



## COMMUNITY BOARD # 4Q

Serving: Corona, Corona Heights, Elmhurst, and Newtown

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**Sharon Lee**  
Acting Borough President

**Louis Walker**  
Chairperson

**Christian Cassagnol**  
District Manager

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September 8, 2020

### COMMUNITY BOARD ATTENDANCE:

#### Board Members Attending:

Louis Walker  
Lucy Cerezo-Scully  
Chaio-Chung Chen  
Yi Chen  
David Chong  
Lynda Coral  
Lorena Diaz  
Michelle Dunston  
Aridia Espinal  
Marialena Giampino  
Kristen Gonzalez  
Vincent Laucella  
Carol Machulski  
Sunil Mahat  
Patricia Martin  
Matthew McElroy

Rovenia McGowan  
Edgar Moya  
Sandra Munoz  
Gurdip Singh Narula  
Georgina Oliver  
Alexandra Owens  
Ashley Reed  
Oscar Rios  
Neil Roman  
Cristian Romero  
Clara Salas  
Lucy Schilero  
A. Redd Sevilla  
Alton Derrick Smith  
Gregory Spock  
Dewan Tarek

#### Board Members Absent:

James Lisa  
Salvatore Lombardo  
Sylvia Martin  
Ruby Muhammad  
Alexa Ponce

Rupinder Raj  
Fernando Ruiz  
Marcello Testa  
Izaida Valcarcel  
Rosa Wong  
Minwen Yang

**ATTENDING:**

Christian Cassagnol, CB4 District Manager  
Margaret Silletti, CB4 Community Coordinator  
Christina Long, CB4 Community Assistant  
Council Member Francisco Moya  
Assembly Member Brian Barnwell  
Mabel, Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's Office  
Cristian Romero, Congresswoman Grace Meng  
Alexandra Owens, Assembly Member Catalina Cruz's Office  
Jessica Schabowski, Mayor's Office  
Joe Nocerino, Queens Borough President's Office  
James Mongeluzo, NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer's Office  
Corey Adams, Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz

NOTE: During the Board's virtual meetings, it may be difficult to determine Board members or legislator representatives or guests who were present if they were not actively engaged or participating in the dialogue or visually seen. Please notify the Board office if you were an attendee at any meeting and not marked present.

## COMMUNITY BOARD MEETING

**DATE: Tuesday, September 8, 2020**

**TIME: 7:00 P.M.**

**PLACE: Via Cisco Webex**

I. Chairperson Louis Walker opened the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

### **II. Chairperson's Report**

Chair Louis Walker announced for the next few months it doesn't seem likely the Board will meet in person. However, the Board elections will still be held according to the Board's bylaws. Accordingly, a Bylaws Committee will be formed to temporarily suspend parts of the Board's bylaws that cannot be fulfilled. Specifically, the night of the election nominations were to be taken from the floor. However since this cannot be done at this time, this is one of the suspensions which needs to be addressed.

The other suspension addresses the Nominating Committee. According to the Bylaws, the Chair chooses two people

In the past, three people were nominated from the floor. Since this cannot be done due to the pandemic, Chair Louis Walker asked Board Members interested in serving on the Nominating Committee, to submit their name to the Board office. Only three people from the entire Board will serve. Once the names are collected, they will be drawn from a hat. Since the selections cannot be voted on, it needs to be somewhat random.

The two Board Members the Chair selects will not be at random and will be notified by Chair Walker. One of those two people will include Chair Walker.

Chairperson Louis Walker noted he will not be running for any office in this upcoming election.

At this point, Chairperson Louis Walker read the following statement from David Burgoa, Community Outreach Specialist, NHS of Queens CDC Inc.:

*Dear Community Board 4,*

*I hope this email finds you well. Our team has prepared the following statement for announcement tonight at your Community Board meeting.*

*We are Neighborhood Housing Services of Queens or NHSQ, and we are happy to share with you some of our programs and initiatives. Currently, we continue our partnership with the LaGuardia Airport for job assistance. If you or anyone is looking for a job, and is considering working at LaGuardia Airport, please email your resume to our Outreach Specialist David Burgoa at: [dburgoa@nhsfqueens.org](mailto:dburgoa@nhsfqueens.org). We are also full steam ahead with our First Time Home Buying Program, Rental Assistance Homeowners Assistance and Financial Capability. If you are interested in any of those programs, check our website [www.nhsfqueens.org](http://www.nhsfqueens.org) and book an appointment or register for one of our webinars.*

*Thank you very much for all you do, and let's continue moving forward together.*

As a point of information, Chairperson Louis Walker further explained the Board's election process. After the Nominating Committee is selected, its scope will be somewhat changed. Any Board Member who would like to apply for any specific office can call the Board office and request their name be put in. When you receive the ballot for the election, all the names of people who decide they want to run are going to be on the ballot. Then, it will be up to the Board Members to choose one person for each office to serve. As a result, no one will be told they cannot run except for the new members who cannot serve because they have not been on the Board for at least one year, which is stated in the Board's bylaws. The At Large Directors will include three to four people who can serve. Whoever those top three or four vote getters are will be elected to At Large Directors positions on the Executive Board.

All will have the opportunity to enter their name, but their name must be entered. This is the only big difference. No one can nominate you with the possibility you may decline. Obviously if you cannot serve, your name will not be entered.

Regarding the ballots, ballots will be sent to your email. Choose the candidate you want and send the ballot back to the Board office. Results will be tabulated and at the November CB meeting, results will be announced. Those tabulations will be kept in printed form as well

so that if there are any questions, there will be documentation as back up and proof as to how many votes each person received and from whom. In the past, the voting was secret where the candidate's name was checked off and the ballot handed to the person collecting those ballots so that no one knew who you voted for. This practice cannot be continued: no mystery vote. Since it is an open process, there should not be a problem.

At this point, Chair Louis Walker brought up Committee assignments for new Board Members. He stated having receiving the Board's bylaws, new Board Members need to inform the Board office of their first, second, and third Committee choices. Once the selections are received, Chair Walker will determine which committee has an opening and assign you to serve on a committee. Since committees are not meeting as in the past, it is unclear when the next meeting of the committee will occur but you will be informed of the meeting date.

