

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

September 13, 2021

(This is a condensed version of taped minutes of the Regularly Scheduled
Monthly Meeting of the Newton Housing Authority
Commencing at 5:05 P.M.)

ROLL CALL:

Present: Chairperson Maria Fiedorczyk
Vice-Chairman Richard Bitondo
Commissioner William Nannery
Commissioner Wendy Vandermaas*
Commissioner Karen Crossley
Excused: Commissioner Rick Turdo

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

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by the filing of a revised Annual Meeting Notice with Municipal Clerk, posting 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 Meetings 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 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.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING – AUGUST 9, 2021

Motion to approve minutes made by Commissioner Bitondo; 2nd by Commissioner Crossley.

ROLL CALL: Chairperson Fiedorczyk Yes

Commissioner Bitondo	Yes
Commissioner Nannery	Yes
Commissioner Crossley	Yes
Commissioner Turdo	Excused
Commissioner Vandermaas	Excused

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT & DISCUSSION

Package sent to Commissioners last month spoke about proposals for physical needs/condition assessment, which is report telling NHA all of the issues in need of repair in building – giving an estimate of cost. On RFP in Commissioners' agendas, which is coming back on 9/29 – perhaps local architect or engineer would like to submit proposal – please tell them to get in by 9/29.

In terms of building itself, NHA is experiencing more and more leaks when it rains. Contractor was in that repaired roof, telling ED Snyder he thinks there is a little bit more life left in roof; suggesting is a maintenance plan, which he will come in – probably soliciting for proposals – but for few thousand dollars a year they come in spring or fall analyzing roof, take pictures, give written report and make repairs necessary to be proactive the roof isn't leaking in advance. During the recent bad rains, rain coming in on top floor into tenants' apartments. The other items that building needs as part of Streamline Voluntary Conversion.

Our number came up on State inspections and an inspector came up to go physical inspection under Right-to-Know Act; wanting to see all chemicals that are in building; where stored because those for maintenance men and anyone who comes in contact with them, it could be potentially dangerous. Report has to be submitted online. Company brought in that did report last time, invoice might be on bill list, Ram Environmental – doing a lot of these. Inspector came back and got approval. As a result of that, ED Snyder was able to go around and noticed several areas of building that needed to be cleaned up. As part of this, we had a man who was cleaning apartments came in and cleaned up maintenance room; someone cleaned kitchen; cleaned front entranceway – all power washed, windows cleaned, furniture all done. Cleaned out rooms in front – stuff packed to ceiling; working on getting garage door repaired on sides. There was a broken wheelchair – working on getting another for front. Several grocery carts were broken, rusted, which were thrown out; keeping a few grocery carts in front. Half were not working to begin with. Furniture moved to one floor. Chairperson Fiedorczyk is signing and notarizing forms so ED Snyder can have access to online system.

(*Commissioner Vandermaas arrived at this point in time.)

Two months ago a revision was passed to Transfer Policy. Those comments are due in 45 days, which is this Wednesday. They will be reviewed, come back next meeting. Several people have requested transfers; we have a list based on date of those requests and will be handled according to the date.

Hair Salon: When Mr. Snyder first came to NHA, he was told hair salon is important; residents need it. Went out for proposals, got firm to come in and is working there now. Unfortunately, they're not getting enough business. Letter sent to NHA requesting if NHA wants salon to continue – as they are also paying for insurance, they're losing money -- \$100/rent/month plus cost of insurance as not enough people supporting them. ED Snyder asking to waive \$200/rent. They would like to bring customers in from outside, but they do work elsewhere, so don't know if that would happen or not. If NHA loses them, no one else will come back.

ED Snyder received email from Diligent Urgent Care, bringing to Board's attention. Firm would come and do presentation for Board, if Board was interesting in putting an onsite clinic here to do certain medical things. There are many issues with respect to that -- #1 Insurance; #2 Other housing authorities doing this, but ED Snyder doesn't believe under State Procurement requirements you can just go lease space to people as there may be facilities that would come in – doctors – and pass for using the space. ED Snyder finds most residents have their own doctors; doesn't know how much it would be supported in the building. If Board not interested, that's what they'll be told.

Commissioner Bitondo in response to ED Snyder's management report stated architect submitted very comprehensive proposal on parking lot/drainage. He'd like to know who he was – probably in old paperwork. This architect should receive a packet. Board liked detail and thoroughness of his proposal in comparison to others. Mr. Snyder answered he knows many engineers/architects and some who specifically do these physical condition assessments, as there is a set form that has to be followed. He has never seen parking lot/drainage report. Commissioner Nannery: NHA liable for all pipes underground to fix. They are township pipes, but because NHA put driveway over them, NHA is liable for them. Town was having problems at one point when redoing sewer system, but they stopped. Commissioner Bitondo: Architect spent a lot of time here, Board liked proposal and has a bit of experience with our grounds, not so much with building.

