



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, November 12, 2025 at the Hillcrest Jewish Center at 183-02 Union Turnpike, Queens, NY 11366.

Attendance:

Board Members Present:

Dilafroz Ahmed, Saaif Alam, Heather Bennett-Idels, Edward Chung, Kenneth Cohen II, D. Lavelda Davis, Sheleeza Deen, Maria DeInnocentiis, Marva Dudley, Armando Echeverry, Allen Eisenstein, Bhitihara Martha-Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., John Gebhard, Wendy Gennaro, Ashan Habib, Michael Hannibal, Mohammed “Delwar” Islam, Elke Maerz, Doretha McFadden, Caitlin Marziliano, David Mordukhaev, Dilip Nath, Alan Ong, Tammy Oshero, Israel Peskowitz, Frances Peterson, Mohammad Rahman, Jesse Rosenbaum, Seymour Schwartz, Aliyah Salim, Douglas Sherman, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Amy Tse, and Rabbi Mayer Waxman.

Board Members Absent:

Jacob Weinberg, Kelly Sexton, Hersh Parekh, Nikolas Michael, Jennifer Martin, Neeta Jain, Howard A. Fried, Joshua Glikman, Steven Villaran, Marisol Perez, and Roger Joyner.

Others Present:

Simone Zito representative of Mayor Eric Adams, Shannar White representative of Congresswoman Grace Meng, Shubhra Datta representative of Queens Borough President Donovan Richards, Peter Paolo representative of Council Member James Gennaro, Rokeya Akher representative of District Attorney Melinda Katz, Scott Sieber representative of Senator John Liu, Ryan Alwi representative of Senator Leroy Comrie, Anthony Lemma & Vanessa DiNardo representative of Assemblyman David Weprin, Councilmember Linda Lee, Deputy Inspector Mo Tsang – 107th Precinct, 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 Martha Taylor called up the speakers for public participation.

Public Participation:

Ziyaad Khan

He is in support of Introductory Bill 1162. Suicide is one of the most urgent public health crisis that we face today. In New York State, it is the leading cause of death for people between the ages of 18-24 and for people between the ages of 25-34 it is the second leading cause of death. In 2021 alone 1,660 New Yorkers lost their lives to suicide. It is important to know that certain groups are affected by suicide disproportionately. Suicide rates amongst Latino New Yorkers have risen nearly 9% annually and construction workers face suicide rates 4 times more likely than the average American. Introductory Bill 1162 if passed, would require the commissioner of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to provide an annual report on the number of suicides including

a breakdown in subsets such as race, age, occupation and sex, as well as borough on residence allowing organizations as well as communities like ours to identify populations at risk and create targeted interventions. Suicide can be prevented, but in order to prevent it, it must be understood

Chairperson Martha Taylor called on the Elected Officials/Representatives to speak.

Elected Officials' Announcements

Rokeya Akhter representing District Attorney Melinda Katz

On October 24th, Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz hosted the first Queens Missing Persons Day, in partnership with the New York City Office of Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) and U.S. Representative Grace Meng. The free event provided one-on-one assistance for families of loved ones who have been missing for 60 days or more. A total of 16 attendees, representing nine separate families, were assisted during the event. Five additional phone interviews were scheduled for families who heard about the event but were unable to travel to Queens.

DA's Cold Case Unit is investigating approximately 47 unidentified homicide victims. The Missing Persons Day helped to ensure that families have the resources and support they need, and it gave them a chance to update records, file reports and submit DNA samples to assist with finding and identifying their loved ones. In 2024, the District Attorney's Cold Case Unit received a \$500,000 grant, secured by Congresswoman Meng, for advanced DNA testing and genealogical investigations on unidentified homicide cases. Since that time, the unit has initiated genealogy investigations for 21 cases involving unidentified humans.

We encourage you to reach out to our office if you know of anyone in need of help with missing persons.

Chairperson Martha Taylor called on Councilmember Linda Lee. She congratulated her on her overwhelming victory.

Councilmember Linda Lee

Thank you all. Congratulations to all the district leaders here tonight. It's so nice to be back to serve for another four years. Deed theft is on the rise in Queens. I am hosting a Deed theft prevention event with District Attorney Melinda Katz on December 5th from 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at SNAP of Eastern Queens. For more information, please contact their office at (718) 454-2100. It is not only hurting our seniors/older adults but family members as well. We want to make sure they are aware of what's happening. I will keep you posted.