### **III. District Manager's Report**

District Manager Christian Cassagnol welcomed the new Board Members and reported:

This time of year is budget season which means the Queens District Managers meet with each city agency such as the NYPD, FDNY, Department for the Aging, etc. and ask questions regarding their funding levels, staffing etc. The information gained is used to create the Board's Needs Statement. Those budgetary sessions are taking place now and once the data is collected Board Members are contacted to compile the Board's FY '22 Needs Statement.

Next, he reported since the Board had received discretionary funding from the City Council we have helped the Precinct by providing paint to clean graffiti within the district. However, while painting over existing graffiti, it creates a canvas for another group to draw on it again. As funding was cut back, there is also less paint to cover graffiti. Reaching out to the Executive Committee, it was brought up to create a graffiti replacement program. The possibility of putting a mural in place was suggested. The idea is to put up two murals in two different places: one in the Elmhurst area and one in the Corona area. A walk thru was done with the Precinct and permission was given by several businesses noting every business contacted was fully on board with the idea. Growing tired of gang graffiti, more permanence is needed.

He explained a public open casting call will be held. Already discussed with the Parks Committee, there are some parameters to be met for the murals. In particular, both murals should have the name of the town either Elmhurst or Corona and the year each was established. All entries will come to the Board, and go through the Parks & Cultural Affairs Committee. The top three choices will go to the public for a vote and the entry that receives the most votes will be painted by the artist.

Earlier in the year Council Member Moya was very gracious to provide the Board with discretionary funding for community events. The Board was given \$20,000 for community events/projects that included processing of ULURP applications. Additionally, \$5,000 was received from Council Member Daniel Dromm for community events/projects.

Both Council Members were contacted and their approval given for those mural projects. He noted Assemblywoman Catalina Cruz has been very gracious offering to pay for part of the project too.

Elmhurst is ready to go. For Corona, a meeting is scheduled with Council Member Moya.

Lastly, he reported he is an artist by trade doing animation and paintings and fine arts etc. Earlier last year, he was involved with a group called Artists Making Changes specializing in therapeutic art camps for underserved countries operating on an international level for countries such as Cuba, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic. Bringing some therapeutic art camps to CB4 using some of our funding to convey it to the local community and get those therapeutic art camps established.

Next, he reported on the census. The Corona and Elmhurst communities are grossly undercounted with Corona taking higher numbers of low counts than Elmhurst.

The Board has its own Census Committee which is chaired by Kristen Gonzalez announcing the Board has been involved in many census events.

Flyers will be forthcoming and Board Members will receive all information presented tonight.

One census event involved Mira USA who will conduct a virtual census panel which District Manager Cassagnol is a host panelist speaking on such topics as: what the census means to our community, what it means to be undercounted, how it affects our services, our schools etc. The meeting date is September 18 at 6:00 p.m.

The second census event is September 27 with John Wang, Queens Night Market, Hall of Science, Queens Botanical Garden. This is a final kickoff event. All were urged to participate. More details will follow.

At this point, Chairperson Louis Walker stated the Board had been asked to respond to New York City Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (DOITT) proposal regarding mobile telecommunications equipment to be placed on street poles across the City. This equipment will facilitate the citywide deployment of 5G. DOITT is seeking public comment on the design proposal. Such comments may include: neighborhood aesthetic, size, placement on the pole, and other feedback on visual impact.

The problem is DOITT is requesting a response by September 25, however, the information was received yesterday (Labor Day). Chair Walker commented the design for the 5G pole tops are very inconspicuous (you won't even know they are there) because they blend in with the light pole. If the Board does not send a recommendation, the agency probably will go forward with it anyway. There are no choices and the proposal is whether or not we support it or not. Board Members may comment on the proposal when they are called upon in Open Session 1.

#### **IV. Open Session #1 – Public Forum\***

Chairperson Louis Walker called on the following Board Members:

Lucy Cerezo-Scully – In attendance

Since Board Member Lucy Cerezo could not fully hear the 5G light pole proposal, Chair Walker explained it's a light pole design for New York City to put the 5G booster on the top of these poles and the poles won't be any higher than they currently are. It will wrap around the top of the pole. The Board's response was due by September 25. However, it's problematic because of the timeframe as the Board will not meet again before then.

Board Member Lucy Cerezo-Scully acknowledged the proposal but would question its safety.

District Manager Cassagnol added the proposal would be sent to the Board Members for further review.

Chaio-Chung Chen – In attendance

Board Member Chen brought up gun violence throughout the City of New York and how is it resolved. Only 30% of the cases were resolved and in many others the shooter could not be found.

Yi (Andy) Chen – In attendance

Board Member Andy Chen reported he had organized a group of volunteers for community cleanup projects starting from Whitney Avenue and Broadway. He had organized an event to clean a couple of blocks and the streets every two weeks. Furthermore, he spoke about the homeless on Whitney Avenue and Broadway. In March and April he became aware of the issue and commented those people lost homes and jobs and their income and became homeless.

Board Member Chen said he also provides lunches for the homeless. Working with City Council Member Daniel Dromm and Department of Homeless Services (DHS), and Breaking Ground the city is not responding to the crises because of limited resources. He spoke about shelter and mentioned a halfway house nearby and with COVID-19 more people were put in shelters. He mentioned the halfway house, 114 Street and 39 Avenue, where 100 or more were to be sheltered but 150 people was housed. He is working with elected officials to seek space so that the housing issue can be resolved. Board Member Chen had participated at the rally in Flushing Meadows- Corona Park, not to protest against the housing, he is for housing, Before concluding, he noted 50 to 70 people sleep on Broadway every day.

David Chong – In attendance

No Report.

Lynda Coral – In attendance

No Report.

Lorena Diaz – In attendance

Glad to be attendance.

Michelle Dunston – In attendance

No Report.

Aridia Espinal – In attendance  
No Report.