Commissioner Bitondo asked if motion is needed re: accepting Keith Koeppel's resignation. Nothing received in writing, but did tell ED Snyder and Board he was leaving.

1. RESOLUTION 2021-14, APPROVAL OF BILL LIST FOR MONTH OF 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 August 2021 in the amount of \$78,715.07 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 August 2021 bills made by Commissioner Crossley; 2nd by Commissioner Nannery.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5) Excused: Turdo

2. RESOLUTION #2021-15 – APPROVAL OF CONTRACT FOR TELEPHONE SYSTEM

WHEREAS, the Newton Housing Authority (NHA) has need to replace its telephone system in the administrative office; and

WHEREAS, the NHA solicited for proposals by advertising in the newspapers of general circulation which were received on September 8th by 10:00 AM; and

WHEREAS, the Executive Director is recommending that the contract be awarded to the lowest priced vendor; NOW THEREFORE

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of the Newton Housing Authority that the contract for a telephone system be awarded to:

OSI Technology
217 Mount Horeb Road
Warren, New Jersey 07059

In the following amounts:
Installation: \$545.00
Monthly Fee: \$ 71.97

Telephone Equipment: 0

Motion to approve contract for telephone system made by Commissioner Crossley; 2nd by Commissioner Nannery.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5)

Excused: Turdo

RESOLUTION #2021-16 – APPROVAL OF CONTRACT FOR COPIER MACHINE

WHEREAS, the Newton Housing Authority (NHA) has need to replace its' Copy Machine in the administrative office; and

WHEREAS, the NHA solicited for proposals by advertising in the newspapers of general circulation which were received on September 8th by 10:00 AM; and

WHEREAS, the NHA received four (4) proposals in response to its official advertisement which were reviewed by the Executive Director; and

WHEREAS, the Executive Director is recommending that the contract be awarded to the lowest priced vendor; NOW THEREFORE

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of the Newton Housing Authority that the contract be awarded to

Ditto Copy System
209 E. Elizabeth Avenue
Linden, New Jersey 07036

In the following amounts:
\$2,234.05

Motion to approve purchase of copier machine and maintenance of same made by Chairperson Fiedorczyk; 2nd by Commissioner Crossley.

ED Snyder indicated it was very old, could not fax, no scan and breaks down often.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5)

Excused: Turdo

RESOLUTION #2021-17 – ACCEPTANCE OF COMMISSIONER KEITH KOEPEL'S RESIGNATION

Motion to accept with regret the resignation from Board of Commissioners of Keith Koepfel and to officially notify Municipal Officials of this resignation made by Commissioner Bitondo; 2nd by Chairperson Fiedorczyk.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5) Excused: Turdo

RESOLUTION #2021-18 – REDUCTION OF FEE FOR HAIRDRESSER SALON IN NHA

Motion to eliminate \$200 rental fee for hair salon to end of March 2022 made by Chairperson Fiedorczyk; 2nd by Commissioner Bitondo.

Audience was asked how many use the hair salon on a regular basis. Joan goes every other week; one woman didn't care for haircut; 2 men have their hair cuts. Men/15 – Women/17. Two different women come – 1 Monday/Tuesday; other Thursday/Friday – every week; a lot of down time; one is from Pennsylvania. Commissioner Bitondo suggested waiving fee completely, allow to continue and hope more people will use them. Perhaps with winter approaching, more will take advantage of salon. Woman said woman on Thursday/Friday does perms, color, hair cut, eyebrows, etc. Commissioners haven't allowed outside people into building for salon services. Prior to Covid, Commissioners were not aware outsiders were using the salon.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5) Excused: Turdo

PUBLIC COMMENTS

AMANDA – 5J – Asked when she would get \$100 check for damage to her car as approved last month. ED Snyder: Check will be picked up this Thursday, signed by Board and available end of next week. Check with ED Snyder Wednesday to make sure everything is correct. When something is approved, it takes a month to get on bill list and get processed. Amanda added there is a broken dryer approximately 3 weeks.

DOLORES – 3E – Is it possible to start coffee and treats again during Christmastime. It was nice and high school choir came to sing. Chairperson Fiedorczyk said it can be discussed, perhaps speaking to Residents Association to do something together.

JOYCE FRANKLIN – 2D – Walgreens has come in to give flu shots, but not last year. Can it be scheduled again? ED Snyder: Speak to him or Karen in office to set up a date if Walgreens will do it. Speak to him on Wednesday. Joyce said WISE Program is coming starting September 16th; she is also trying to get someone to do chair yoga in Community Room.

