

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

AUGUST 9, 2021

(This is a condensed version of taped minutes of the Regularly Scheduled Monthly
Meeting of Newton Housing Authority
Commencing at 5:15 P.M.)

ROLL CALL:

Present: Vice-Chairman Richard Bitondo
Commissioner William Nannery
Commissioner Keith Keoppel
Commissioner Karen Crossley
Commissioner Wendy Vandermaas

Excused: Chairperson Maria Fiedorczyk
Commissioner Richard Turdo

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

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT

"Adequate notice of the meeting has been provided by the filing of a revised annual meeting notice with Municipal Clerk posted on the official bulletin board and delivery of same to the Herald News and Star-Ledger on June 23, 2021. 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 meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interest is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of this Act, the Newton Housing Authority has caused notice of the meeting to be advertised by having the date, time and place posted on the Newton Housing Authority website.

SWEARING IN - NEW COMMISSIONERS KAREN CROSSLEY & WENDY VANDERMAAS

ED Snyder introduced 2 new Commissioners: Karen Crossley & Wendy Vandermaas; it has been difficult having public meetings without a quorum.
ED Snyder asked each to stand and recite Oath of Allegiance, raising right hand and repeating after ED Snyder:

"I, KAREN CROSSLEY – WENDY VANDERMAAS – do solely swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of New Jersey and that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same and to the governments established in the United States and in the State of New Jersey under the Authority of the people of the State of New Jersey."

(Applause.)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING – JUNE 2021

Vice-Chairman Bitondo realized awkwardness of new Commissioners regarding June 2021 minutes, asked if they read minutes and have faith in NHA Secretary, then you may vote "yes" instead of "abstain". It is an interpretation of Roberts Rules of Order regarding people who are absent, but minutes are being produced; without one of you voting, minutes cannot be approved.

Motion for approval of Regular Meeting Minutes of June 28, 2021 made by Commissioner Crossley; 2nd by Commissioner Keoppel.

There were no questions, concerns or comments.

ROLL CALL:	Commissioner Keoppel	Yes
	Commissioner Nannery	Yes
	Commissioner Crossley	Yes
	Commissioner Vandermaas	Yes
	Vice-Chairman Bitondo	Yes

Excused: Fiedorczyk/Turdo

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT COVERING OLD/NEW BUSINESS – ED SNYDER

On Agenda this evening, under direction of Board, is new hire for residents, if approved by Board. She will be here on a daily basis, get ED Snyder messages (who is only at NHA 1-day a week) and doing many things Mr. Snyder has not been able to work on: a contractor register – who are our contractors; what's term of their contract – as these go out for proposals on an annual basis; reach out to vendors. She can do all the leg work between times Mr. Snyder is here and not here.

Wednesday when ED Snyder is back, and discussed last month in preparing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for architectural services to do capital needs assessment on the building. Some of you have heard me, and discussed with Commissioner Nannery today, both elevators went down this weekend. These are old; need to be upgraded – new motors, cables, cars. As part of capital needs assessment we will look at that.

Roof still leaks and old. Hopefully, an architect will come in, figure out whether a Streamline Voluntary Conversion or as I reported last month on Infrastructure Bill, and believe, there will be some HUD money in there. Democrats were pretty smart, as they got this Infrastructure Bill \$1.2 billion, looks like it will be approved – highways, bridges and roads. Once that is out of the way, they can go through reconciliation process – putting it all on their Christmas tree – people infrastructure – HUD stuff is kind of people infrastructure. It looks right now as if there will be about \$70 billion that HUD will get for things such as Capital Fund Program. We should take advantage of that, do things needed – and this building needs a lot of things.

With the maintenance staff, air-conditioners have been put in windows – windows need to be replaced; ventilation system needs to be improved. That will all come about when I get together with someone who will come in, take a look at numbers to see what it's going to take to actually bring building back the way it was when originally built.