Marialena Giampino – In attendance

Board Member Marialena Giampino commented on the 5G proposal to be placed on street poles across the City noting safety concerns.

However, she did not think more information would be forthcoming. Significantly, it should be on record the Board did request more information.

In this way, NYC DOITT would know people want more information about the design.

Next, as a member of the Elmhurst History and Cemetery Preservation Society, the Society is working to landmark another important structure in Elmhurst a wooden house on 43 Avenue. This house was the center of Polish American culture in America after World War II. It's about two World War II heroes, a Polish husband and wife, called the Janta-Polczynska House after Aleksander and Walentyna Janta-Polczynska. Currently a landmark campaign is in process and support is needed. Normally, a presentation would be made before the Board and a vote taken if it recommended writing a letter in support of land marking. However since a vote cannot be taken, the information will be sent and the Chair and District Manager can discuss how to proceed.

At this point, District Manager Christian Cassagnol commented he did discuss the proposal with the Chair Louis Walker and Board Members may be asked if they have any oppositions, questions or comments and to reach out to the Board office. If the majority approves, a letter of support can be sent.

Kristen Gonzalez – In attendance

Regarding the NYC 5G Pole Top proposal, DOITT should prove it is safe.

Also notify her or the District Manager if you are interested in census work.

Vincent Laucella – In attendance

Board Member Vincent Laucella reported he had a house fire and extended his thanks to the Board and the office staff that gave support to him and his family. It shows the spirit of the community and how we come together.

For the elected officials, it's embarrassing driving through Flushing Meadow-Corona Park with the World U. S. Open and the amount Of garbage dumped. This year because of no spectators our park is disregarded. Board Member Laucella has taken many photos. Walk through the Park and see the amount of garbage dumped by vendors and others. Dumping goes under the Long Island Railroad and is out of control. As a 40 year community resident, he has never seen so much dumping in the neighborhood. It must be stopped.

District Manager Christian Cassagnol echoed the sentiments of Board Member Laucella commenting the garbage was appalling and needed to be addressed. However, he did note the Park was understaffed.

At this point, Chair Louis Walker commented he visits the Park quite often and was surprised to see a couple of discarded couches. He agreed it is disgusting. Park personnel must know the conditions because you cannot avoid seeing what's obviously in front of your eyes.

After the comments were heard about the Park, District Manager Cassagnol urged all to attend the meetings of the Flushing Meadow-Corona Park Alliance.

James Lisa – Not in attendance

Salvatore Lombardo – Not in attendance

Carol Machulski – In attendance

Sunil Mahat – In attendance

He urged all to stay safe because the COVID-19 danger is not over.

Regarding the 5G NYC Pole Top, he had no opinion yet because of the lack of information. However, he brought up dog walkers are not curbing their dogs. As a result, dog poop is all over the streets and is disgusting. More needs to be done.

Chair Louis Walker commented once a person picks up the dog poop, there are no receptacles to dispose of it and a person can walk two to three blocks carrying the poop noting no waste baskets are on any corners.

District Manager Cassagnol reported the issue with the curb your dog is the City stopped making those signs. Signs are no longer in production. It is up to the property and business owners to find those signs or make their own. No enforcement was given.

If you know a dog owner who does not pick up after his dog, call 311 whereby a unit specifically comes out, will wait for the offender, and issue a summons to the wrongdoer although the offender must be caught in the act to receive a summons.

Patricia Martin – In attendance

Sylvia Martin – Not in attendance

Matthew McElroy – In attendance  
No Report

Rovenia McGowan – In attendance  
No Report

Edgar Moya – In attendance

Ruby Muhammad – Not in attendance

Sandra Munoz – In attendance

Board Member Sandra Munoz commented on the dog issue and shares the frustration picking up other dog poop. In Bayside, there are little poles with baggies available and a little garbage box for use.

District Manager Cassagnol commented a request was added to one of the Board's Capital & Expense budget submissions and it was rejected because there was no way the City enforce it, noting a local community group in Bayside oversees its operation.

The Parks Department has little baggies that can be put in certain places. We can request this for certain parks but that doesn't make dog walkers cleanup after the dogs, but the bags can be requested.

Board Member Sandra Munoz also brought up not only in the Park, garbage is all over our community. Worsening conditions are the strip by the Long Island Railroad where 43 Avenue ends towards Broadway on Whitney. Two problems exist: dumping of garbage and the homeless, noting there has been an increase in the homeless population not practicing CDC Guidelines. She inquired if a cleanup of the area is planned.

District Manager Cassagnol noted the Precinct did a cleanup last week of that particular block with the local community, however, he was not fully aware of it.

Board Member Sandra Munoz stated the area was cleaned but it gets filthy too quickly.

Gurdip Singh Narula – In attendance

Board Member Gurdip Singh Narula brought up the homeless problem which is a public safety concern and a big problem in the area. Regarding the 5G proposal on street poles, he requested more information to study. He also agreed with Board Member Sandra Munoz on the dog walking issue. It is people's responsibility to clean up after their dog so that we should not make more litter in our area.

Georgina Oliver – In attendance

Alexandra Owens – In attendance  
No Report

Alexa Ponce – Not in attendance

Rupinder Raj – Not in attendance

Ashley Reed – In attendance  
No Report

Oscar Rios – In attendance

Board Member Oscar Rios reported on the homeless issue on Broadway and he was optimistic we as a community could do something about it.

Walking the streets of Broadway, he noticed disposable face masks and gloves in the streets. People should throw face masks in garbage bags not on streets.

Chair Louis Walker noted this is an ongoing problem since the pandemic started. One of the problems is there are not enough trash baskets so that people turn the streets into trash baskets.

Also, Chair Walker commented the City removed the trash baskets because people were overfilling them with their household garbage so to solve the problem the trash baskets were removed. If there is nowhere to throw the garbage, it will end up on the street.

