



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, October 22, 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, Lavelda Davis, Sheleeza Deen, Marva Dudley, Allen Eisentstein, Howard Fried, Bhitihara Martha-Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., John Gebhard, Joshua Glickman, Michael Hannibal, Mohammed “Delwar” Islam, Neeta Jain, Elke Maerz, Jennifer Martin, Caitlin Marziliano, Doretha McFadden, Nikolas Michael, Dilip Nath, Alan Ong, Tammy Osherov, Hersh Parekh, Israel Peskowitz, Frances Peterson, Mohammad Rahman, Seymour Schwartz, Kelly Sexton, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Amy Tse, Rabbi Mayer Waxman, and Jacob Weinberg.

Board Members Absent:

Kenneth Cohen II, Maria DeInnocentiis, Wendy Gennaro, Ashan Habib, Roger Joyner, David Mordukhaev, Marisol Perez, Jesse Rosenbaum, Aliyah Salim, Douglas Sherman, Steven Villaran, and Jacob Weinberg.

Others Present:

Samone Zito representative of Mayor Eric Adams, Shannar White representative of Congresswoman Grace Meng, Shubhra Datta representative of Queens Borough President Donovan Richards, Ruocheng Chen representative of Council Member Linda Lee, Henry Yam representative of Council Member James Gennaro, Rokeya Akher representative of District Attorney Melinda Katz, Scott Sieber representative of Senator John Liu, Waael, Ryan Alwi representative of Senator Comrie, Vanessa Dimardo representative of Assembly Member David Weprin, Josh Simanowitz representative of Assembly Member Samuel Berger, 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.

Public Participation:

Jose Suarez

Mr. Suarez has orders of protection against members who reside in the Wyndham Hotel. He requested police presence for the surrounding area of Fresh Meadow due to safety concerns.

Francesa Bishop representing Hillcrest Library

The library is scheduled to reopen on Tuesday, October 28th at 1 p.m. There will be a few programs offered at the library.

Tammy Oshero

There was a rally that took place against the Fresh Meadows Development Plan. She requested Council Member Linda Lee to attend a meeting with members of the community regarding their concerns.

Jennifer Martin

Schwartz Brothers-Jeffer Memorial Chapels, Sinai Chapels, Parkside Memorial Chapels, and Forest Park Funeral Home are hosting several events at the funeral home. Flyers were provided.

Elected Officials' Announcements

Rokeya Akhter representing District Attorney Melinda Katz

District Attorney Melinda Katz wants seniors to be careful and advised that you do not open the door to anyone you do not know. For people in uniform, such as a utility worker, ask to see ID and call the utility to verify credentials. There was a doctor charged with grand larceny for stealing state money meant to expand access to care for women.

Ryan Alwi representing Senator Leroy Comrie

Senator Leroy Comrie is hosting several events. To learn about upcoming events, feel free to contact their office at (718) 765-6359. Also, when it comes to lithium-ion batteries there is a S1106 bill that requires clear warning labels to prevent injuries. The office is also tracking complaints regarding lithium-ion batteries.

Shannar White representing Congresswoman Grace Meng

Congressmember Grace Meng is ready to negotiate for a government funded bill to protect health care access and end the government shut down. The office is also hosting several events. To learn about upcoming events, feel free to contact their office at 718-358-6364.

Keith Felsenfeld representing Council Member Linda Lee

Council Member Linda Lee's office has a CUNY lawyer who comes to the office every other Wednesday. If there is anyone who needs legal assistance, you can reach out to the office at 718-468-0137. Council Member Lee has publicly stated that she is opposed to the Fresh Meadows Development as is and always follows the community's advice.

Vanessa Dinardo representing Assembly Member David Weprin

Assembly Member David Weprin is hosting several events. To learn about upcoming events, feel free to contact their office at 718-454-3178.

Scott Seiber representing Senator John Liu

Senator John Liu is hosting several events. Flyers were provided. To learn about upcoming events, feel free to contact their office at 718-765-6675.