Thanksgiving is coming and I am working with a few of our community partners trying to get turkey donations; regular, halal and kosher turkeys. It will be on a first come – first serve basis and they go fast. If you have not signed up to receive our newsletter, please do so. We will get you on our waitlist. This is how we get information out to the community. We are hosting an E-waste/Textile event on December 7th from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. in Cunningham Park at 196th Street and Francis Lewis Boulevard. Every first and third Wednesday of each month we have a CUNY Law Attorney in our office to assist residents in providing free legal advice. If you have a case with a landlord/tenant etc. and need initial advice, please contact our office for more details at (718) 468-0137. On the fourth Monday of each month, we are partnering with the VFW services office to help veterans with benefits assistance.

Regarding the Fresh Meadows project, I am against it. I am always with the community. Please call our office or send us emails to let us know your feelings about it. On Election Day we had ballot proposal measures that were voted on which all went through. This may change how the ULURP works moving forward. This will target the districts with the least amount of housing. If there are any questions about any of these, I can address them after this meeting.

Ryan Alwi representing Senator Leroy Comrie

Senator Leroy Comrie is hosting several events. He is holding a Free Legal Assistance event with NYLAG (the New York Legal Assistance Group) at the District Office on Monday, December 1st from 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. The NYLAG van will be outside our office to assist people with civil (not criminal) issues such as tenant/landlord disputes, healthcare, debt management, immigration and many other civil issues. This event is by appointment only and slots fill up quickly, so it is recommended that you call our office at (718) 765-6359 to make an appointment **ASAP!** You can also inquire about other events taking place as well. I left flyers on the table.

Senator Comrie is tracking the government shutdown and subsequent funding issues that have been happening such as with food stamps and utility assistance programs, and as such we have several bills we are working on to address resulting in hardships:

Senate Bill S5129 would require food distributors who accept SNAP benefits to establish a mechanism to apply coupons to purchases so that those on SNAP will receive extra discounts when purchasing food.

Senate Bill S1847 would require the public service commission to consider the economic impact of utility rates and charges so as to combat unfair rate hikes for energy consumers and has passed the Senate and is currently in committee in the Assembly.

Senate Bill S2460 would require the Secretary of State to appoint a representative from the Consumer Protection Division's Utility Intervention Unit to serve on the State Energy Planning Board, who would serve as a consumer advocate with regards to energy planning and is currently awaiting the governor's signature.

Peter Paolo representing Council Member James Gennaro

We are giving away free Turkeys on Monday, November 24, from 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. in the district office. Please note that the supplies are limited. Please call the office to get your turkey. They are kosher and will be frozen. After 5:00 pm, it will be first come-first served. We are only able to give one turkey per household. For more information on upcoming events, please call our office at (718) 217-4969. Flyers were left on the table.

Shannar White representing Congresswoman Grace Meng

Congresswoman Meng continues to fight for healthcare for the hard-working families in Queens who deserve to have it and she is also working to reverse the devastating cuts to Medicare. She rejects the rate hikes that Con Edison is proposing and will take up that fight as well. A couple of other bills include;

Bill HR 5151 - The Quiet Community Acts of 2025

Bill HR 5645 - The Pray Safe Act of 2025

Bill HR 4306 - The Ban Harmful Food Dyes Act

We do have a couple of events coming up. For more information, please contact the office at (718) 358-6364.

Scott Sieber representing Senator Liu

Senator John Liu is hosting several upcoming events. Flyers were left on the table. We had our pumpkin smash and it generated about 1,000 lbs. of compost. We have up to 300 table top composting bins at our office. Stop by and take one, they are free. We are having a fraud prevention seminar in sponsor with the DA's office regarding EBT, CRYPTO and other scams from text/emailing fake messages. We are having a fire safety training, with FDNY, 2 E-waste/textiles events, a toy drive for our troops of Fort Totten Brigade. If you would like to donate toys, please drop them off at our office by December 19th. We are also hosting our holiday party at our office including free food from local restaurants. Please call our office for more information (718)765-6675.