Neil Roman – Not in attendance

Cristian Romero – In attendance  
No Report

Fernando Ruiz – Not in attendance

Clara Salas – In attendance

Board Member Clara Salas reported on the garbage which is incredible and noted the budget cut to three days a week and also the graffiti which is terrible. No matter how much we paint, the graffiti is back. She was optimistic the Community Board can alleviate the problems of the graffiti, garbage and homelessness. There is a group of men gathering at the Whitney Avenue and Broadway, and on the train about 15 men play dominoes and drink beer and sleep on the sidewalk. The homeless population in our community is serious and needs to be addressed. Breaking Ground has been helping but it is only one agency, assistance from other agencies is very much needed.

Regarding the homeless situation, Chair Walker commented New York State needs to change the law that anybody upon arrival gets immediate shelter.

People should be here for a designated period of time. He also noted mental institutions were closed adding to the homeless population. Unfortunately, the problem is worsening with the economic situation brought on by COVID-19.

Lucy Schilero – In attendance

Board Member Lucy Schilero reported there are a row of businesses that have the same address. When summonses are issued whether it be given by the State Liquor Authority, Dept. of Buildings, Fire Department, Health Department or Sanitation Department, the business owner states the summons is not his. Significantly, Board Member Schilero is asking for a law whereas when someone shares the same address, for example, a row of businesses at 86-10 Roosevelt Avenue, and a few businesses on Junction Blvd. and some located on Broadway. There should be an alphabet letter next to the address number and that it is monitored. Also a photo should be taken at the time of the summons/correction. In this way, we get the right name because sometimes the business name or corporation is changed. Additionally, this legislation should include a row of homes because if one taxpayer falls behind on the real estate tax, it is a problem for the other row of houses. She would like to see a law passed so that the Police can take a photo and it can be documented what is being said for that particular address that has an alphabet letter.

A. Redd Sevilla – In attendance

Board Member A. Redd Sevilla reported in March New Life CDC was distributing food to the neighborhood because the programming closed down. Delivery was necessary because people were quarantined. There were many homes in Elmhurst and Corona that had elementary school children in the home without the right type of technology. Since the Department of Education was offering free devices, it was confusing because many of these homes did not have the devices.

There were many layers of challenges that many families faced such as language barriers, fear of filling out an application, and technology barriers. In addition to food, New Life wanted to determine which families needed devices for school. It was heartbreaking as he shared an account of one family who had four children that had to share one phone in shifts on distance learning. Because of the hard work at New Life and partnering with local organizations to address this need, 150 devices such as free laptops and tablets, not to be returned, were sent out. Yet, it's a celebration and so sad to think that those 150 students would not have had the right kind of technology. There were so many students that did close to nothing in the past three months. Even though they did not have the device, they could not maneuver through Google classroom.

In conclusion, when we see something that is not right, we do something about it. CB4 does not leave it as a complaint, we will do something about it.

Alton Derrick Smith – In attendance

Board Member Alton Derrick Smith reported on the 5G proposal more information is needed. Also, there is some "conspiracy" theories on COVID-19 and 5G.

Next, he spoke about the banking services in the Queenswood and Lefrak City areas. Those two large apartment complexes are underserved particularly by Chase Bank.



He noted there are lines and lines of people standing outside the bank on 99<sup>th</sup> Street and 57<sup>th</sup> Avenue any time of the day. There is also garbage beginning to accumulate around Chase Bank. The Neighborhood Reinvestment Act was created to prevent those problems from occurring. On Queens Blvd., there are two Chase banks which are one block away from each other and spoke about service. This needs to be addressed. In the past, there was Sterling Bank, but now there is one bank left. Chase Bank needs to be contacted to determine what their plans are to serve this huge community.

Chair Louis Walker asked what would happen if Chase Bank left the area.

Board Member Alton Derrick Smith replied under the Obama administration the Neighborhood Reinvestment Act the Bank would lose a lot of points if they left an underserved area. The points are good publicity and carry a lot of weight.

Discussion ensued about the number of banks that served the area in the past and now only one bank currently services the area.

Gregory Spock – In attendance

Board Member Gregory Spock commented on the good work Board Member A. Redd Sevilla and New Life is doing. COVID 19 is a human issue. Essentially with regard to the homeless situation and other issues we have to do our part to help and solve this crises. It's not something to complain about mentioning Broadway which can be compared to other parts of the city. There is a scenario with People protesting the homeless to be removed from hotels on the upper west side. A group of people banded together and did a sleep out in solidarity. You cannot lump everyone into one category because you don't really fully know what's going on with them concluding we need to do our part working with organizations like Breaking Ground and others that will help with food, Advising them of the food pantries or the elected officials that sponsor giveaways.

Next, he spoke about the School Construction Authority (SCA) in Long Island City. In the past, the Board heard a presentation by the SCA for construction of a school at Flushing Meadows-Corona Park by the Hall of Science. Because of budget woes, the city will start cutting construction of building schools in extremely overcrowded areas.

Attention is needed to this issue and pressure put on the SCA to address it. Maybe funds can be moved from other budget lines to fund school construction. As an example, he cited the air train.

Next, he spoke about mask wearing. COVID 19 can return if people do not stay vigilant and has seen many people not wearing masks properly on buses and public transit and are getting violent and fighting back.

We need to do our part by wearing masks, social distancing, and using common sense.

Dewan Tarek – In attendance

Board Member Dewan Tarek was unintelligible.

Marcello Testa – Not in attendance

Izaida Valcarcel – Not in attendance

Rosa Wong – Not in attendance

Minwen Yang – Not in attendance

## **V. Report from Elected Officials**

### **Senate**

#### **Charles E. Schumer**

No Report. No representative present.

#### **Kristen Gilibrand**

No Report. No representative present.

### **House of Representatives**

#### **Grace Meng**

Board Member Cristian Romero reported the Congresswoman welcomed everyone back. If you have any questions or concerns or need assistance, call Cristian Romero at the office or on his cell at 202-420-8819. He directed an inquiry at Board Member Alton Derrick Smith to contact him about the Chase Bank situation previously mentioned.

#### **Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez**

Mabel, a case/field worker at the Congresswoman's office reported the Congresswoman has spent the last three months in and out of Washington DC.