Shubhra Datta – representing Queens Borough President Donovan Richards

Queens Borough President Donovan Richards is hosting several events. To learn about upcoming events, feel free to contact their office 718-286-3000.

Chairperson called on Captain Tsang to speak.

Sergeant Oscar Li, 107th Precinct - Quality of Life

There is a homeless condition on 188th Street by Kohl's that was addressed by the Department of Homeless Services and the Department of Sanitation. Compared to last year, crime has decreased. Their officers have been combating crime regarding grand larceny of autos and grand larceny. Please stay alert. They have

received complaints about people speeding and have issued speeding tickets to the violators. They are also working on requesting a speed bump near Cunningham Park. The 107th Precinct has been towing illegally parked vehicles; especially vehicles that have been parked in the same location for more than 7 days. It is considered street storage.

Chairperson Taylor requested for the roll call.

DM Adam-Ovide announced we have a quorum.

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

Chairperson Taylor requested a motion to approve the minutes.

Approval of Minutes: Michael Hannibal made a motion to approve the minutes of Wednesday, September 10, 2025, seconded by Saaif Alam.

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

<u>32</u> Yes	<u>0</u> No	<u>0</u> Abstentions
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The motion passed unanimously without corrections.

Members for: Saaif Alam, D. Lavelda Davis, Maria DeInnocentiis, Marva Dudley, Armando Echeverry, Allen Eisenstein, Howard A. Fried, Bhitihara Martha-Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., John Gebhard, Ahsan Habib, Mohammed “Delwar” Islam, Elke Maerz, Caitlin Marziliano, Nikolas Michael, David Mordukhaev, Dilip Nath, Alan Ong, Tammy Osherov, Hersh Parekh, Marisol Perez, Israel Peskowitz, Frances Peterson, Mohammad Rahman, Jesse Rosenbaum, Seymour Schwartz, Douglas Sherman, Harbachan Singh, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Amy Tse, and Rabbi Mayer Waxman.

Chairperson’s Report – Martha Taylor

We have a message that our member for many years, Harbachan Singh has passed. He served on our board as our Treasurer/Budget Director and Chair of our Government Affairs Committee. He also served on the Queens Civic Congress. Chairperson Taylor wished condolences to his family, friends and all those who are affected by his passing. In his memory, the board offered him a moment of silence.

Chairperson Taylor requested for a moment of silence.

Special Election - Seymour Schwartz, 2nd Vice-Chair & Chair of Nominating Committee

With the passing of Harbachan Singh, Community Board 8’s Bylaws dictate that for certain reasons, it is required that we vote for a substitute at the first board meeting. On October 8th, the Executive Board recommended Hersh Parekh, as a substitute to serve the remaining term.

Seymour Schwartz

Are there any further nominations for the office of Treasurer?

Hearing none, Sey closed nominations for Treasurer.

Seymour Schwartz

Hersh Parekh, do you accept the nomination?

Answer [Hersh Parekh] – I accept

Dr. Penny Stern

Since Hersh Parekh is running without opposition, I am going to ask our secretary, Bhitihara Fulton, to cast one vote for the slate.

Answer [Bhitihara Fulton] – I cast one vote.

Health Minute with Dr. Penny Stern – Health Committee Chair

October 22nd is International Stuttering Awareness Day. Since 1998, this day has been observed to raise awareness of a condition that impacts about 1% of the world's population or 80 million people. Males are much more likely to stutter than females by a ratio of about 4:1. Stuttering is a disorder of communication. Sometimes the word stammering is used interchangeably with stuttering. It means that the normal flow of speech is interrupted. In some people, the stuttering is also accompanied by movements of the face and body that reflect the difficulty a person is having in getting the words out. The source of stuttering is genetics as evidenced by the fact that other family members also stutter. It can be a component of other language problems as part of developmental problems of some sort of neurophysiologic problem. Stuttering can be treated, thanks to speech therapy. There is no truth to the idea that stuttering bespeaks low intelligence. Today, research continues to more clearly identify the causes of stuttering. Stuttering is prevalent and help can be made available.