ED Snyder needs a copy machine; still getting proposals on that; and should have by next month to upgrade office a little bit.

Transfer Policy approved by Board last month requires a 45-day comment period from residents. Notices have gone out to residents; comments are due back by September 15th at which point everybody will be notified – several residents indicated they want a transfer. ED Snyder preparing a list and getting ready for that. Looking at that policy again – Admission Continued Occupancy Policy – that's where transfer stuff was, my recollection in speaking with Joan was: age for entrance/admission into building was 55, I'm told. That's not in accordance with HUD Regulations. HUD does allow you to admit people under 62 providing you go through a fairly cumbersome process of proving that you have nobody 62 or older to fill units. This is not the case. This has to be revised at some point; not aware of how to look at people that are not of proper age, but just found out today that one of the professional consulting firms from California did audit of Phillipsburg Housing Authority; asked them to come in and one of their first comments was: you're letting people in at age 55. Age is 62. Perhaps when Phillipsburg came here, they changed that.

Vice-Chairman Bitondo said he was here just before Phillipsburg came in; thought it was 55 at that point in time. ED Snyder will look at records, as it could be they went through HUD process. ED Snyder stated its 62, disabled or handicapped, no matter what your age is.

Last month we spoke of getting proposals – bid limit in New Jersey is \$17,500; anything over that has to be publicly bid – under that we get quotes if it's 15% of that, quotes still needed. Phone system and copy machine were above that. ED Snyder advised to reach out to Newton to see if their Qualified Purchasing Agent could act as NHA's agent. Mr. Snyder can contact them himself, but they hire that out, as they don't have anyone, and it's probably expensive. Mr. Snyder was a QPA, but dropped his license as he takes enough courses. NHA is small enough and doesn't believe it will be a

problem. He will advertise and whatever comes in, comes in and will extend things just a bit longer.

Mr. Snyder is still attempting to reach Commissioner Turdo's family about sending him something, but has heard nothing as yet. Phillipsburg could not tell his status either.

ED Snyder added Amanda (a resident) had a tree fall on her car. Her insurance company paid for window with exception of \$100 deductible, so if it's the Board's pleasure whether or not to reimburse her – putting it on record and done by a Motion. These should be handled on a case by case basis because it could be problematic in other ways.

Vice-Chairman Bitondo asked if \$100 was on any bill list. ED Snyder said no, it will be put in next month, if approved. ED Snyder said when all contracts are together, a tree service should be brought in. NHA has a right to cut trees on NHA side of fence and trim up; as this is not first time this has happened. There was a dispute another time with property owner – he will get prices for that.

Commissioner Crossley noted it's an Ordinance within Town of Newton that property owner has to maintain his trees. Even if NHA trims several, there are some that will still fall. Perhaps a phone call to Code Enforcement Officer Bernie Hattarsley will get some results.

RESOLUTIONS #2021-11 thru and including #2021

1. RESOLUTION #2021-11 REVISED – APPROVAL OF BILL LIST FOR MONTHS OF JULY/AUGUST 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 monthly 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 July 2021 in the amount of \$40,137.62 & August 2021 in the amount of \$64,034.91 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 July/August 2021 bills made by Commissioner Nannery;
2nd by Commissioner Keoppel.

ED Snyder noted his bill in July was for 2 months. There were no questions or comments. Policari is fee accountant; Palmer is landscape contractor, Roto-Rooter and Spin Cycle are self-evident. Mastech is computer person & web site. Commissioner Vandermaas asked if vendors have to be HUD approved. ED Snyder answered no. Vice-Chairman Bitondo noted Federal Government is trying to move housing authorities out of governance of HUD.

ROLL CALL:	Commissioner Keoppel	Yes
	Commissioner Nannery	Yes
	Commissioner Crossley	Yes
	Commissioner Vandermaas	Yes
	Vice-Chairman Bitondo	Yes

Excused: Fiedorczyk/Turdo

2. RESOLUTION #2021-12 – REVISION OF EXECU-TECH CONTRACT TO ADD ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Motion to approve Resolution #2021-12 made by Commissioner Crossley; 2nd by Commissioner Nannery.