The House has continued to work on the next COVID-19 relief package. The Congresswoman has hosted virtual town halls on police brutality, the census and COVID-19 relief. Also, there was an information session for service academy applicants with Representative Grace Meng.

The following legislative updates were presented:

Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and the legislative team worked on many legislative priorities this summer. In July, the House was focused on the appropriations process where a number of amendments were submitted that were passed including a ban on the purchase of chemical weapons as well as a series of amendments to protect public housing and eliminate the so-called Opportunity zones. Along with Senator Kamala Harris, the Climate Equity Act was introduced, which is legislation to ensure that our communities are centered on the front line of the climate crises.

Next, legislation was introduced with Representative Nadia Velasquez for the Puerto Rico self-determination Act. This legislation would prompt Puerto Rico's legislature to create a status convention whose delegates will be elected by Puerto Rico's voters. The body would develop a long term-solution for Puerto Rico's status whether it be statehood, independence, free association or any other option other than the current territorial arrangement.

In August, the House was called back into session to address the concerns around the United States Post Office and the Postmaster. The House passed a nonpartisan Postmaster General Act to ensure that the positions of Postmaster General and Deputy Postmaster General are filled by qualified experts.

Finally, Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez participated in the House oversight committee hearing with Postmaster DeJoy. She pressed him to release his detailed calendar to the Committee and asked him to respond to our community's request for a disability ramp at the Jackson Heights Post Office.

In conclusion, Mabel spoke about the census. Currently, northern Corona is coming in at 45.4, Corona at 46.2 and East Elmhurst at 52.5 meaning there is a lot more communities to count. Please encourage family members and neighbors to complete the census.

As always, the Congresswoman's office is available for constituent assistance. Throughout the summer the office had been celebrating community members who have gone above and beyond to support our community. She will be sharing some links to nominate friends or neighbors or family who have been volunteering. Also those who were lost to COVID-19 are honored and you can submit those names to the office. The office can also assist with Federal case work. Contact the office either on their website or by phone.

At this point, Chair Louis Walker asked First Vice Chair Marialena Giampino to continue the meeting to adjournment as he had to leave shortly.

### **NYS Assembly**

Before exiting, he called on NYS Assembly Member Brian Barnwell who commented on the illegal dumping in many different locations. Due to the Department of Sanitation's budget cuts, they will not increase pickup or add waste baskets and it's an ongoing battle. He had talked to the DSNY about legislation and about being more proactive with cameras. According to the DSNY, even if someone is seen on camera illegally dumping, a summons cannot be issued. He had spoken to some Council Members and that changes are needed to the City Charter. Specific locations were mentioned such as underneath Amtrak and under the LIRR.

Graffiti is one the rise and homelessness is an ongoing problem with housing being the key issue. He reported when developers build affordable housing to get tax breaks, the tax break is based on a flawed formula—the AMI.

He explained the AMI is the basic income of the area. Because of this huge formula, New York City uses Westchester, upper richer neighborhoods mentioning Putnam County, Rockland County in the calculation deemed affordable when the project is built. Under this formula for a family of three the average income level is \$95,000. For example, in some of our districts for a family of three, the average income is not \$95,000.

Assembly Member Brian Barnwell and Senator Michael Gianaris have introduced legislation that would change that formula to make the AMI zip code based. For example, if the average income was \$50,000 for a certain zip code, developers would have to base their affordability rate on it and stated there was a lot of pushback from developers.

Next, he spoke about the binding power given to Community Boards over the ULURP process. For example, if a developer wants to offer units 60% or higher of AMI, the Community Board would be able to say no. The Community Board would determine if more is

needed from developers on infrastructure, the MTA, schools, the sewer system, or affordable housing. As a result, the Community Board would have binding power to deny the application.

Before concluding, Assembly Member Brian Barnwell offered his assistance to the Board.

**Michael DenDekkar**

No Report. Representative not present.

**Jeffrion Aubry**

No Report. Representative not present.

**Catalina Cruz**

Board Member Alexandra Owens announced the office will reopen September 14 to in person constituents. It will be by appointment only for constituents seeking help. Constituent work is also handled over the phone. For appointments, all safety protocols are to be followed such as wearing masks and social distancing.

September 18 and 19, Assembly Member Catalina Cruz will host a citizenship drive for anyone who is eligible. Certain criteria must be met such as having a green card, which should have been held for a certain amount of time. Call the office at 718-458-5367 for an appointment.

She announced a series of business walks in Elmhurst and Corona with the SBS Commissioner and Comptroller Stringer. The most recent walk was held today and there was also a walk in the last week visiting small businesses and speaking to them about reopening and providing guidelines and resources that are available.

Lastly, she spoke about legislation that would help commercial tenants impacted by COVID-19 to be able to work with their landlords outside of court to mediate any issues including renegotiating their lease.

The Assemblywoman wishes everyone well and looks forward to working with the Board.

**NYS Senate**

**Michael Gianaris**

No Report. Representative not present.

**Jessica Ramos**

No Report. Representative not present.

**Toby Ann Stavisky**

No Report. Representative not present.

**NYC Council**

**Francisco Moya**

Council Member Francisco Moya reported on services that have been cut due to the deficit in the city's budget. In particular, the overflow of garbage in the garbage cans throughout the district. Council Member Moya had added \$160,000 for twice a day Pickups so that unsightly garbage will be collected to keep our community clean.

Complaints have also been received about the local parks. Council Member Moya has added additional resources to help with PEP Officers (Park Enforcement Officers) that will be patrolling the parks for people drinking alcohol. Parks are for the community.

Also, the Council Member had brought in the ACE Program who are out in areas from Roosevelt Avenue to Corona Avenue to 111 Street and also on 104 and 108 Streets. Many problematic areas are cleaned every day to ensure clean streets.

Education to residents is essential. Much of the garbage thrown out on street corners is from private residences. He was optimistic this will help to alleviate the problem.

The Council Member further gave more information about our local parks. As mentioned previously, additional resources were added for PEP Officers (Park Enforcement Officers) who will be patrolling our parks. Our parks are meant for families and children of the community to enjoy not to be overtaken by those who do not respect quality of life issues.

