



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 the Public Safety Committee Meeting

- Date:** Meeting held March 9, 2023.
- Attendance:**
- Committee Members:** Committee Chairperson Dilip Nath, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, and James Gallagher
- Virtual:** Heather Bennett-Idels, John Gebhard, Mitch Lisker and Mohammed Tohin,
- Members Absent:** Dilafroz Ahmed, Allen Eisenstein, Ahsan Habib, Michael Hannibal, Mohammad Rahman, Harbachan Singh and Amy Tse.
- Others Present:** Deputy Inspector Kevin Chan – 107th Precinct Commander, Hassan King - NYPD Community Affairs, P.O. Timothy Gorman - Community Affairs, FDNY Battalion Chief Christopher Eysser, EMS Deputy Chief David Burke, and FDNY Community Affairs Le-tis Williams.
- Staff:** District Manager Marie Adam-Ovide and Community Assistant Sandra Aikens-Williams

Chairperson, Dilip Nath opened with a welcoming statement. He thanked the members of the committee for attending and our guest speakers for keeping the community safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dilip Nath: Given the challenges of our times how are you doing with meeting issues to service Community Board 8? We would like to know if there are any resources that Community Board 8 can make available to you that will help you continue to serve this community optimally.

EMT Deputy Chief David Burke: I am here tonight representing Chief Gilligan; this is not my usual division to service. The citywide response time for EMS was 7 minutes and 49 seconds, in 2022. For 2023, year-to-date the service response time is 7 minutes and 46 seconds. For the year 2022 the Borough of Queens’ response time averaged 8 minutes. Thus far, for calendar year 2023, we are at 7 minutes and 36 seconds for the Community Board 8 area. Our reception time is below the city average. You asked for a citywide map of where EMS stations are located, the map is currently being update due to a revamping of the unit matrix. It is anticipated to be completed next month and it will be forwarded to you. I did bring a printout indicating all Queens locations of ambulances, broken down by Response Stations.

Dilip Nath: What are some of the challenges you have been facing?

EMT Deputy Chief David Burke: It has been difficult for EMS to improve response time. They continue to face staffing shortages, throughout all shifts.

Dilip Nath: Throughout the city [government] there is 25% personnel vacancy. How has that effected your department?

EMT Deputy Chief David Burke: I am not sure of the exact number; those figures are with the Personnel Department.

Dilip Nath: How is the structure of the buildings, vehicle, and safety equipment?

EMT Deputy Chief David Burke: There are shortages of equipment parts. The staffing shortage affects us but not in a substantial way. This is a national supply chain problem. The problem has not affected response time dramatically. There are one EMS station and one Queens TRG. Additionally, there are two stations in close proximity that will service this area to temporarily relieve a shortage.

Dilip Nath: Do you know the ratio of population to service calls for Queens?

EMT Deputy Chief David Burke: I don't have that information, but I can get it to you.

Dilip Nath: I am interested in the comparison of levels of service as it effects one borough vs. another borough.

Le-tis Williams: We are currently updating our database regarding equipment and usage.

Dilip Nath: Is Jamaica Hospital our Level 1 primary trauma center for this area?

EMT Deputy Chief David Burke: Yes. With support from Level 1 centers at New York Presbyterian Hospital of Queens and Long Island Jewish Hospital, in Manhasset.

Dilip Nath: Please give us a sense of how we are doing, the good and the bad.

FDNY Chief Christopher Eysser: The fire houses are structurally sound and are all in good shape. The engines and ladder trucks have a contractual expiration date of 11 years, 364 days. This is written in the union contracts. The major problem is the supply chain delays. The good news is that FDNY keeps spares in operational readiness. All personal protective equipment is at the levels agreed upon by union contract. We are constantly getting new equipment that is lighter, faster, and more efficient.

Dilip Nath: How are your staffing levels?

FDNY Chief Christopher Eysser: We are fully staffed, every tour. Due to personnel vacancies, we are filling in using overtime.

James Gallagher: Ladder 152 and Engine 299 on Utopia Parkway, are you aware of the sump pumps and do you know if the flooding condition remains?