ED Snyder said woman is ready to start; Jenny and Joan are in office. Jenny is there until noontime. He doesn't want to disrupt flow that he's had. New woman will come in the afternoon – probably 11:00 to 4:30 – 12:00 to 5:00 – about 20-25 hours a week. Joan usually leaves about 3 o'clock; new woman leaves after that. Jenny and Joan are volunteers getting a minimum stipend. ED Snyder said he and Joan will introduce woman at next Resident Meeting.

ROLL CALL:	Commissioner Keoppel	Yes
	Commissioner Nannery	Yes
	Commissioner Crossley	Yes
	Commissioner Vandermaas	Yes
	Vice-Chairman Bitondo	Yes

Excused: Fiedorczyk/Turdo

3. RESOLUTION #2021-13 – APPROVAL OF \$100 EXPENSE INCURRED AS RESULT OF TREE FALLING ON RESIDENT VEHICLE – COVERING DEDUCTIBLE ON OWNER'S INSURANCE POLICY – AMANDA GRINDLE – APT. 5J

Motion to approve payment of \$100 to Amanda Grindle for expense incurred
Made by Commissioner Nannery; 2nd by Commissioner Vandermaas.

ROLL CALL:	Commissioner Keoppel	Yes
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Commissioner Nannery	Yes
Commissioner Crossley	Yes
Commissioner Vandermaas	Yes
Vice-Chairman Bitondo	Yes

Excused: Fiedorczyk/Turdo

REMARKS OF CITIZENS

JOYCE FRANKLIN, 2D – Joyce spoke of WISE Program. Is it possible WISE Program can be brought into Liberty Towers and have outside people also come in. Program brings lunch, give you \$25. It is health & wellness program run by Center for Prevention. Joyce will call and inquire if woman can come here – open it up to public. Last time it was held here, seniors were invited, either in morning or afternoon, getting either breakfast or lunch. ED Snyder asked how often they visit. Joyce said once a week for 6 weeks, depending on when they can set it up -- August or September. Joyce answered they bring in speakers, talk about environment, recycling – Fire Department came in. It is fun, little contests, informative and great. They give a \$25 gift card if you attend 5-6 of the meetings. It was only done once, but Joyce will ask if they can do it more often. Vice-Chairman Bitondo asked ED Snyder if there were any requirements for use of Community Room. ED Snyder didn't think so, but ask Tenant Association. Notice can be sent out to residents. Please stop to see ED Snyder Wednesday so it can be set up. Joan will remind Mr. Snyder.

Joyce asked if possible to have pizza lunches, donuts and coffee – can they be started again. Vice-Chairman Bitondo asked if Community Room is open again. ED Snyder said yes; NHA brought vaccines into building. Joyce said 2 years ago she had Walgreen's pharmacists come in to give free flu shots and 25-35 people from building participated. ED Snyder said that with new employee, and what NHA needs here coming out of pandemic is more activities for seniors – perhaps movie night with pizza, different things like that and having a person here everyday, they can be gone over and worked out with Resident Association, get a formal schedule – game night, whatever residents want; perhaps a survey to see what they'd like and interested in. There is a lot she can do that would be beneficial; ED Snyder doesn't see why more organized items cannot be done.

Commissioner Crossley did a survey when she was with Recreation Commission. She has that and once new employee gets email, Commissioner Crossley will send over spreadsheets of what things they might like – not only fun things, but services, etc.