Public Hearing:

Michael Hannibal, 1st Vice-Chair - Budget Committee

FY '27 District Needs Statement and the Capital & Expense Budget

There was a budget meeting conducted on Monday, October 20th. We have to vote each year on our needs statement and budget priorities. The FY'27 Needs Statement provided the district overview and the needs CB8 believes is necessary in the community.

Michael Hannibal

I would like to make a motion for the approval of the Needs Statement. Who seconds?

Answer [Saaif Alam] – I second.

Michael Hannibal

All in favor say aye.

The FY'27 Needs Statement was unanimously approved.

Michael Hannibal

The Capital Budget priorities had concerns which we would like to present to the City Council. Everything was ranked in the order we felt was a priority. I would like to make a motion for the approval of the Capital Budget priorities. Who seconds?

Answer [Jacob Wienberg] – I second.

Michael Hannibal

All in favor say aye.

The Capital Budget priorities were unanimously approved.

1st Vice-Chair Hannibal called up Brittany Shropshire to speak.

Brittany Shropshire

Ms. Shropshire advocated in support of additional funding for the libraries.

Michael Hannibal

Lastly, the Expense Budget has requests for increases in funding. May I have a motion to accept the Expenses Budget?

Answer [Howard Fried] – I make the motion.

Michael Hannibal

May I have a seconded?

Answer [Saaif Alam] – I second

Michael Hannibal

All in favor say aye.

The Expense Budget was unanimously approved.

Guest Speaker Henry Yam, Chief of Staff - Council Member James Gennaro - 2025 NYC Ballot Proposals

The ULURP process is when applicants can change the zoning of NYC. They can change the zoning from low density to high density, which is what gets to be built there. The applicant would go through a long bureaucratic process. They will then present to the Community Board and Borough President who will offer their opinion to the proposed changes. Once the Community Board and Borough President give their opinion, it goes to the City Council where the local City Council Member has a say in the ULURP application. This is called member deference, whatever the local member wants for their district their colleagues will support them.

On November 4th, there will be five ballot proposals that were put on by the mayor and his administration. Mr. Yam spoke about ballot proposals two to four. Proposals two and three are similar in that they will change the ULURP process so that not every project will have to go through the ULURP process. Certain projects that will be arbitrarily determined by the Commission and will no longer be part of the ULURP process. Instead, it will be decided by the Board of Standards and Appeals (BSA) and the City Planning Commission (CPC). Both of those bodies are not elected but are appointed by the mayor's office.

Ballot proposal four is about the creation of an appeals board that consists of the mayor, speaker of the city council and the local borough president where the project is proposed. They would be able to override the entire NYC Council on whether the project continues or not. The creation of the appeals board would be surrendering power away from local communities and handing them to the speaker who could be from any borough, the mayor who has many different interests across the entire city and the borough president who does represent where the project is proposed but still has the entire borough to consider. It will become a political tool between those three leaders as opposed to the council member who is a representative and member of the community. Mr. Yam also provided the flyer.

Executive Committee Resolutions:

Howard Fried, Executive Committee Member

Community Board 8 and its residents always stand up against hate, violence, and things that matter to residents and the city. Just before COVID-19, we passed a resolution about Anti-Asian hate and violence. Community Board 11 had another resolution about immigrant hate, in which we supported them. Another form of hate is against the Jewish community. The phrase that is going around is "Globalize the Intifada". The resolution is against the use of the phrase "Globalize the Intifada" and what it means to the Jewish Community.

Howard Fried

I make a motion to accept the resolution. May I have a second

Answer [Saaf Alam] – I second.

Howard Fried opened up for discussion.

