

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
NEWTON HOUSING AUTHORITY
32 Liberty Street
Newton, New Jersey 07960

March 8, 2021

(This is a condensed version of the ZOOM virtual and taped minutes of the Regularly Scheduled Monthly Meeting of the Newton Housing Authority Commencing at 5:00 P.M.)

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT

The New Jersey Open Public Meeting Law was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meeting of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of this Act, the Newton Housing Authority has caused notice of this meeting to be advertised by having the date, time, and place posted on the Newton Housing Authority Website.

In light of the Governor's issuance of Executive Order 107, we have been strongly encouraged to conduct all public meetings subject to the Open Public Meetings Act exclusively using communications equipment (e.g., telephonic conference call-in connections, internet streaming, etc.) for the foreseeable future without providing a physical meeting place. All members of the public may access the meeting (either video or telephone) via "Zoom".

ROLL CALL:

Present: Chairperson Maria Fiedorczyk
Vice-Chairman Richard Bitondo
Commissioner William Nannery
Commissioner Keith Keoppel

Also Present:
Acting Executive Director William F. Snyder
Deborah Alvarez, Secretary/Transcriber

Absent: Commissioner Rick Turdo

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING – February 8, 2021

Chairperson and Commissioners noted minutes were very comprehensive and detailed. Corrections: On Page 7, there is roll call and voice vote. Commissioner Turdo was present on Zoom until last third of meeting. It is requested that "VOTE: AYES" etc. be eliminated on future minutes if there is a Roll Call. On Page 6, Commissioner Bitondo noted it was he who asked about vacancies and not Commissioner Turdo. **(All corrections were completed and February 8, 2021 CORRECTED MINUTES sent to ED Snyder to disseminate to Commissioners).**

Motion to approve minutes of February 8, 2021 with corrections made by Commissioner Keoppel; 2nd by Commissioner Bitondo.

ROLL CALL:	Chairperson Fiedorczyk	Yes
	Commissioner Bitondo	Yes
	Commissioner Nannery	Yes
	Commissioner Keoppel	Yes
	Commissioner Turdo	Absent

APPROVAL OF BILLS – MARCH 2021

ED Snyder explained NHA is transitioning to Bill Katchen. Program used is PHA Web for a housing authority. Woman using it is new to that; started to print them and made mistakes. Where they are crossed out, they were voided checks. Mr. Snyder explained he did call them about different vendors going to Account 12317, can't have more than one check going to different vendors. Total at bottom includes amounts deposited and negative amounts. Amount of bill list is \$26,000. Chairperson Fiedorczyk said she likes Summary at bottom.

Mr. Snyder has made decision that it's odd to pay bills before Commissioners' meeting; these have not been paid. Checks will be delivered to ED Snyder from Mr. Katchen on Thursday, bring to NHA next week to be signed and they'll go out. He was concerned that if Commissioner doesn't want him to pay a vendor, they're already paid.

Chairperson Fiedorczyk asked about contractors being paid for snow/ice removal. Mr. Snyder said it was the roof leak; price they gave him; ED Snyder thought it was a little high, but water was going into Commissioner Keoppel's apartment. They did come back and inspected roof with Mr. Snyder. They found one area that has to be repaired, underneath the seam. He will bring them back in spring to do more comprehensive review and be proactive to make some repairs so NHA is ahead of game for next winter. Commissioner Bitondo suggested recategorizing from landscape to an appropriate expense category – Roof Repairs. Commissioner Nannery asked Chairperson Fiedorczyk if roof had a warranty with company that installed it. Yes, Chairperson Fiedorczyk said, but thought it had expired. Commissioner Bitondo said typically EPDM roofs have a 10-year warranty. Mr. Snyder added he was told it's about 15 years, the way it looks. It's in relatively good shape, but usually he has a company come in and do an inspection; make repairs to seams, etc. in the spring. Chairperson Fiedorczyk added

they've had problems with roof in the past with leaks getting underneath rubber coating that's lying on roof.

ED Snyder said under roof is density board, like a rigid insulation a few inches thick. In walking roof, he noticed that there were many areas where that density board was now loose and moving around. What happens over time is with differential pressure from winds, it can actually lift roof up like a balloon, which is one thing he's talking to them about. There are a few ways to fix: put down an adhesive to put the boards back down; other is mechanical fastener which is screwed into density board to the roof.