AMANDA, 5J, gave list to each Commissioner of residents' concerns and would appreciate answers. She gave list to ED Snyder in January. ED Snyder said he looked at her concerns; handled tree issue tonight and will follow-up. Ventilation issue – doesn't disagree with you, but this is not just put a fan somewhere. An architect is being hired to come in and analyze entire building; part of that will be ventilation system. There is a make-up air unit that provides fresh air into the corridors going into

apartments – it's not working and probably hasn't worked in years. NHA has limited funds, but with new HUD money coming – many things to do, but certainly when architect comes in, he will look at all that. Architect will be here before end of year. Vice-Chairman Bitondo added it's just needs assessment. First, funding; go out to bid; find contractors to do work. Nothing is immediate. We know there are many capital improvements that are necessary on this building over 50 years old.

ED Snyder added we are well aware of trash compactor. It can't be opened because of way system was designed; and cannot be moved because of that. As part of capital needs assessment, we will come up with a new system. It is tens of thousands of dollars. Thank you for your list – we are talking about all items on it and list will become part of these minutes.

Vice-Chairman Bitondo asked ED Snyder if there is a requirement when fire alarm sounds, everyone is to evacuate. ED Snyder said it's up to town Fire Marshall; speak with Joan to have Fire Marshall come in as part of what Joyce was saying. Some towns require fire drills, but not elderly buildings. Some say stay in your unit. Usually, there's a voice-activation system that they speak to people and come get them, but not sure what it is here. Someone said they were told if you are able to use stairs, to get out of building. Vice-Chairman Bitondo said there was a fire drill once and people that were able to, did evacuate.

Someone asked if there are fire doors on apartments – they're fireproof, but not smoke proof, spaces where smoke could come right into apartment.

ANN WILLS, 5N – Is there any way to put fans in elevator. Ann got stuck in there and was very hard to breathe. Vice-Chairman Bitondo answered that would be with elevator replacement. ED Snyder will check as most elevators have a vent – a code requirement. It's there, but it doesn't work? He will look into it and get it fixed.

LAURA MARCHESE – Is there any possibility that with health & wellness, perhaps chair yoga would be offered? ED Snyder said yes as part of the survey. If you know someone who does that, perhaps at the Y. Vice-Chairman Bitondo added we have a contact with Recreation Commissioner. Commissioner Crossley added they use many high school students as they need Community Service for college credits. It's similar to shoveling snow, etc., as long as NHA would provide a letter of hours of Community Service, also Boy & Girl Scouts. ED Snyder said NHA looking for students to shovel snow between people's cars, etc.

MARY ANN COLLINS, 3G – Trash rooms – In the summer you cannot stand smell of rotting food. Visitors come in and ask about smell. Everybody is against them being closed, but for the record, smell is terrible.

KAREN FENSKI (ph.), 3H – Regarding snow – more than just between cars. I'm wondering if you are going to address that, as walking around last year, any of these sidewalks were a treacherous ordeal; turned to ice and totally impossible. Residents

were trapped in building. Most people around shoveled a little pathway you could walk through. Many here have walkers – you could not get around and trapped for weeks. Discussion about landscaper – is he in charge of snow removal. It is a separate contract; man also does roofing. Bids go out in fall. This time specify about sidewalks and tenants concerns when writing bid specs. The 32" snowfall was difficult to deal with.

AMANDA, 5J, - Any chance of having maintenance man here more than 1x/week? ED Snyder answered that's what NHA is contracted for. He will come when needed and was here more than 1x last week. If there's a need, he's here. One man did come, just stood around as there were no work orders. New employee will handle work orders and it is incumbent you get work order into system; but if an emergency, he will be here ASAP.