Israel Peskowitz

A couple of months ago, I saw a post by someone I respected that used a word that has only been used in a racist context. That word is something that I've heard my grandparents use. At first, I thought, who are they to tell us that we cannot use this word. It is our word. Then I thought, it is not about my feelings, it is about how they felt. It is not my knowledge; it is their knowledge. I looked up the word Intifada which means rising up. It is used for a lot of peaceful and nonpeaceful revolutions. For me and all the other Jews in the room, the word means death.

Hersh Parekh

I think it is important to know that it is not just about the Jewish people in this room, this is a sentiment that we should all share. I think it is incumbent on us as leaders in this community and our elected leaders to do more than just discourage the use of these types of phrases. We need to emphatically denounce this type of language that calls for violence against our neighbors. Supporting this resolution does not mean that you do not care about what is happening to the Palestinians. You can care about the impact this violence is having on the Palestinians, but to say that "Globalize the Intifada" means different things to different people is wrong, because it means one thing. We must loudly and strongly denounce hate speech against all communities.

Neeta Jain

Hate speech should not be accepted within any community. New York is considered a melting pot. We should have respect for each other's religion, creed, color, and race. We are speaking about the Jewish community today; however, we stand for each community with respect, love and compassion.

Mohammad Tohin

We all agree that violence should not be accepted. I am Muslim. When we say Allah, people think that is a Muslim word when it is an Arabic word. Sometimes we have words that are misrepresented. In Arabic, Intifada means uprising. We should make it clear that it is an Arabic word. People use this word to go up against their government.

Nikolas Michael

We should be standing with the Jewish Community but also across the entire world. I do not want to debate this word. We are a quasi-governmental body. This is not a resolution to stand with a particular community – which I fully support, this is a resolution calling for policing of a particular protest phrase. I do not feel like this should be our role as a body. Our role as a body is to stand with communities and not policing protest speech.

Howard Fried

The resolution calls on city leadership, community organizations and civic leadership as partners to denounce such rhetoric. To promote peace and mutual respect among all New Yorkers. To continue strengthening efforts that combat antisemitism and all forms of hate. Free speech is a wonderful thing, but when people are inciting violence with that term it is not free speech. Intifada, in this sense, is an uprising for antisemitism, anti-jew, jew hate and murder.

Chairperson Taylor requested a roll call vote.

Yes - 32

No - 1

Abstention - 0

Members For: Saaif Alam, Heather Bennett-Idels, Edward Chung, Lavelda Davis, Sheleeza Deen, Marva Dudley, Allen Eisentstein, Howard Fried, Bhitihara Martha-Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., John Gebhard, Joshua Glickman, Michael Hannibal, Neeta Jain, Elke Maerz, Jennifer Martin, Caitlin Marziliano, Doretha McFadden, Dilip Nath, Alan Ong, Tammy Osheroov, Hersh Parekh, Israel Peskowitz, Frances Peterson, Seymour Schwartz, Kelly Sexton, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Amy Tse, Rabbi Mayer Waxman, and Jacob Weinberg.

Members Opposed: Nikolas Michael

Michael Hannibal, 1st Vice-Chair

This resolution grew out from what was going on in the Jewish community. As they say, “If they come for me, they will come for you”. The resolution is about what we are hearing and seeing outside our community, but yet we know it is here. We know that there are people who have problems with diversity and about us talking about being together. We know that we have to stand united about everything that is going on. This resolution states that we must all stand together and that CB8 must stand up against any type of hate regardless of if it is antisemitism, racism, islamophobia, homophobia, etc. In addition, CB8 must recommit to this every two years.

Yes - 32

No - 1

Abstention - 0

Martha Taylor

May I have a motion to accept the resolution?

Answer [Heather Bennett-Idels] – I motion.

Martha Taylor

May I have a second?

Answer [Dilip Nath] – I second.

Chairperson Taylor opened up for discussion. Hearing none, she requested a roll call vote.