PHYLLIS – 5M – Can something be done about ice in parking lot in winter; very bad, people falling. Water comes down and forms puddles at the sewer line and in back parking lot. Chairperson Fiedorczyk: Parking lot needs to be redone; best to do at this time is speak with people doing snow removal; salt too. It could be a different company this year and will be dealt with when NHA goes out for bid; make sure those items are specified with regard to parking lot. Commissioner Bitondo: if drainage problem not solved, icing will never be solved. Perhaps cordon it off. Phyllis mentioned side door needs to be fixed, won't open; little one that goes into hallway.

BEVERLY BOYD – 3W – Clean up done in outer porch looks very nice, however, no notification was given to residents before people's personal property was thrown away. Shopping carts were used by people who get on bus; cart supposed to be there waiting for them when they come back with groceries. It all disappeared and not all were broken/rusty. ED Snyder: 3 were saved plus 2 big ones. Beverly: 80 apartments here. Her husband goes to Stokes State Forest, fills 3 5-gallon jugs with water; comes in with water or groceries and no carts available. Some use them to take garbage or recycling out.

KATHLEEN – People used carts and chair that was removed; no notice things were being removed or a notice tenants were permitted to use. Chairperson Fiedorczyk requested ED Snyder give tenants an opportunity to speak with him before items are thrown away. Some new carts will be purchased for tenants to use.

BEVERLY – 3W – Originally, there were 6 carts, but Kim took them away. Carts were not usually taken outside, but by door. ED Snyder: Perhaps carts taken back to grocery store, as they didn't belong here.

AMANDA – 5J - Could someone explain what a government funded building is? ED Snyder: This property is funded under Housing Act of 1937 – Public Housing Program – oldest subsidized housing program in country. Second program: Housing Choice Vouchers where people are subsidized in existing buildings. Residents here pay 30% of their adjusted annual income/Federal Government pays balance up to a formal submitted to them every year. We can talk privately; I'll give you sites to read up on it. Commissioner Bitondo: Is your question based on where NHA is going with conversion? Amanda: We pay rent/government subsidizes rest of it? Where is money going? ED Snyder: Look on NHA website and budget is there. Federal Government defunding these properties since President Reagan was in office – we have no money to fix parking lot/leaking roof. Money from Federal Government puts band-aid on it, but hoping we can secure funding to make repairs that are necessary. Millions of dollars of repairs are needed here. Commissioner Bitondo: If infrastructure passes, it should provide millions of dollars to housing authorities.

Why does NHA have Commissioners? What is job description and what do you do for tenants? ED Snyder: I could do a seminar during the day, since you have so many questions, please speak to me on the side and I'll explain all to you, citations on Redevelopment Housing Law, where to look it up.

BEVERLY – 3W – Many things have been taken away – garbage chutes with compactor – no way to monitor it so it was removed. Many people in here, especially in winter, cannot take their garbage and recycling outside – can't lift cover of dumpsters. There are kind residents who go around and take other garbage and recycling, but shouldn't have to be that way. One lady was here 5 days a week in a.m. and took all recycling out; garbage went in chute and compactor. ED Snyder: It's being looked at as part of big renovation, certainly will be in there and we all agree with you.

MARY ANN – Asked about living with smell and stink again – her apartment was right next to it. Being outside, doesn't that make it healthier and cleaner? Chairperson Fiedorczyk: It's been a big topic for several years; few ruin it for the many. Management tried and it's a hard decision to make; don't know what solution is going to be. She asked if high school students could come 1x or 2x a week to take out garbage. She put up a notice that she'd do it and only one person signed up. Chairperson Fiedorczyk: Would that be beneficial as you'd have garbage inside your apartment waiting for them to pick up. It is a good suggestion. Commissioner Bitondo: Is SCARK (ph) is back in business? ED Snyder: Yes, came and gave NHA a proposal, but more money than NHA is currently spending. Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts/volunteers were discussed. If anyone has phone numbers or contacts, please give to Joan or Karen in office.

MARGE – 4W – Can anything be done about Optimum Cable – terrible. TV goes out every week, call but Customer Service doesn't speak clearly, charging \$125 for cable/month. Why do they charge so much? Selection isn't good. Chairperson Fiedorczyk: Don't know what NHA can do.

ANN WILLS – 5N – New cable company out – Planet – and she sees truck all over. Chairperson Fiedorczyk: They are internet service, not cable company.

JOYCE – 2D – Only has internet, can't afford to have television – no basic TV. Chairperson Fiedorczyk: Planet Network – and they'll let you know if it's available or not on this street, but it's not cable – fiber optic. Smart TVs can get Netflix, HULU and comes through internet rather than through cable; also a possibility.

MARY – Thank you to maintenance men, doing a good job in her apartment.

AMANDA – There is dust and dirt behind washers/dryers – can it be cleaned out?