DEBORAH KING, 2S – Are there any funds to replace beds in garden. 2 sections are good; 2 sections are bad. Dirt is falling out. Vice-Chairman Bitondo noticed a need for weed removal when he was coming in today. They have overtaken sidewalks and curbs. ED Snyder inherited Palmer Landscaper; seems like a nice young man. Early in season, ED Snyder walked site with him, pointed out everything he wanted done – it hasn't been done. When you enter parking lot after that storm, bamboo trees hanging down – 3-4 weeks ago. He was told to remove them. Fellow just tells ED Snyder he's going to do weeding in flower beds. We will go out to bid; specs will be tightened up. It looks horrible and not up to Mr. Snyder's standards. Fellow was told when to put down dandelion killer; fertilizer; what needed to be seeded; closing up certain areas and nothing has been done. He was called again last week and didn't pick up his phone. It is not known if there is a contract. Perhaps hold back payment. Maybe contract only for mowing lawn, although he cut down some trees and carted them away. Short story: NHA looking at landscaping and something needs to be done.

The vents that come into apartment – they get very dirty, is there any way that they can have filters put over or in them? ED Snyder said filters not required. Fresh air is coming into apartment, goes up through vent as there is mechanical vent on roof that's sucking air out – probably dust, etc. that's accumulating. Perhaps use a Swiffer. Deborah meant vent over stove has to be cleaned every few days.

In dryers where lint is cleaned, is there any way to remove the top part as much dust underneath. Eventually the dust, lint backs up into hoses and can cause a fire. Is it possible to be unscrewed? ED Snyder said it was just talked about, but not sure if it has been done yet. The maintenance man can do it, as just screws on vent. Woman spoke about dirt/lint underneath drum, can it be cleaned out? It will be looked at – speak to ED Snyder on Wednesday and show him.

MARY ANN: Spoke about vents in kitchen. Someone was hired to open vents and clean inside. It was very dirty. It isn't the one near stove. ED Snyder said there are mechanical vents on roof that are on all the time sucking out air from apartments. Vents probably have to be taken off and cleaned themselves from roof. A big job. There are

30-40 vents on roof, which have to come off. ED Snyder will look into it. There are companies that do that.

Woman asked if they're on 24/7 for fresh air to come in – according to CDC with pandemic – supposed to have air circulation, but she noticed vents shut off at about 10:30 PM with no air all night long. ED Snyder said they're on a timer; can be put on 24 hours, but next month people will say I can't sleep because they're loud, especially if on top floor. Vice-Chairman Bitondo said we're in 21st century, but dealing with technology from 1970's, so much can be done today to improve upon air quality, etc. We're hopeful that funding will come from Federal Government and bring building up to date.

ED Snyder said he's working with Rutgers University on a project that specifically has to do with multi-family ventilation – new technology, use of products. They're getting money from Federal Government (some pandemic money) and actually doing a seminar on it coming up in Atlantic City in November – an annual trade association. When he speaks to woman, he will make sure this building gets in that study so they can come and specifically take a look at what's going on.

Vice-Chairman Bitondo noted it's hard to update 50-year old equipment. You are not going to get quality of air you deserve with equipment that's over 50 years old. Lady said let ventilation fan run 24/7.

Another woman asked if there was an allotment for entertainment, as a couple entertain that are from Newton Town Center; during holidays they play 2 hours – Frank Sinatra and oldies. Discussion about cost and it would probably go to Residents Association. ED Snyder said let's try to put together package of events and entertain – see how it goes; setting up a budget and perhaps get donations from people. Bands might come as a community service. Commissioner Crossley said a lot can go through Rec Commission. They did 2 lunches – spring including musical (all day event); in fall was Harvest Festival. In light of everything, let's do it here, which worked out very well.

CELEST PREDMORE, 4J: Just wanted to thank Commissioners for work done so far, even though not everyone notices it.

Woman asked about Tenant Based Vouchers. Do you have applications for that? ED Snyder answered no, they are not here. Newton Housing Authority does not have a Housing Choice Voucher Program; don't know if County has one. Woman asked where she could go. ED Snyder said it's Section 8 – County may have department that does that or in different towns or Department of Community Affairs has biggest program in State.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Nannery; 2nd by Commissioner Vandermaas.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5)

Excused: Fiedorczyk/Turdo

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah L. Alvarez
Secretary/Transcriber