Vanessa Dinardo representing Assembly Member David Weprin

We just wrapped up our senior appreciation month event. We hosted a fraud prevention seminar. We had a great turnout. It is an important topic for our seniors to know about. Also, we will be hosting a Thanksgiving Halal

whole chicken distribution on Monday, November 24th from 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. at our Richmond Hill office. We are accepting canned goods for our food drive and toys for our toy drive for drop off at our Fresh Meadows office. Please contact our office at (718) 454-3027 with any questions.

Shubhra Datta representing Queens Borough President Donovan Richards

On behalf of Queens Borough President Donovan Richards, we thank everyone who attended the Veterans celebration at Queens Borough Hall on November 6th. Awards were presented to several distinguished military veterans from Queens. They were honored for their sacrifices for serving our nation in uniform. He is hosting several events. Flyers were left on the table. To learn about the upcoming events, please feel free to contact the office at (718) 286-3000.

Chairperson Martha Taylor called on a representative from the 107th Precinct.

Deputy Inspector Mo Tsang - 107th Precinct

He reminded everyone not to leave things visible in your car. Don't invite burglars in. Also, there is a jewelry scam going on. If you see a man driving a car with a female passenger and they approach you saying they want to bless you with cash for your jewelry, walk away. On Sunday, November 16th from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. they will host an event in St. John's University parking lot. They will be giving away free Catalytic Converter Etching kit.

Chairperson Taylor requested for the roll call.

DM Adam-Ovide announced we have a quorum.

Salute to the flag – Chairperson Taylor led the salute to the flag.

Chairperson Martha Taylor requested a motion to approve the minutes.

Michael Hannibal made a motion to approve the minutes of Wednesday, October 22, 2025, seconded by Sey Schwartz.

Chairperson Martha Taylor requested that those in favor of approving the minutes say aye.

37 *Yes*

0 No

0 Abstentions

The motion passed unanimously with any corrections.

Members for: Dilafriz Ahmed, Saaif Alam, Heather Bennett-Idels, Edward Chung, Kenneth Cohen II, D. Lavelda Davis, Sheleeza Deen, Maria DeInnocentiis, Marva Dudley, Armando Echeverry, Allen Eisenstein, Bhitihara Martha-Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., John Gebhard, Wendy Gennaro, Ashan Habib, Michael Hannibal, Mohammed “Delwar” Islam, Elke Maerz, , Doretha McFadden, Caitlin Marziliano, David Mordukhaev, Dilip Nath, Alan Ong, Tammy Osherov, Israel Peskowitz, Frances Peterson, Mohammad Rahman, Jesse Rosenbaum, Seymour Schwartz, Aliyah Salim, Douglas Sherman, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Amy Tse, and Rabbi Mayer Waxman.

Chairperson's Report – Martha Taylor

Thank you, Andrew Karpan, for the nice article you wrote in the Chronicle. Congratulations to Community Board 8 Member Seymour Schwartz who was honored at the Veterans Celebration last week by St. John's University. Thank you, Sey, for your service to our country. Thank you to all the veterans as well.

In your packets, we have the tentative dates for our Executive Committee and Monthly CB8 meetings for 2026. These dates were emailed to everyone approximately two weeks ago. No one has reached out to the CB8 office with any issues. If you have a problem with any of those dates, please reach out to the community board.

The holiday party for CB8 members will follow our board meeting on December 10th. Tonight, Elke Maerz is collecting donations so we can buy refreshments.

Health Minute with Dr. Penny Stern – Health Committee Chair

November 18-24, 2025 is US Antibiotic Awareness Week. Antibiotics are medications that can treat bacterial infections. Antibiotics kills the bacterial organism or disables it so it cannot multiply or grow. Bacteria respond to antibiotics, not viruses or fungal infections. Antibiotics date back to work of Alexander Fleming, who is credited with discovering penicillin in 1928, an event that has saved countless numbers of lives.

Resistance to the effect of these medications occurs when they are used inappropriately. Example: when a person has an illness and wants an antibiotic, even though what he or she has is not sensitive to it, such as a virus. Eventually, the bacteria will no longer respond to the antibiotic. It becomes difficult and sometimes impossible to find an agent to treat these infections, commonly called “superbugs” for their ability to survive treatment with antibiotics. The result can be catastrophic. It is absolutely essential to use antibiotics only as indicated to prevent resistance developing. Every year organizations gather together in observance of Antibiotic Awareness Week. The CDC represents the US and the World Health Organization’s World Health Assembly represent a worldwide awareness campaign.