Members For: Saaif Alam, Heather Bennett-Idels, Edward Chung, Lavelda Davis, Sheleeza Deen, Marva Dudley, Allen Eisentstein, Howard Fried, Bhitihara Martha-Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., John Gebhard, Joshua Glickman, Michael Hannibal, Neeta Jain, Elke Maerz, Jennifer Martin, Caitlin Marziliano, Doretha McFadden, Nikolas Michael, Dilip Nath, Alan Ong, Tammy Osheroov, Hersh Parekh, Frances Peterson, Seymour Schwartz, Kelly Sexton, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Amy Tse, Rabbi Mayer Waxman, and Jacob Weinberg.

Members Opposed: Israel Peskowitz

Martha Taylor

I want to thank you all. I have always prided us on being a group that can agree to disagree and can put their best thoughts forward. I want to thank you tonight because that is what you did again. I love you all dearly. This is a wonderful community board.

District Manager’s Report, October 2025

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.

Police Department

Crime has been down for the last 28 days. The Q-teams started. The 107th Community Car Wash will be held on September 20th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The yearly Halloween event, Trunk or Treat, will be held at the end of October - more information to follow.

Department of Design and Construction

There are three projects on DDC's list for CB8:

- Tide Gate Project – Community Construction Liaison Karen Flores – They are relining the existing watermain, they will be setting up the dewatering system and excavating. All DEC guidelines to protect aquatic life will be followed during this project.
- HWPR24Q1 - Community Construction Liaison Iva Christie – They are working on 76th Avenue and Parsons Blvd., 147th Street, 68th Drive and 68th Avenue. Notices go out every week for this pedestrian ramp project. We just received a notice for work scheduled for tomorrow (see attached).
- HWPR23Q1 – Community Construction Liaison Eric Abreu - This pedestrian ramp project is in both CB8 and CB12. They are now working in CB12.

Con Edison

Con Edison wanted to remind residents to act fast when they smell gas. If you see a smoke cloud, or if there is a smell of rotten eggs, leave immediately and call 911 or Con Ed outside your home. They have more information on that on their website.

Department of Sanitation

I raised the issue of lack of sanitation bins along Hillside Avenue. Superintendent Mazzola stated that one was vandalized, and others were stolen. The agency has added six (6) sanitation bins along Hillside Avenue (i.e. 202nd, 169th and 168th Streets). He also stated that Sanitation has been monitoring the Hillside Avenue corridor, especially from 175th Street to 164th Street, during the commercial routing hours and summonses have been issued. They have spoken to some of the vendors who have placed their commercial waste in the residential baskets, which are for the residential units on the second floor.

The Department of Sanitation is giving four hours of training to their sanitation workers with 5 or less years' experience on how to maneuver the snowplows in preparation for the winter.

Queens Public Library

They are having events celebrating Hispanic Heritage, Italian Heritage, Philippino Heritage and LGBTQIA+. In November, they will celebrate the Indigenous People of America.

Mayor's CAU

Our CAU Representative Kevin Morris was promoted to another position. He is now the Director of Citywide Shooting Response. He introduced Simone Zito who will be replacing him as Queens Borough Director. He touted the removal of 4,000 illegal firearms this year and a total of 23,000 during Mayor Adams' Administration. He thanked the NYPD for their work.

He also informed us that the 15 MPH speed limit on e-bikes and e-scooters will take effect on October 24th . He mentioned that there will be cameras installed for enforcement. It was unclear as to how the enforcement would work.

NYC Commission on Human Rights

The agency used to offer a two-hour online workshop that addressed all different topics on human rights. They are now offering one-hour workshops on individual topics with more information. Here is the link to the workshops: <https://www.nyc.gov/site/cchr/community/events-workshops.page>



Happy Birthday to: Howard Fried and Ashan Habib!

Marie Adam-Ovide

Chairperson Taylor requested a motion to adjourn.

Michael Hannibal made the motion. Adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Soleil Griffin-Green, CB8 Staff
November 5, 2025*