The Parks Base that will be operating from the Park of the Americas. Talking with the Queens Parks Commissioner to ensure face masks are given out, there are no open containers, and to keep the parks clean and safe.

Significantly, Council Member Moya spoke about legislation passed to help many local businesses especially restaurants by third party apps. such as Grubhub who have been hurting small businesses. Grubhub charges up to 30% of the cost to mom and pop restaurants in the area for services they do not provide. Restaurants are also charged for delivery service, credit card fees, and phone calls that go to the restaurant through their website. This legislation will cap the fee at 15% so that restaurants can no longer be charged 30%. Five percent is for delivery services and ten percent for other services provided such as advertisement and promotions. Services cannot exceed the recommended charges and no charges for services not rendered, which has a tremendous impact on small business and local restaurants.

Council Member Moya had commented about the food shortages in our community and had funded seven pantries in the district while visiting most of them throughout the week. Long lines of families in our community are going hungry. Partnering with the Hispanic Federation to provide funding to hire five local restaurants in the district to prepare 500 meals throughout the week to feed families in our community.

Council Member Moya reported not only are we are helping our local businesses who are struggling but also helping the families that live here.

The program will be continued until late October and it is operating three days a week. Taking care of our communities is so critical during this time.

Furthermore, \$20,000 was allocated by Council Member Moya to Community Board 4 for community events/projects and it is through the Chair and District Manager's advocacy that has led the way during severe budget cuts throughout the area. The city is facing a \$9 billion revenue shortfall brought on by the pandemic.

Community Boards are very important to Council Member Moya who strives to be present at the Board meetings because of the Board's essential work and he is here to help and support the Board.

#### **Daniel Dromm**

Kelly Wu reported the Council Member's Office handles immigration issues and legal connect is starting in the next two weeks by September 23 meeting twice a month. Please call Council Member Dromm's office if you need legal help to schedule an appointment. The Council Member's office continues to work remotely.

#### **NYC Mayor's Office**

Jessica Schabowski reported the Mayor has been advocating for the Federal government to provide a stimulus and for the state to provide long term borrowing authority to address the budget gap that Council Member Moya mentioned. The Mayor is working with labor unions to try to prevent layoffs of 22,000 city workers and optimistic for a long term borrowing authority that would help address the budget cuts that have trickled down to the community level.

Also, work is being done to expand the test and trace core to promote awareness of city resources to stop the spread of COVID-19. If anyone is part of a community organization and would like to partner for either a presentation from the team or for distributing palm cards in multiple languages, the Mayor's Office will work with you to set up outreach events.

All New Yorkers are encouraged to get a COVID-19 test. To find a test site, including a mobile testing site which rotates every week, please go to [nyc.gov/covidtest](https://nyc.gov/covidtest).

Meanwhile, Ms. Schabowski reported on the census response rate especially within pocket communities where there are many immigrant communities and encouraged neighbors, friends and family to go to [my2020census.gov](https://my2020census.gov). The deadline to address the census is the end of this month.

Significantly, more than 10,000 restaurants have participated in the outdoor dining initiative open restaurants in three months. This program has saved an estimated 90,000 jobs across the five boroughs. The Mayor has said by the end of this month, a determination will be made regarding indoor dining.

New York City Care launched in Queens September 1 will address some of the health care disparities witnessed with the COVID-19 pandemic. New members will receive a primary care appointment within two weeks with a membership card access to language interpretation services, expanded pharmacy hours within the health and hospital system and a 24/7 customer assistance line. Those eligible and to enroll in the program, call 646-Nyccare or go to [Nyccare.nyc](https://Nyccare.nyc).

Lastly, today educators return to school to start collaborating on preparing for the school year. September 16 schools will begin engaging students in learning and orienting students to the new school year prior to the first in-person day on September 21.

The remote launch will be used to encourage students in health and safety procedures and talk to students about connectivity for remote learning, wellness, and social emotional health heading into an unprecedented school year and to ensure students are ready to learn. I pads are being distributed to students who need them. Reach out to her if a student needs those devices.

The city's plan for reopening schools is the strongest in the country and among the most rigorous in the world with blended learning socially distanced classrooms, mandatory masks, and a widely available testing and contact tracing. The city will only open schools if remission stays below three percent.

#### **Queens Borough President Sharon Lee (Acting)**

Joe Nocerino reported on the census, The Borough President is aggressively working on it inclusively three days a week for the last two weeks, citing there are pop-up census booths at six libraries and two are in this vicinity: East Elmhurst Library and Jackson Heights Library. Many people have been signed up.

The eighth installment of the very successful Borough Hall Job Recruitment Fair is Wednesday, September 16, at 2:00 p.m. Go to the Borough President's website for more information.

Lastly, there are free Wednesday night drive-in movies at the Hall of Science. Mr. Nocerino will send the movie listing to District Manager Cassagnol. Drive in only. Go to the website to sign in. The Hall of Science has other nights they are showing drive in movies that have to be paid for by the car. Free Wednesday movies are thank you to Borough President Sharon Lee.

At this point, Chairperson Louis Walker exited the meeting and turned the meeting over to First vice Chair Marialena Giampino and concluded if a Board Member wishes to serve on the Nominating Committee, please call the Board office at 718-760-3142. More information will be forthcoming.

#### **NYC Comptroller**

James Mongeluzo reported:

With the recent intense Tropical Storm Isaias which caused considerable damage, many trees and light poles had fallen in various areas. If you wish to file a claim against the city for damage caused to your property whether it be a car, fence or your home, you can do so within 90- days of the incident.

If a Parks Department tree (on the sidewalk) damaged your car or property, you can file a claim. However, this does not mean you will receive any compensation but depending on the circumstances, you may be able to.

In cases where a tree or light pole has fallen or other city property damaged your property if there was a previous report filed of damage to the tree or light pole that suggested it was structurally deficient, reported cases are more likely to result in compensation. For more information, please go to the Comptroller's website on how to file claims electronically and by mail.

