

MINUTES: HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE TOWN OF NEWTON, NJ
October 16, 2017

“In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, notice of this public meeting was given to the newspaper of record and posted on the official bulletin Board on December 29, 2016.”

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Commissioners for the Newton Housing Authority was held on Monday, October 16, 2017 in the Community Room at Liberty Towers. The meeting was called to order by Secretary Iozzi at 5:30pm and roll call was taken. Chairman Nannery, Commissioner Capinjola, Cmsr. Leonardo, Cmsr. Fiedorczyk (excused), Cmsr. Jack Durkin (excused) and Cmsr. Vhranos.

Minutes of the September 11, 2017 regular monthly meeting were reviewed. Motion made by Cmsr. Leonardo to approve the minutes. Motion seconded by Cmsr. Nannery. Motion approved.

Bills for the period 09/1/17-10/4/17; \$69,362.20 for normal operating. Motion made by Cmsr. Capinjola; seconded by Cmsr. Vhranos to approve payment of bills. Motion approved.

Communications:

Treasurer’s Report: Account balances as of 9/30/17: general ledger balance \$38,861.17; tenant security/escrow \$55,031.39; and \$64,020.58 NJ Cash Management Fund; NHA Post Employee Benefit Cost, \$47,580.67 Motion made by Cmsr. Leonardo; seconded by Cmsr. Nannery to accept the Treasurer’s report. Motion approved.

Secretary’s Report/ Old Business:

RESIDENTS: Two apartments will be turned over, allowing two more two-person households to move in. Once the new families move in, another orientation will be held for families moving in recently, to review the handbook and procedures at the Towers. At the October Resident’s meeting, Resident Commissioner Leonardo reminded everyone to call the emergency number for maintenance emergencies as residents had been calling either her or Mary directly. Residents were also addressed about the use of the trash compactor. Atlantic Health Systems sent someone to do a chair exercise program. Only 4 people signed up. The class was supposed to start today, but nobody came. She will return next week on Monday at 1pm. If anyone else is interested in participating, they can sign up in the community room.

Unfortunately, two residents have been reprimanded for being intoxicated in common areas. Both are belligerent when intoxicated. The common areas are for tenant convenience and are a privilege to utilize. With the exception of utilizing the postal service and laundry facilities, the tenants in violation have received a final warning about their behavior. If another incident occurs, they will be forbidden from using the common areas for their pleasure. Residents have been urged to call the police to report any incidents in which they feel unsafe or threatened and have been told not to pick anyone up if they fall for any reason for both of their safety. All other incidents should be reported in writing on an incident report form. Tenant disputes, unless a violation of the terms of the lease at Liberty Towers, do not belong in the interest of the Housing Authority.

BUILDING/GROUNDS: Our current insurance broker’s representative informed us that we are eligible for a small payment towards to the cost of the damage, approximately, \$2,500. Unfortunately, it is negligible as compared to the accumulated cost, which is \$23,960, not including the new floor. The trash compactor has been out of service on an off as a result of abuse and near fire conditions caused by dumping non compactible items in the chute. Tenants have had to remove their trash outside of the building or make arrangements for someone to take it for them. To date, this has worked very well. Once the trash is collected tomorrow, the chutes will be reopened for our tenants’ convenience. The Board is asked to consider closing the trash rooms overnight each weeknight and opening them at 9am each weekday morning to prevent the motor from running continuously overnight. At our August meeting, the Board discussed the need to set policy that requires all tenants and their caregivers to wear shoes in the common areas to prevent injury. It is essential that we address it at next month’s

meeting. The heat has been turned on. One boiler is operational at this time. The other is being repaired. We have solicited quotes for snow removal and only received one proposal from Gerber Landscaping, who did not raise his rates from last year. TSS Facility Services has retained a new cleaner that is doing an excellent job. The convenience store has inquired whether we would entertain renting the office space again. Further information will be provided as it is obtained.

ADMINISTRATION: If the Board approves a policy that closes the trash rooms each evening and specifies conditions for trash removal that will be enforced through the lease, a revised handbook will be created and tenants will be asked to attend a meeting to review the changes and sign a lease addendum so that any violations are enforceable by the lease. Otherwise, the addendum will be completed as part of the annual recertification process.

FINANCE: The 2018 budget has been prepared and is ready for approval for State submission. The director wrote a personal check to cover the cost to join the operating subsidy litigation. Non-HUD funds will be used to reimburse this cost.

PERSONNEL: N/A

COMMISSIONER ITEMS: The annual reorganization of the Board of Commissioners will take place in December.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC “At this point in the meeting, the Board of Commissioners welcomes comments from any member of the public on any topic. To help facilitate an orderly meeting and to permit the opportunity for anyone who wishes to be heard, speakers are asked to limit their comments to 5 minutes. If reading from a prepared statement, please provide a copy and email a copy to the Main Office of the Newton Housing Authority after making your comments so it may be properly reflected in the minutes. Barbara Darrohn made a quilt for raffle to benefit the resident’s association. She will also make bread, candy and mixed snacks during the holiday season. Pat Powers reported that her grandson will shovel snow again this year and asked that people make arrangements with him directly. Josephine Sorin asked about the policy for drinking in the common areas and asked for a sign to be posted that informs people that drinking is prohibited in common areas.

NEW BUSINESS: The Board reviewed the only proposal for snow removal services and discussed their past performance. Cmsr. Nannery made a motion to award the contract for snow removal services to Gerber Landscaping, 1011 Old Foundry Road, Newton, NJ 07860 for \$130 each plow/pass and \$130 each application of sand and salt mix, and \$100 for snow loader service for relocation of snow and removal of snow from the sidewalks at a rate of \$100 and/or \$25 per bag of potassium calcium. Motion seconded by Cmsr. Vranos. Motion approved. The Board also reviewed the 2018 budget for submission to the NJDCA DLGS. It reflects total revenues of \$633,559 and \$620,297 Motion made by Cmsr. Leonardo; seconded by Cmsr. Vranos. Motion approved. Finally, the Board addressed the need to close the trash rooms each evening to prevent the compactor chutes from becoming clogged overnight, forcing the motor to run constantly, and creating a fire hazard. The Board asked the residents that were present for feedback. Mary Schoonover asked if new tenants are given instruction on how and what to do. She was informed that they have a written handbook and that at resident orientations, are given instruction. Everyone in attendance agreed that it was a good idea to lock the rooms. Director Iozzi explained that it wasn’t as simple of a project as locking the doors because they have the electronic mechanism on it that needs to be overridden. A contractor will be retained for this purpose. Once the plan is in place, residents will receive written instruction on how to proceed. Cmsr. Nannery moved to close the trash rooms daily. Motion seconded by Cmsr. Leonardo. Motion approved. Audrey Snyder’s daughter spoke to the Board and residents and thanked everyone for being so supportive of her and her mother, who recently had a hospital stay and commented on how convenient the facility is and how it is really a hidden gem in the community.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, Motion was made by Cmsr. Vrahnos; seconded by Cmsr. Capinjola. Motion approved, meeting adjourned at 6:20pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Iozzi, PhD, Secretary to the Board