As part of the Streamline Conversion, he will take a look at it to see if NHA doesn't need a new roof at this time, what can be done to bring it back to another 10-15 year life expectancy. Commissioner Nannery asked about an A-frame roof on that building. Another building in town with a flat roof did an A-frame years ago, which would run all the water right off the building. Mr. Snyder said NHA could take a look at that as part of the Streamline Conversion; not an A-frame, but pitched roof. A standing "C" metal roof would change the entire look of the building. Commissioner Bitondo thought it was towards the end of its useful life – 15 plus years. ED Snyder said they measured the roof and was given a ballpark number of \$170,000 to replace the roof. It has to be publicly bid, but is an idea of cost. ED Snyder got them on a Google search in the area. Roof on building is a Carlisle Roof and you have to be approved by them to be an applicator and not supposed to use anyone but their applicators or it will void the warranty; roofs are not cheap. Chairperson Fiedorczyk said it was a problem in previous years to get maintenance done on roof; manufacturer would not cover warranty unless NHA had certain contractors working on roof. Man that came was very knowledgeable.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

ED Snyder tried to get COVID 19 vaccine into building; sent a letter to Governor Murphy today citing how anyone would expect a 103-year old woman to have to go wait on line. Chairperson Fiedorczyk, a former County employee, called County of Sussex. Subsequently Health Department Acting Director John Lovell called ED Snyder back and Mr. Snyder now in process of doing survey in building. He's requested tenants fill out survey and this week he will get back to County. County will come in and give Johnson & Johnson vaccine. Residents liked idea of only 1 shot. Also, prior to that, ED Snyder reached out to City Manager Thomas Russo and Mr. Russo said when survey is completed, give it to him and City also has vaccines available. Perhaps County will service people using walkers and wheelchairs; and Town will be backup for that plan or even CVS if they're willing to come on-site. Maybe Commissioners or even the maintenance man, who goes in all apartments, Mr. Snyder will try and get vaccine for them.

HUD requires that all units be inspected once a year. NHA had been doing them around this time of year; they were started last week and half were done and this week the other half will be done. Mr. Snyder's son, who works for him, is doing inspections

around New Jersey. If there are issues regarding units, after inspections and all data is compiled, letters will be sent to tenants: too much clutter in apartment – there are some units with problems and he will notify them what they need to do. He's been in touch with one family member about a condition in an apartment and person is working with Mr. Snyder to bring in a cleaning service. Person was here on Saturday with her husband to try and clean up problem that they had.

Income Recertifications: I inherited that when I started here. Many housing authorities when they do their recertifications – income is based upon when tenant moved into the building. If you move in in July, your recertification will be 12 months away. In many places, they stagger: if you have 120 units it's almost 10 a month. NHA does 4 months, effective April 1st and it's by floor. Second floor in building/first batch of recertifications are almost done. Income data is being worked on and done shortly. Info being entered into PHA Web as HUD actually evaluates you on something called a "pick system". Pick system tells you who's been recertified, you must maintain a rate of 96-98% otherwise HUD comes down on housing authority saying, you are not properly recording and not doing recerts.

Custodial service: We need to bring in custodial type services – janitorial services to vacuum, shampoo, etc. ED Snyder has appointment with local cleaning company. Cost not known. ED Snyder has a college student he's spoken with that may be willing to come in at least two days a week to vacuum all hallways, clean elevators, sweep down stairwells and twice a year shampoo carpeting, which ED Snyder likes to have done in spring after rock salt has been on rugs and in fall before start of winter. Carpeting while not new in building is holding up quite well. Some residents requested doorknobs be sprayed along with handrails in building. Mr. Snyder has a long list and doesn't always get to requested items immediately. Residents have complained that cleaning isn't up to par.

Commissioner Keoppel suffered most from roof leak, but ED Snyder understands it isn't leaking now. There was also an elevator leak, but vent has been fixed.

Last month Commissioners approved contract for consult for Streamline Voluntary Conversion subject to review of the fact that he also does accounting for ED Snyder and works on other projects with Mr. Katchen. Mr. Snyder has not heard from Tracy Goldstein, Esq. as she was away. Mr. Snyder gave her all information she needed after February's meeting. He received an email, back and forth, and today tried again. Contract has not been signed and is subject to that review and approval. ED Snyder will get back to Commissioners after Ms. Goldstein says it's okay.

ED Snyder feels NHA well-positioned in regards to Streamline Voluntary Conversion; and is working with another housing authority doing same thing. Mr. Snyder estimates it is possible to raise over \$10 million. NHA has over 80 units – over \$100,000/unit to raise just to the additional cash to get through that program. He asked if anyone has informed Commissioners how program operates. Chairperson Fiedorczyk requested an overview.

