

**MINUTES: HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE TOWN OF NEWTON, NJ
February 13, 2017 As Amended**

“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, February 13, 2017 in the Community Room at Liberty Towers. The meeting was called to order by Secretary Iozzi at 5:32 pm and roll call was taken. Chairman Nannery, Vice Chairman Carr (excused), Commissioner Rochelle, Cmsr. Leonardo, Cmsr. Fiedorczyk.

Minutes of the December 12, 2016 regular monthly meeting were reviewed. Cmsr. Leonardo made a motion to approve the minutes; seconded by Cmsr. Fiedorczyk. Motion approved.

Bills for the period 12/30/16-2/7/17 were reviewed: There is a total of \$79,321.23 for normal operating prepaid. Motion made by Cmsr. Nannery; seconded by Cmsr. Rochelle to approve payment of bills. Motion approved.

Communications:

Treasurer’s Report: Account balances as of 1/31/17: general ledger balance \$23,466.75; tenant security/escrow \$55,785.33; and \$63,796.30 NJ Cash Management Fund; NHA Post Employee Benefit Cost, \$47,566.86. Motion made by Cmsr. Leonardo; seconded by Cmsr. Rochelle to accept the Treasurer’s report. Motion approved.

Secretary’s Report/ Old Business:

RESIDENTS: Two apartments were vacated at the end of this January. Both are now occupied with applicants from our waiting list. Annual recertification has begun. A soup and sandwich luncheon was held in January. A breakfast is being held this Thursday.

BUILDING/GROUNDS: The glycol pump has been installed. A new control panel had to be installed for one boiler. The apartment that was treated for bed bugs was treated again, as the result of new bugs appearing elsewhere in the apartment. Since the bugs appeared after the initial treatment series and were in their early development, it is likely that the source of the infestation continued to be introduced to the apartment after treatment. Anyone who has been in the tenant’s vehicle or apartment has been identified and was inspected as a preventative measure. The tenant has been advised that due to the poor housekeeping conditions found in her apartment, that we will need to re-inspect the apartment every month for at least 3 months. The tenant has been asked to clean the apartment or find someone to do it for her. The same tenant was also fined for having cigarette butts and ashes on her floor, and having a strong odor of smoke in the apartment.

Residents have been asked to report all overnight guests to the office for fire and safety reasons at all times. Guests cannot stay on the premises more than 14 days total. If any visit will extend beyond two weeks, the Tenant must notify the NHA in writing, stating the reasons for the extended visit, which must be authorized in writing by the NHA. If the extended visit is not authorized, the guest must leave. Guests cannot leave vehicles on our premises at any time. This is especially important during the winter with snow removal needs.

Residents have been asked to write all work order requests or call the main office directly during regular hours to request work. Staff can’t be expected to remember all verbal requests while coming

and going from the building and managing multiple tasks simultaneously. Writing request helps ensure that work is scheduled and provides the office with a record of all incidents as well.

The annual inspection was held on January 17, 2017. This was the most thorough inspection we have experienced. A large number of work orders have been generated to prepare ourselves for a HUD inspection that has not yet been scheduled. Only 3 apartments failed the housekeeping portion of the inspection. Residents have been informed of the failure and have been given the opportunity to correct the problem before their re-inspection.

The wifi service has continued to have service disruptions. Despite many efforts to repair and upgrade the system, it is not free for the Housing Authority to maintain. The upgrades are costly and the hassle of being stuck in the middle between angry tenants and the provider is not worthwhile for the agency. Tenants have been urged to purchase their own service, share services with neighbors or visit the local library.

Tenants continue to dispose of things that are not routine household trash in the compactor chute and nearly caused a fire when the motor continued to run as the result of a jam. This has happened in the past and is not only dangerous, but it is also costly to repair the equipment. Since this tends to happen over the weekend, measures are being taken to only allow for disposal Monday through Friday. Residents will be notified in advance when the new policy will take place.

ADMINISTRATION: The Board previously awarded a contract to an accounting firm, but held off awarding a contract for auditing services. Upon consultation with the appointed accounting firm, it was determined that if it was the Board's intention to offer the auditing work to the same firm, that the audit would have to be completed prior to the Board awarding them the contract for accounting work. If that is the board's position, the Board will have to reverse its action to award the contract for accounting services and instead, award a contract for auditing services. The need for additional signers on checks was identified months ago. However, it was not reflected in our minutes as to who the Board designated. The bank requires proof of such action before it will allow the additional signer. The Board will be requested to make a resolution for this purpose.

FINANCE: Cmsr. Leonardo suggested creating a Gofundme page for the Towers. GoFundMe's fee is 5% from each donation received and WePay's fee is 2.9% + \$0.30 per donation. If the board is interested in pursuing this avenue in the future, I would like input as to what monies raised will be used for so that a marketing plan can be made around it.

PERSONNEL: There are no changes at this time.

COMMISSIONER ITEMS: Former Cmsr. Fellner has passed away in her home. Cmsr. Carr was hospitalized. The Town council has interviewed two candidates for our Board.

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. Janet Dodd reported that the Resident's Association would be cleaning the flags.

New Business: The Board discussed the need for a secondary signor on our accounts. Cmsr. Leonardo made a motion to approve Resolution (2017-01) Designating Cmsr. Fiedorczyk as a secondary signor on our account, motion seconded by Cmsr. Rochelle. Motion approved. The Board discussed its intentions to award a contract to Polcari and Co. for auditing services for FY 2016. However, understands that it must complete the audit before it can begin the provision of accounting services. For that reason, Cmsr. Rochelle made a motion to adopt Resolution (2017-02) revoking Resolution (2016-11), whereby the Board awarded a contract for fee accounting services in the amount of \$18,000 to Polcari & Co. of 2035 Hamburg Turnpike, Unit H, Wayne, NJ 07470. Motion seconded by Cmsr. Nannery. Motion approved. The Board subsequently authorized Resolution (2017-03) awarding a contract for auditing services for fiscal year 2016 to Polcari & Co in the amount of \$7,390. Motion made by Cmsr. Fiedorczyk, seconded by Cmsr. Leonardo. Motion approved.

Adjournment: There being no further business, Motion was made by Cmsr. Fiedorczyk; seconded by Cmsr. Leonardo. Motion approved, meeting adjourned at 5:55pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Iozzi, PhD, Secretary to the Board