What can you do to help limit drug resistance?

- 1) If you are prescribed antibiotics, finish the entire course of treatment. Don’t stop because you “feel better”. This can lead to drug-resistant bacteria taking hold and multiplying.
- 2) Never ask for antibiotics when the problem is viral. Don’t borrow medications from other people. And don’t share yours, either.
- 3) If you have old prescriptions, dispose of them properly. Don’t leave them around to be used “later”.

The best thing to do is to avoid getting sick whenever possible. That means frequent handwashing, covering your mouth and nose when coughing and/or sneezing whenever possible, stay home when ill. Don’t spread your illness around! Please take care of yourselves.

Guest Speaker – Xin-rui Lee, Community Engagement Specialist – Independent Budget Office (IBO)

She presented information on how to use IBO as a resource to answer your budget and policy questions.

- 1) What is IBO? The Independent Budget Office is a nonpartisan City agency that provides data driven fiscal and policy insights into New York City’s budget, economy and policy.
- 2) What does IBO do? IBO provides charter mandated reports in alignment with major budget actions and answers questions from Council Members and public.

If you have any questions or presentation requests, please visit us at info@ibo.nyc.gov.

Chairperson Martha Taylor called on DM Marie Adam-Ovide to share her November Report. DM Adam-Ovide invited everyone to read her report as it was in everyone’s packet.

District Manager's Report, November 2025

Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Following the Federal Decision on abortion, the agency created the new NYC Abortion Access Hub which was up and running by November 2022. Information can be found on their website at: nyc.gov/sexualhealth.

One can find the Sexual & Reproductive Health Care Bill of Rights on their site. The goal is to make NYC Abortion Services accessible to all, especially the vulnerable and marginalized. This is the first municipal funded abortion access line - 877-NYC-AHUB. As of September 30, 2025, they have received about 25,000 calls yearly. The callers are mostly Latino between the ages of 18 to 29 years old. They are usually less than 3 months pregnant. Most live in NYC and used Google to find the Hub. They connect abortion seekers with care and resources in NYC.

Department of Parks and Recreation

Parks Manager Nelson Fung announced the DEP project for water drainage at Utopia Playground. It started on October 10, 2025, in the multi-purpose area. This work will last for about 4 months. Once completed, the area will be coated with asphalt. The basketball court will not be affected by this project.

NYPD

Patrol Borough Queens South Assistant Chief Christopher McIntosh reported that crime was down by 2.9% overall. Shooting went down by 40%, shoplifting went down by 12%. Robberies went up. There were 16 versus 6 around the same time last year. They have made 12 arrests. Grand larceny increased. This is mostly due to gypsy scams targeting the elderly and grand larceny auto. They are still stealing catalytic converters and air bags from vehicles. It is very organized. It takes the perpetrators only a couple of minutes to steal the parts. Honda vehicle models are still the ones most targeted and Toyota Highlanders. He recommended the use of the Club, or the wheel covers to protect your vehicle. Vin etching of catalytic converters is also recommended.

Department of Environmental Protection

Commissioner Lopez wanted to remind residents to remove fallen leaves and uncover the catch basin to assist in alleviating flooding, especially the areas that do not have mechanical broom service. This information was also included in the November Community Board 8 Newsletter.

Department of Design and Construction

The agency received the contract for the Briarwood Library. The design should be completed by early 2026. Construction will start in 2027 and last for about two years. The agency is also looking for civil engineers. They have been posting this opportunity online.

Tide Gate Project Update, as per Community Construction Liaison Karen Flores

The city contractor is in the process of:

- Sealing and dewatering the cofferdam: (A cofferdam dewatering system is a temporary structure designed to remove water and/or soil from a specific area, allowing construction work to be carried out in dry conditions.)
- Wildlife relocation: (The city contractor follows DEC regulations regarding the relocation of aquatic life. Trapped fish must be safely captured and returned to the water outside the cofferdam before full dewatering.)
- Drainage work: (Drainage infrastructure improvements involve the installation of catch basins and manholes.)
- Possibly starting the bridge demolition work by the end of November and/or December 2025



James Gallagher and Douglas Sherman!

Marie Adam-Ovide

Chairperson Martha Taylor requested a motion to adjourn.

Michael Hannibal made the motion to adjourn at 8:25 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Nettie V. Norris, CB8 Staff
December 1, 2025*