Sometimes some tenants are reluctant. NHA would be switching from Public Housing Program, oldest housing program in USA, as per Housing Act of 1937. NHA would be switching to Section 8 Program, which most people know as Tenant Based Program, which is rent subsidies. Component is that it will be project based, so subsidy actually stays with the unit. Difference is that you're funded now under Public Housing Program from 2 sources: one is Operating Fund, which gives you money to operate every single month, and other is Capital Fund – you get about \$100,000 there. ED Snyder got allocation and will work on Capital Fund budget; but you combine both of those; take average amount formulated every year as to what tenant pays. When you take what tenant pays, amount HUD gives you from Capital Funds on a per unit/per month basis and amount of Operating Fund that you get per unit/per month – it comes up to the rent. Rent is about \$600-\$700.

On Section 8 Program, it's 40 to and in some places almost 100% higher. NHA will probably get rent for 1-bedroom for \$1,200. If it's \$600 and you're getting \$1,200 – that additional \$600 in cash flow is what NHA will go to bank with and say NHA is flush with cash. We're able to borrow that, just like any loan that you'd go in and that they review. We all have all this additional cash flow, which is how other housing authorities were able to borrow up to \$10 million.

As part of this process, ED Snyder suggests #1 is have an architect come in, do an evaluation on what NHA needs – actually called a Physical Condition Assessment. Essentially tells what everything is in the building. Starts on outside – exterior lighting, asphalt paving, how many linear feet of curbing and sidewalk; goes in building – heating system and tell cost of what NHA wants to replace per unit/per building. Residents are met with and informed of plans; everything would come back before Commissioners and you would decide plan of action in terms of this work. Some people are conservative and won't borrow \$10 million, only \$2 million. Commissioners' decision. At that time ED Snyder would suggest roof, air-conditioning problem talked about – sleeves – that be addressed and other things residents tell you about are all put into that whole pot, mixed up and then a design architect comes in to redesign it.

As Commissioner Nannery said about pitched roof, that's all something discussed with architect. Then an engineer is needed re: snow loads and whatever goes into that, getting complicated, but can be done. You would also ask architect to give cost to do it, you'd decide if you want to go in that direction or not. ED Snyder suggests due to age of building: kitchens and bathrooms, which tenants will want. Look at heating and air-conditioning system in general to see about upgrade or replacement. Look at compactor chute situation as it's been closed; Mr. Snyder could not move container in that room, going uphill over a bump. There is a system that they use sausage bags – long bags that come out, get cut – there are others way to do this. Tenants tell ED Snyder they have to walk all the way to back of parking lot to throw their trash away. All those things would be put on a table for inspection; then decide costs in conjunction with a pro forma that tells how much NHA can finance, which is how NHA would move forward. Lakeland Bank has been very good in doing deal with Mr. Snyder and has a

relationship with them already. NHA would talk to them about best rate available. Bank also gets credit for this as its affordable housing, as banks have requirements from Federal Government, and like to invest in this.

To get this accomplished, it will take a few years. If NHA starts now and consultant comes in, it will be two years to get this done. In ED Snyder's opinion, this is a demonstration program and with demonstration programs by HUD, there is tremendous opportunity. They are generous to small housing authorities under 250 units, even when pinching pennies in other programs, but are doing it and time is right to jump on it and take advantage of it. One of the first things is to have meetings with residents to tell them what NHA is doing.

Commissioner Nannery asked if NHA switches over to new program, a rent of \$600 would turn out to be \$1,200 in this program. ED Snyder answered yes, but the tenants don't pay any more money. Tenants pay a formula based rent, 30% of their incomes: 30% of income now is \$1,000 – they get deductions for medical, but let's say \$333/month. If rent is \$1,200, HUD pays the balance. Tenants don't pay any more. In most instances, the transition is so seamless; they would not know it's being done. There is an analysis that ED Snyder will have to do as there are some residents – “flat rent tenants” – who pay a formula, which is 30% of income – maybe \$333 and what they would pay. If flat rent, which has to be 80% of a published fair market rent done annually – fair market rent is \$1,000 for one-bedroom, they have to be at 80%, meaning flat rent has to be \$800. If 30% of your income is \$1,200, NHA would ask tenant: Would you rather flat rent and pay \$800 or rather pay 30% of your income -- \$1,200. Chairperson Fiedorczyk believes there is one tenant paying flat rent. Mr. Snyder said with those tenants, depending on what 30% is, they will have to pay 30% -- no more flat rent on Section 8 and is phased in over a series of years. Then going forward, new tenants coming in, it has to be at or below fair market rent, which is \$1,200 or whatever, to be admitted; otherwise, you lose the subsidy for the unit. ED Snyder does analysis by the computer program to tell how many people are at that. Concept being different from elderly, which he agrees in family units, if someone has income where 30% is \$3,000/month and rent is \$1,200/month – should they really be in public housing? It wasn't meant for that. Families should move out, go into private sector and give this unit to someone else. With elderly, it's a little bit different because there are other dynamics going on that they like to stay in these units. There is always ability to carve that unit out and not part of subsidy process.