Additionally, the Comptroller's Office has been monitoring the situation with the Sanitation Department mentioning the lack of clean streets in certain areas especially commercial corridors and overflowing bins. The Comptroller's Office had asked Sanitation to come up with a plan on how to efficiently deal with it given the budget cuts as the Comptroller's Office is in charge of auditing and investigating all mayoral agencies including the Sanitation Department. It is essential that the services are working for all the residents. The Sanitation Department was asked to consider a few different ideas that their policy team came up with.

Also, the Comptroller's Office put out a policy proposal about ways to save our commercial corridors such as the main streets of our communities such as Woodside Avenue and parts of 108 Street, Corona Avenue where many small businesses are located. The proposal contains ways on how to help those businesses survive during the pandemic.

The recent policy proposal was to encourage biking in the city. The Comptroller's Office realized 58% of parents in New York City of children under 18 have cars and as a result many parents will be driving their children to school because they do not want their children to ride the bus or subways for possibly catching the COVID-19. More traffic is anticipated in the coming months especially once school has the in-person component. Therefore students, especially high school students, are encouraged to bike to school especially if they lived near to the school which will alleviate some of the pressure on the roads and traffic conditions.

#### **NYC Public Advocate Jumaane Williams**

No report. Representative not in attendance.

#### **District Attorney Melinda Katz's Office**

Corey Adams reported the office is available to assist in any way, please email him at [cjadams@queensda.org](mailto:cjadams@queensda.org).

During the course of the meeting, Mr. Adams had taken notes and will report back to the Board if he can be of further assistance.

## **VI. Committee Reports**

### ***Census***

Committee Chair Kristen Gonzalez was unable to enter the discussion earlier due to technical difficulties so that District Manager Christian Cassagnol reported the census subject matter was already announced noting two upcoming events September 18 and September 27.

More information will be forthcoming.

### ***Consumer Affairs***

Committee Chair Alexandra Owens reported a meeting will be called sometime in the next month to brainstorm ideas on how to revitalize the neighborhood after COVID-19.

### ***Environmental***

Committee Chair Oscar Rios reported a meeting is planned for next month.

### ***Health***

Committee Chair Ashley Reed reported the committee had not met since pre-COVID19 in February and was optimistic a meeting will be held once the new Board Members are on board. Individually, the committee has been very active throughout the summer with their own local community events. She hoped to reconvene sometime later this month or early next month.

### ***Parks***

Committee Chair Gregory Spock reported many of the parks issues have already been mentioned such as the trash. He noted elected officials are working on the issue which needs constant pressure.

He mentioned the dog issue and to provide resources and support citing an example in front of his co-op of the dog problem.

Mentioning Flushing Meadows-Corona Park, there is a dire need for more education on social distancing. Many parks including Flushing Meadows-Corona Park are experiencing large parties etc. that are creating large amounts of trash in addition to illegal dumping.

From the smaller parks standpoint, there needs to be education and examples set from the parents, for example, many parents are not wearing masks. For younger children it is hard to get them to wear masks, but for the parents there is no excuse. Wearing a mask prevents the virus from spreading.

Next, he commented on the stewardship opportunities that are available. Many organizations have talked about their volunteer efforts. More education is needed directed to people leaving the garbage. Instead of monetary fines, there needs to be an incentive to help clean up the parks.

In conclusion, we will continue to beautify our parks because they are so vital at this crucial time.

### ***Transportation***

Transportation Committee Chair Lynda Coral reported a meeting is planned sometime next month.

### ***Public Safety***

Committee Chair Lucy Schilero reported the Public Safety Committee meets all twelve months of the year, with no breaks. A Special Thank You was extended to committee members Clara Salas, Gurdip Singh Narula, Dewan Tarek, Georgina Oliver, and Ruby Muhammad for being steadfast Committee members.

Likewise, District Manager Christian Cassagnol recognized the Committee Chair's hard work on the Committee too.

The Committee Chair reported on CERT and their work with the homeless population. Much was done in January when CERT went out to see those out in the snow and cold. Some of the team members were taught Thrive, which is a way of talking to the homeless to reach out to leave their habitat such as under a tree or living in the parks and go to a shelter. Documentation is also kept.

This month is National Preparedness month. Since pamphlets cannot be distributed, go to [nyc.gov/readynewyork](http://nyc.gov/readynewyork) or [nycemreadynewyork](http://nycemreadynewyork) where much information in any language can be obtained.

Still at distributing sites, mostly in Flushing, which are being narrowed down since more people are going back to work. There will be less boxes to send out to Queens and Manhattan noting those sites will be shutting down very soon.

Reporting on the Fire Department, Committee Chair Lucy Schilero reported since more people are home and cooking, they forget to turn off their stoves. As a result, there have been some kitchen fires which is a number one issue especially in Elmhurst.

Reporting on the Police Department, Committee Chair Lucy Schilero related the crime stats. Crime decreased, no murders, however, Grand Larceny rose from five last year to 18 this year. An increase in Grand Theft Auto informing people not to leave keys or property in the car. Remember to close the windows and lock the doors.

One shooting was reported a few months ago. Fortunately, no one was killed, but the incident is under investigation.

Further reporting on the homeless and encampments throughout Broadway, Whitney Avenue, and mostly throughout the Elmhurst area, the 110 Precinct did a sweep a week ago near Whitney Avenue and the stores closest to the Long Island Railroad, however, with the help of Breaking Ground and other not-for-profit agencies, the individuals do not stay long in shelter and go back to their location. Since this an issue that will continue to grow, another way is being sought to handle the problem. Extra help is needed. Breaking Ground in many places is overwhelmed. A possible solution is if the families of the homeless can be contacted, who want their loved ones back into their life, help can be given to family members to help their loved ones. Mental issues are involved as well. Another matter brought up was that there are more homeless in Elmhurst than Corona. Possibly since Elmhurst has more underground trains so that when it rains or is cold, individuals seek shelter there. Corona does not have the underground stations as Elmhurst does which can account for the increased population, noting it's an endless problem. Next, she reported on Quality of Life, on noise complaints people are doing Zumba in the parks such as Veteran's Park where the music is blasted very loud that homes are vibrating. Outdoor restaurants are blasting loud music too. The 110 Precinct was asked to inform businesses to lower the music.