FDNY Chief Christopher Eysser: No, that is not my area. We can follow up with the Battalion for you. Lithium-Ion Battery fires are the biggest challenge to the Fire Department. These fires are causing deaths. The Fire Department Commissioner is making this type of fire safety awareness a top priority. There was this type of fire in this community at a day care center. A child was successfully rescued during this operation. These fires are difficult to put out. Replacement batteries are more likely to burst into flames. We are working on new flyers. Do not charge at night, do not charge them by a point of egress and do not use an extension cord. The fire marshals are beginning enforcement at charging stations. What would be an effective way to get the message out about the dangers of these batteries?

Dilip Nath: I suggest the mosques, churches, and synagogues.

Le-Tis Williams: Would you share your faith base list with us?

Dilip Nath: We can arrange for that.

Le-Tis Williams: We just received a grant to provide fire safety lessons to the community at houses of worship. We have free fire alarms for the public and would like to work with you to get them distributed.

Heather Idels-Bennett: I appreciate this information you have provided us this evening.

James Gallagher: Are you going to change your vehicles over to electric battery operated?

FDNY Chief Christopher Eysser: We had hybrid operated vehicles in the past. I have not heard of a program to change over. However, at some point I suspect they will.

Mitch Lisker: I had heard that they have a ban on e-mobility device.

FDNY Chief Christopher Eysser: There are no bans currently.

Heather Bennett-Idels: If you are going to talk about e-bikes the real problem is their refusal to follow automotive traffic laws.

Marie Adam-Ovide: We have already received requests for Chometz Burning Stations this year. We are requesting barricades for April 5th. Both NYPD and FDNY should receive a letter from CB8 soon.

Dilip Nath: The community is in fear of criminals.

Deputy Inspector Kevin Chan: Violent and property crimes are up throughout the country. Crime appears to be up 5% in our area. This year 13 NYPD officers have been injured. I am recommending home alarm systems. Most car thefts are due to the owners leaving the car with keys in them. The crime of bait and switch of jewelry is popular. The precinct is down 10 officers. Every station just lost 2 officers transferred to the City's Community Affairs.

Dilip Nath: How are we doing in terms of officers to population ratio and compared to the rest of the city?

Deputy Inspector Kevin Chan: We have a total of 176 officers: 1 Deputy Inspector, 1 Captain, 7 Lieutenants, 17 Sergeants, 2 Detectives and 148 Officers. We are down about 10 officers from last year.

Dilip Nath: On 168th Street, northside of Hillside Avenue, a resident is being cited for garbage on the front lawn. The residents are cleaning but the livery cab drivers who [park and] drop garbage all day long.

Deputy Inspector Kevin Chan: I have worked with them in the past but, have not heard from them in a while. I will reach out to them.

Marie Adam-Ovide: A contributing factor is that there is parking allowed on only one side of the street. The cab drivers consistently park in the "No Parking" zone. We need enforcement.

Deputy Inspector Kevin Chan: I will have my officers look into this. I know these homeowners make every effort to keep their property clean.

Marie Adam-Ovide: It is so unfair that the homeowners are getting tickets for a matter not under their control.

Sandra Aikens-Williams: Last year almost to the day 22 vehicles parked along Foothill Avenue, between Francis Lewis Blvd. and the Dead End were vandalized. Just this morning 2 Honda vehicles were vandalized for the airbags, one had two Gucci pocketbooks inside and the thief just took the airbag.

Deputy Inspector Kevin Chan: Unfortunately, the thieves love Hondas. They have tutorials on YouTube on how to steal Hondas.

Sandra Aikens-Williams: What I am asking additional patrols. In addition to car vandalism. we have shift workers traveling at night passing this dark area. I am worried for their safety.

Deputy Inspector Kevin Chan: The best protection is to have the neighbors call 911 if they see someone suspicious.

Marie Adam-Ovide: That is a dark area. They have newly improved HD exterior cameras. A request for additional streetlighting has been approved by NYC Department of Transportation. I would ask that you join me in writing a letter of support for the lighting. Maybe a joint effort will speed up the process.

Deputy Inspector Kevin Chan: Okay.

James Gallagher made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Adjournment 8:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Aikens-Williams, March 15, 2023