Commissioner Bitondo asked if there was a sunset provision to the Streamline Voluntary Conversion. ED Snyder will share videos and websites with Commissioners as there is a lot of written commentary on this. They call it as part of their Repositioning Tool Kit with several different programs, where you can demolish public housing, Section 19, Streamline Voluntary Conversion. Before SVC there was Rental Assistance Demonstration or RAD Program. Now there is a blend program between demolition and (inaudible) program. There are many tools and this is the latest tool right now. Last count was over \$30 billion in capital needs of public housing across the country. This is an ability to partner with private sector and not have direct hit on HUD budget.

Chairperson Fiedorczyk asked about transfer policy, did Mr. Snyder look into that. ED Snyder said no, but he'd make a note. He will have a written memo on that next month.

NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Nannery is concerned with NHA numbers. If one Commissioner is not available, and perhaps Commissioner Turdo will not be with NHA long term, NHA will not have a quorum to conduct business. It is important to get another Commissioner appointed and approved. Chairperson Fiedorczyk said Joyce's daughter, Lisa, expressed interest. She will speak with Joan; Commissioner Nannery spoke with Joyce and asked for a resume to forward down to Town officials. There is a brief application on Town Website for volunteers. Commissioner Nannery helped Commissioner Keoppel fill out his form. ED Snyder will speak with Joan and reach out to Joyce and get daughter's resume. Commissioner Nannery interviewed Commissioner Keoppel as he was filling out form; some questions about related experience, but no reason why Lisa could not do herself. Chairperson Fiedorczyk will get ED Snyder web address and then forward it to Lisa. Joyce did it on line also. ED Snyder asked Commissioners if they knew any residents that would like to do it. Chairperson Fiedorczyk thought it easier to get town or county resident. This will have to be a priority.

Commissioner Bitondo said difficulty was traveling for training and it's now all virtual. Commissioner Keoppel said its online now, but has missed 2. He will be with ED Snyder on Wednesday. Rutgers people have called Commissioner Keoppel after he came onboard, but never heard anything else. ED Snyder looked it up and got schedule for him; things that Commissioner Keoppel was not familiar with, but he's been studying. Commissioner Bitondo said you have 18 months to complete program. Commissioner Keoppel noted four are required and three of your choice. John Clark, Rutgers New Brunswick, is listed as one of the instructors, but not individual who called Commissioner Keoppel. Mr. Snyder added he teaches for the National Association and will get it straightened out.

RESOLUTION #2021-4 – APPROVAL OF BILL LISTS FOR MARCH 2021

WHEREAS, in the course of administering the operations of the Newton Housing Authority expenses are incurred and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to pay invoices on a monthly basis after being presented to the Board of Commissioners; NOW, THEREFORE

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of the Newton Housing Authority as follows:

1. That the attached list of bills for March 2021 in the amount of \$_____ be approved for payment.
2. That the proper officers of the Authority be authorized to pay all items on the list of invoices.
3. That this Resolution shall take effect immediately.

Motion to approve payment of bills for March 2021 made by Commissioner Nannery; 2nd by Commissioner Bitondo.

ROLL CALL:	Chairperson Fiedorczyk	Yes
	Commissioner Bitondo	Yes
	Commissioner Nannery	Yes
	Commissioner Keoppel	Yes
	Commissioner Turdo	Absent

PUBLIC COMMENTS – nothing at this time

ADJOURNMENT – 5:46 p.m.

