January 30th at 6:00 p.m. – Lunar New Year

You can RSVP to any of these events on our website at [queensbp.nyc.gov](https://queensbp.nyc.gov)

*Salute to Flag – Martha Taylor led the salute to the Flag.*

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***Chairperson Taylor requested a motion to approve the minutes.***

***Approval of Minutes: The minutes of Wednesday, January 15, 2025 were unanimously approved.***

***Chairperson Taylor asked if anyone had any corrections or concerns about the minutes – answer was no. Chairperson Taylor requested that those in favor of approving the minutes raise your hand.***

***30 Yes***

***0 No***

***0 Abstentions***

**Members for:** Saaif Alam, Edward Chung, James Gallagher Jr., John Gebhard, Wendy Gennaro, Joshua Glikman, Ahsan Habib, Michael Hannibal, Elke Maerz, Caitlin Marziliano, Nikolas Michael, Dilip Nath, Alan Ong, Tammy Oshero, Hersh Parekh, Simon Pelman, Israel Peskowitz, Frances Peterson, Aliyah Salim, Seymour Schwartz, Deepti Sharma, Douglas Sherman, Mohammad Rahman, Jesse Rosenbaum, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Amy Tse, Rabbi Mayer Waxman and Jacob Weinberg.

**Chairperson's Report – Martha Taylor**

Members who joined Community Board 8 on an odd year must re-apply. The application is now open online. The deadline is Friday, February 14, 2025, by 5:00 p.m. Please ***do not*** wait until the last day to complete the application.

Please see Marie or Nettie after the meeting to see if you are on the list to re-apply.

Former CB8 Member Susan Cleary passed away earlier this month. There was no memorial or service as she did not have any living relatives. Susan served as a CB8 Member for 21 years. She was passionate about our parks.

She served on the Parks Committee, Zoning Committee and Transportation Committee. She was also very much involved with the Borough President's Solid Waste Advisory Board. In addition, she served on the 107<sup>th</sup> Precinct Council, The JFK Democratic Club and served as Vice President of the Kew Gardens Hills Tennant Association.

Please rise and observe a moment of silence in her memory.

## **District Manager's Report, January 2025**

### **Department of Design and Construction**

The agency has two active projects affecting CB8. One is within our borders and the other is on the periphery:

- **DDC Project # HWTRQX1** – Watermain replacement and resurfacing at 186<sup>th</sup> Street (between 73<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and 75<sup>th</sup> Avenue). The work has been stalled due to the cold weather. The work is continuing this week. There is a water shut down scheduled for tomorrow, January 16, 2025.
- **DDC Project # HBPED800Q** - Tide Gate Bridge over Flushing Creek at Flushing Meadows Corona Park. This project includes replacing and widening the existing deck, upgrading the flood control structures with new gates and installing a new hydraulic system. They are currently doing staging while waiting to receive all necessary permits. When the work starts, there will be one lane of traffic kept open with flaggers to move traffic. They expect this work to be completed in two years. Work was last done in this area back in the 1930s.

### **Police Department**

Crime is down except for grand larceny, grand larceny auto and burglaries. People posing as landscapers are burglarizing homes and targeting Asian households. They believe it is due to valuables being kept at home. They have not made any arrests on that; however, they have some leads. The GLAs are associated with drivers leaving their vehicles unattended without locking their doors or leaving the vehicles running with the keys in the ignition. The GLs are associated with package theft during the holidays. There have been incidents of residents being robbed along Hillside Avenue of their mobile telephone. They have robbed residents of their cash as they are exiting and counting money taken out of ATMs.

### **Department of Buildings**

The agency is offering "DOB in Your District" to the elected representatives and Community Boards. CB8 already took advantage of that service two months ago.

### **NYC Aging**

The agency will be celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> year in 2025. Once that date has been set for the celebratory event, the CBs will be notified. The HEAP application is available, and the agency encourages residents to apply online. Call Aging Connect at 212-244-6469 to speak to an aging specialist for programs or services.

### **Queens Public Library**

The QPL Mobile App is available in 96 languages, and they encourage residents to download it. They will have access to numerous cultural programs. Since the Hollis Library is closed for renovation until 2026, they continue to provide a mobile library on Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

### **Mayor's Community Affairs Unit**

The Adams' Administration in collaboration with Governor Hochul's removed 73,000 ghost cars from the street last year. They noticed a great number of these vehicles had Texas temporary plates. It appears that in Texas one can continue to renew temporary plates, as there is no rule as to how many times they can be renewed.

The mayor announced a \$63 million tax break that would eliminate taxes for New Yorkers earning under 150% of the poverty line.

### **NYC Commission on Human Rights**

Last month we learned from the NYC Commission on Human Rights that as of January 2025 under the Fair Chance Housing Law, prospective landlords or those selling a property (co-op/condo) cannot request a background check unless they have offered a contract to lease or sell. If they deny renting or selling the property following the background check, they must provide a copy of that background check. Furthermore, they must wait at least five (5) days to allow the prospective renter, lessee or seller to respond before offering the property to someone else.

In addition, landlords must provide a copy of the Fair Chance Notice to perspective applicants. There are some exceptions: one or two-family dwellings that are owner-occupied or occupied by the owner's family members.



***Happy Birthday to:** Kenneth Cohen II, Maria DeInnocentiis, Mohammad Rahman, and Martha Taylor*

***Marie Adam-Ovide***

### **Health Minute with Dr. Penny Stern – Health Committee Chair**

New York City like the rest of the country are experiencing Norovirus, which is not a new virus. Several thousand cases of norovirus occur each year, from late fall to early spring for the most part. Most people are aware of the virus from outbreaks on cruise ships but that is just the tip of the iceberg. It can also strike at schools, restaurants, day care centers and various types of healthcare sites.

- **Prevention:** staying home while sick, proper food handling, washing your hands, cleaning & disinfecting surfaces and objects.
- **Symptoms:** Vomiting, Diarrhea, Nausea, Stomach Cramps, Fever, Chill, Aches and Tiredness.
- **Treatment:** Drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration. If you've got a high fever and are really, seriously unwell, you need to seek medical attention promptly.

As with most medical conditions, the very old and the very young are at particular risk so pay attention to people in those groups.

There is no vaccine available, as of yet, but potential vaccines are being worked on. Try to stay healthy and avoid norovirus.

Wendy Gennaro made a motion to adjourn, Amy Tse seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Nettie V. Norris, CB8 Staff  
January 27, 2025*