ANN – Can tenants get handicap grab bars in the bathroom? Chairperson Fiedorczyk: Is it something that we do? ED Snyder: As part of renovation of buildings, it's a major undertaking as wall has to be taken out to put them in; blocking behind the wall; what can happen is, many people who need them; you can get them by prescription also – do make with suction cups that will stick to wall – Home Depot sells. When we get to point of renovating apartments, bathrooms will be looked at to see where the grab bars are needed to go, but need to go down to studs, blocking across because you can't just put to wall, if someone pulled on it, they'd fall down. Ann: I had a bar and they took it out. ED Snyder: If they took it out, they should be able to put it back. Put in a work order for that and we'll take a look at it. Speak to me on Wednesday and I'll look at it, unless installed by another tenant and it doesn't meet code. Ann: Why did they take away emergency button, especially in bathroom? You could slip and fall, hit button and get help.

A VOICE: It only rang in office and if no one was there to answer...

ED Snyder: Many of these things are very good comments, and remember we'll have an architect engineer come in and analyze entire building from outside to parking lots to curbing to sidewalk to exterior lighting to grading of parking lot – inside, interior lighting, in your apartments: kitchens, bathrooms, flooring. And when he does that a lot of these comments we are hearing – meetings will be held with tenants, so that you understand before anything is done, what it is to be done. We hear these comments, but right now we have no funding to do it. When funding is secured, that's when all work to be done will be decided. New windows, waterproofed, HVAC system – only building I ever came to where air-conditioners have to be put in/out. We have to put together a financial pro forma that will tell us all we need to do; how much money we have to do it. We will have a wish list and prioritize it. I won't promise you anything, but with Board when we sit down, decide what needs to be done, we'll meet with you. What's for the benefit of the whole? We want to put this building in a condition that's called "long-term physical viability" meaning we know where it is today – older building, what can we do to secure this building is good for another 30 years.

BARBARA – 4G – I want to thank Bill as chairs were changed in our hall and very good.

CELESTE – 4J – Who took over WISE Program, isn't Association supposed to vote on it, not the NHA office. It is the Association that votes, not Board. Chairperson Fiedorczyk: We are not voting on it; it's being handled by Association. ED Snyder: It actually came from Joyce, who brought it to our attention. We may

have called them on your behalf, but we don't want to run anything. Association should take it over; whatever you want to do, do.

JOYCE - Notices should be put in elevators, as many don't come down to read bulletin boards. Ed Snyder: I'll speak to Karen and tell her don't do anything unless they ask you for help. Picnic: I spoke with Joan and wanted to pick up food, etc. for you. We don't want to interfere with that. Who is going to put notice up: Joyce: Put up notice to get head count. I will do that, and have always done it. ED Snyder: I won't shop until you say what you need, and you can't tell me until you put up notice. If you're having a party and need forms printed, office will print them.

KATHLEEN: Asked about rollators, walkers disposition again. People didn't know they could take them. Chairperson Fiedorczyk: Signs needed – use and return. Sorry for problem. They were probably thrown away.

DEBORAH KING – 2S – Thank you for cleaning up outside, especially sumac trees. Secondly, we used copier machine in Community Room and didn't have to bother office; we had a code to use it, but copier no longer works. ED Snyder: Office getting new copy machine; I'll look into putting other one here, which works.

GEORGE – 2P – Trees are leaning over our property. I have a 2021 new car and Amanda's car had branch land on it. I had branch come down in snowstorm. Don't want car hit and our area supposed to have storm tonight. ED Snyder: As reported last month, I reached out to Newton Property Maintenance Officer; he informed me that NHA has a right to cut trees back to plane of our property line. Trees, however, you're talking about are on other side. One tree leaning over tremendously; we cannot do anything with that. We can take down on our side. I will take a chain saw myself as many need to be cut – I have to do a Request for Proposal, as we're a government agency; advertise and then get proposals from 3 guys; they'll come in and cut down trees on plane straight above fence. However, that won't adjust trees that are on angle and could come down in our parking lot again. Property Maintenance Officer said we'd need advice of attorney and take court action against neighbor. Commissioner Nannery: Just because you want it done, doesn't mean we can get it done.

MARY – Offered to print or copy for tenants, just notify her. Is there a time line on this renovation? ED Snyder: Congress is looking at a 2nd infrastructure bill, which is \$3.5 trillion – People Infrastructure. In there is supposed to be close to \$200 billion for housing programs and good chunk coming to properties like this. If it's approved, work will be part of that. Second track is called Streamline Voluntary Conversion – that's the backup to the infrastructure bill. Once we use HUD

money there, if we need more, we can actually borrow money. It will take at least 2-3 years at least. Wheels of government run very slow.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Crossley; 2nd by Chairperson Fiedorczyk.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5)

Excused: Turdo

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah L. Alvarez
Secretary/Transcriber

Adjourned: 6:20 P.M.