Motion to close public meeting and go into CLOSED SESSION regarding Personnel Matters made by Commissioner Nannery; 2nd by Chairperson Fiedorczyk.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4) Absent: Turdo

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairperson Fiedorczyk and ED Snyder discussed Joan, who volunteers her time in office of NHA. ED Snyder wholeheartedly supports that as Joan is excellent; stays in touch with Mr. Snyder several times a week, putting in many hours before ED Snyder is there at 9 A.M. Joan comes back in afternoon after lunch, delivers all notices – is like a part-time employee. Her stipend is \$200. ED Snyder looked up HUD Rules and their rules on stipend for a tenant cannot exceed, doing type of work Joan does, cannot exceed \$200/month, but that's for purposes of being excluded from income. Everyone's income is recertified on an annual basis – you pay a formula base rent. \$200/month Joan and Jenny get is not counted as income – it's a flat \$200, beneficial. It doesn't mean Joan cannot be paid more, but anything above and beyond, would have to be calculated income, which means for every dollar she makes, Joan would only get 70 cents – 30 cents comes back to Authority. Commissioners just need to be aware of that.

Commissioner Bitondo asked if that would be different if she were to be employed by Mr. Snyder's company. ED Snyder said no, it is still income from any source. Chairperson Fiedorczyk asked if Joan is then given the option of either accepting more money or not, as it will affect her rent calculation. ED Snyder thought it a great idea. He will speak with her on Wednesday and see what Joan would like to do. If she doesn't, it would show everyone appreciates what she does. If she does NHA will try and work something out. It can be made retroactive. ED Snyder will come back to Commissioners, tell what was worked out, what do Commissioners think, whether she works for his company or Authority. Authority doesn't have a payroll and payroll for one person is ridiculous, especially part-time. It would cost as much for payroll service in taxes, etc. as for what she's being paid. ED Snyder suggests, if she wants, to work for

his company; NHA do \$200 like they're doing now and then see what hourly rate is. Most people now paid \$15/hour. Commissioner Bitondo asked if NHA is financially able to incur additional expense and, if so, can we establish hours Joan would work in office — 8 to 12 3-days a week. ED Snyder said yes, but one of the systems he has to put in place is with accountant – Policari. Mr. Snyder wants a quarterly report that he'd give to Commissioners, which is budget to actual, so Commissioners would know where NHA stands.

ED Snyder assumes NHA was able to operate they were, and if you look at his bills, they're under what he budgeted, which he assumed they would be. There are going to be custodial costs in there, which will push it up a little bit. He will check with Policari and ask for budget to actual where NHA is. It's already March. Policari can do for first two months of the year.

Chairperson Fiedorczyk asked how hours that Joan works will be delineated between stipend from NHA and what ED Snyder pays. Mr. Snyder said he'd think about it as Joan is on-call all the time, even at night. He will get a call and Joan will tell maintenance, I spoke with tenant, don't worry, and do it first thing in the morning. Joan is on-call 24/7. Each Commissioner commented how much Joan does in the office or just staying in touch with people. Commissioner Keoppel said Joan is with every penny. ED Snyder said give her \$200, like he pays maintenance man, for being on-call. What she would get paid for is hours – give Joan set hours up to a point – 9-12 at x-amount of dollars/hour. He will do some kind of a budget so Commissioners will know. Commissioner Bitondo wants a job description also. Just call Joan Jack-of-all-trades or Joan-of-all-trades. Chairperson Fiedorczyk said Joan in office every day that Jenny is in office; residents are not always so pleasant to Jenny. Joan is there to make sure that everything stays calm. Commissioner Bitondo noted her trust and reliability, which you don't find in everyone.

Chairperson Fiedorczyk told Mr. Snyder they had thought about having Joan become a Commissioner, but she could not be a stipend worker and be a Commissioner.

Decision was Joan was more valuable in capacity she's in now.

Commissioner Bitondo would like to see her employed by Execu-Tech with whatever NHA needs and can afford with job description outlining what her responsibilities and duties are, a set of hours, and additional amount for 24/7 on-call. ED Snyder said he'd have something by next meeting for Commissioners for discussion purposes; he'll speak with her Wednesday next. If Joan wants to do something right away, he'll make it retroactive, if Commissioners want. Commissioner Bitondo said Commissioner Keoppel was also speaking on behalf of residents of building. Commissioner Keoppel agreed; just the way she relates to people and on-call any hour. Commissioner Bitondo doesn't want her put in a position that she no longer meets the income eligibility to be a resident.

ED Snyder talked about the 30/70 split and then taxes to be paid; all of that adds up so a person might be down to 50-60 cents on a dollar. Joan is doing it now for free, so is 50 on \$1.00 worth more than nothing. He thinks it is.

Motion to adjourn Executive Session made by Commissioner Keoppel; 2nd by Commissioner Bitondo.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4) Absent: Turdo

Motion to adjourn meeting at 5:57 P.M. made by Chairperson Fiedorczyk; 2nd by Commissioner Bitondo.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4) Absent: Turdo

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah L. Alvarez
Secretary/Transcriber