Next, she reported on men drinking and smoking pot in certain locations such as 108 Street and Corona Avenue and Junction Blvd and 41 Avenue. NCO officers will be sent out.

Talking about 111 Street from the Long Island Railroad 43 Avenue down to 41 Avenue, there are vendors not licensed selling food and liquor out of serving cups.

Commenting on the ongoing problem of graffiti, enrolling college students and arts and businesses to help with the maintenance of those walls that have constant graffiti was suggested. Other incentives may include giving out awards to beautiful murals or up to a \$500 reward to those who see the crime committed. She spoke about one area of Junction Blvd. where the murals stay beautiful on the west side but on the east side there is always graffiti.

At this point, the liquor licenses were given:

**NYS LIQUOR AUTHORITY LICENSES  
SEPTEMBER 2020**

**RENEWAL APPLICANTS**

<b><u>Establishment's Name</u></b>	<b><u>Establishment's Address</u></b>	<b><u>Committee Recommendation</u></b>
Norton Lingkhas Inc. <i>Lungta</i> Wine, Beer & Cider	75-16 Broadway Elmhurst, NY	
Noise complaints and harassment – The owner felt most complaints were on the neighboring stores.		
Puebla Puebla Bar Restaurant Inc. Wine, Beer & Cider	42-18 Junction Blvd. Elmhurst, NY	
Assault complaint. Owner will talk to his managers and security guards to test patrons before they enter. If they have consumed too much alcohol, not to let them enter.		
The Cheesecake Factory Restaurants Inc. Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider	90-15 Queens Blvd-Space 1073 Elmhurst, NY	
One Grand Larceny complaint – Trying to find the patron who was robbed of his wallet. As of today, he cannot be found.		

All applicants were present at the Public Safety Committee meeting on September 1 and answered all questions presented.

***ULURP/Zoning***

Committee Chair Alton Derrick Smith reported on a MIH application that was resubmitted for 111 Street across from Flushing Meadows-Corona Park. The application was heard at Queens Borough Hall. Issues being examined were the community room versus adults. A committee meeting is planned in the next 30 days on that application.

Next, he mentioned the banking situation that he spoke earlier on and presented corrections on earlier statements. Previously, he stated the Community Reinvestment Act was under President Obama but the Community Reinvestment was not active in 1977 noting it was not under President Obama and presented more details.

***Youth***

No Report. Committee Chair not in attendance.

**VII. Open Session #2 – (Comment Board Member Only Comment Period)**

First Vice Chair Marialena Giampino reported she did not have the list alphabetically of the Board Member names and turned the floor over to Staff Member Christina Long.

Before Christina Long called out the names, District Manager Christian Cassagnol commented at this segment Board Members get a second comment period on anything mentioned in tonight's meeting.

All inserts and links mentioned tonight will be sent to the Board Members.

Staff Member Christina Long called:

Lucy Cerezo-Scully – In attendance

Board Member Lucy Cerezo Scully mentioned a face mask giveaways. Also, she commented she has had monthly book swaps. The first one in July--just giving away books. People give her books and she gives them away. The first time near Newtown High School and the second time in front of her dad's barber shop on 92 Street and Corona Avenue. Also, she mentioned it would be ideal to have census events there for census intake because it is a busy area. Contact her if you wish to donate books or help out. Upcoming book swap dates are either September 20 or September 27. Usually she posts details on Facebook and a flyer will be sent to the Board office.

Chaio-Chung Chen

Board member Chen brought up the city's \$88 billion budget to use for seniors, youth, and employee's salaries etc. Help is needed financially and mentioned funding spent for the 58,000 homeless.

Andy Chen

Not in attendance

David Chong – In attendance

No report

Lynda Coral – In attendance

No report

Lorena Diaz – In attendance

No report

Michelle Dunston – In attendance

Board Member Michelle Dunston reported Council Member Moya and the Sanitation Department teamed up with the merchants on 57 Avenue to Adopt Trash Baskets.

Merchants would be responsible for changing the green garbage bags. All were thanked.

Aridia Espinal – In attendance

No report

Marialena Giampino – In attendance

No report

Kristen Gonzalez – Not in attendance

Vincent Laucella – Not in attendance

James Lisa – Not in attendance

Salvatore Lombardo – Not in attendance

Carol Machulski – Not in attendance

Sunil Mahat – In attendance

No report



Patricia Martin – Not in attendance

Sylvia Martin – Not in attendance

Matthew McElroy – In attendance

No report

Rovenia McGowan – Not in attendance

Edgar Moya – Not in attendance

Ruby Muhammad – Not in attendance

Sandra Munoz – In attendance

Getting solutions is what we are all about by acknowledging the problem and finding a solution.

Gurdip Singh Narula – In attendance

Hoped to solve the homeless problem. With flu season coming, everyone should get the flu vaccine from either CVS or Walgreen's or a doctor and take it before flu season begins.

Alexandra Owens – In attendance

No report

Ashley Reed- In attendance

Board Member Ashley reed encouraged all to take advantage of pre COVID testing and continue to stay safe.

Oscar Rios – In attendance

No report.

Cristian Romero – In attendance

No report

Clara Salas – In attendance

Optimistic to solve all the problems we have today.

Lucy Schilero – In attendance

No report

A. Redd Sevilla – In attendance

Board Member A. Redd Sevilla is aware of the problem with the census asked what he can do about the census tomorrow.

District Manager Cassagnol responded he will get information about a September 18 census event and gave more details about what Board Members can do, mentioning a census representative was assigned to the Board. Resources and forms are on hand.

More discussion on the census.

Alton Derrick Smith – In attendance

No report

Gregory Spock – In attendance

No report

At this point, Staff Member Christina Long announced no other Board Members were in attendance. Since there was no further business, First Vice Chair Marialena Giampino adjourned the meeting at 9:35 p.m.