

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

December 19, 2022

(Condensed version of taped minutes of Special Monthly Meeting
Newton Housing Authority Commencing at 5:25 P.M.)

ROLL CALL:

Present: Chairman Maria Fiedorczyk
Vice-Chairman Richard Bitondo
Commissioner Karen Crossley
Commissioner Wendy Vandermaas

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

Excused: Commissioner Mary Ann Carlson
Commissioner Joe Ricciardo

FLAG SALUTE

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by the filing of an Annual Meeting Notice with Municipal Clerk, posting on the official bulletin board and delivery of same to New Jersey Herald & Star Ledger on December 14, 2021. The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have an 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 this meeting to be advertised by having the date, time and place posted on the Newton Housing Authority website.

Members of the public are welcome and encouraged by the Newton Housing Authority to comment during the public comment portions of the meeting. There will be two public comment sections of the meeting. Residents can address the Board of Commissioners on Agenda items during the Public Comments Agenda Items portion of the meeting and general subjects of interest during the Public Comments General Items portion of the meeting. All questions and comments from the public will be directed to the Chairperson. When addressing the Board of Commissioners, please provide your name and apartment number.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – Agenda Items

Nothing at this time

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 21, 2022

There were no questions or comments from the Board.

Motion to accept Minutes of 11/21/2022 made by Commissioner Bitondo; 2nd by Commissioner Crossley.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4)

Excused: Carlson/Ricciardo

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT – ED SNYDER

Currently there are 3 vacancies – 1 person approved; other 2 units being prepared for turnover.

Jenny will be retiring 12/31/2022; taking her out and thank her for all her work.

Six known cases of COVID in our building – reason why masks are being worn this evening. Fire Drill – almost every resident was present (could be cause of COVID). Notice sent to residents re: social distance; still disinfecting 2 times a week the way NHA did before; memo sent to residents to please follow COVID protocols.

Lease with Verizon has ended, but they have not removed equipment. Did not pay last month's rent – another letter sent they owe us 2 months, expecting to be paid until equipment gone. They did show up, but no equipment removed. All wiring, etc. to be removed from building also.

December 13th was Fire Drill at recommendation of Jason Miller, Fire Chief. All protocols that Chief Miller recommended put in place; Karen worked with them preparing several emergency lists – listing all tenants; who has oxygen; every tenant who has a pet; pet that they have in event of emergency in a specific apartment. Office has copy as does Fire Department. Only 5 people out of entire building didn't make meeting. At request of Fire Department, Hall Monitors selected for 2nd through 5th floor and a system in place now. Monitors have list of residents in event of fire or emergency.

Cameras – NHA has 3 quotes, but in terms of specifications they are not identical; so ED Snyder took best of all options, which is 21 cameras; issued a Request for Bids, now out -- due back in January. Hopefully having pricing then -- award contract, as our cameras not performing properly.

Smoking – Notice sent out to all residents re: smoking. Board approved designated smoking area last meeting to be revisited in 6 months. I advised smokers & tenants, they need to follow designated area. If they don't Board could reverse and make this a NO SMOKING CAMPUS. I've a letter from resident requesting to move because of medical issues, who lives over door right here; indicating people are smoking right there. Many people came in anonymously saying people in bad weather smoked outside Community Room door – not in designated smoking area. In my notice to all residents I advised them again – in 6 months at review, if I have a negative recommendation to Board, I'm sure Board will agree – **then no smoking anywhere on campus**. SMOKERS – please police yourself. Residents should let me know if they see a smoker outside designated area; new cameras will also help. If people smoke outside designated area, we will issue fines. TO BE FOREWARNED IS TO BE FOREARMED.

Leak on porch – tore holes in apartments, thought we found it, but still leaking. There is a cast iron pipe in ceiling. I told maintenance to call plumber to replace pipe with PVC. It doesn't leak all the time – not when it rains; just can't figure it out; we've cut many holes.

Laundry Room – last meeting it was noted a few dryers were out. Problem is supply chain all across USA. Parts for machines are not being made. We got Laundry Vendor to "pirate" 2 motherboards out of other machines not working; now installed and machines working again. Hoping for price from one of our vendors to replace them with new machines; I've received 2/3rds of bids back – then we can replace them – probably in January. Machine we have where tenants insert money, amount goes on laundry card – needs to be compatible with other vendors' machines or we will have to buy new change machine - \$4,000.

Automatic Door coming into Community Room – We got 1 price; will hold off until we do other work, but are waiting for 2 more prices – door is \$8,000.

Railing – At last meeting it was requested NHA put railing outside door – railing now fabricated, but weather must be conducive to drill holes as material around hole has to be correct temperature or it won't hold. Karen will ask tenants who requested railing what side of walkway they want it on.

Emergency Response Plan – Sent again to Ken Teets on 12/7, but no answer received yet. Plan looks good; I suggest we adopt Plan in January; send Ken a letter saying we adopted it, if you need any further revisions, let NHA know and we'll change it. We've waited many months.

Streamline Voluntary Conversion – Letter sent to HUD Field Office saying NHA needs a Contract Administrator as NHA switching from Public Housing to Section 8. As we don't have Section 8 now, we need an Authority that currently has one, administers one. Regulations provide HUD can recommend a Contract Administrator; we've sent 2 letters – July and few weeks ago, no response. Now I'll prepare Request for Proposals, send to Housing Authorities I know, asking them to submit proposals to NHA to be our Contract Administrator. There is an administrative fee you get for managing these vouchers; I will ask them to do this: NHA gets 75% of fee/they get 25% as Contract Administrator. I've set up this in other Housing Authorities. Once in place, NHA goes to next step.

Wednesday, I finally got into a HUD system where you upload Capital Needs Assessment. Engineer told me he got encrypted email; now he needs an "M" number, which he now has; has to log in; I have access to this online system, but not able to upload anything as I'm the Administrator, he's the User. We are still working that out. With Streamline Voluntary Conversion, we do not need Capital Needs Assessment – not required. It is RAD requirement, not a bad idea for NHA to have listing of what an engineer thinks NHA needs to do, what price is going to be.

Resident Association having their Christmas Party – December 21st @ 1:00 PM. Matter of Balance began on Nov. 18th; Walk With Ease class which Arthritis Foundation does started Nov. 15th; Thriving to Survive Cancer – 11/2 to 12/7.

COMMISSIONER BITONDO: Re: railing – isn't there a standard location based on where door is hinged? Logically, should be on side where door opens. Is HQW engineering company? ED SNYDER: Yes. I believe they subbed out to environmental company.

COMMISSIONER BITONDO: In interest of tenant safety, should we discuss cancellation of 12/21 Holiday Party, because there is food, people eating, no masking and we have 6 besieged with COVID, perhaps number would increase at that point.

Discussion amongst Board members and ED Snyder regarding postponing party. To be discussed again at Public Comments. Office has case of COVID tests that can be distributed to tenants.

OLD BUSINESS – NEW BUSINESS – nothing at this time

RESOLUTIONS #2022-42 THROUGH #2022-47

1. RESOLUTION #2022-42 – APPROVAL OF BILL LIST FOR 12/2022 MEETING

Motion to approve bill list in amount of \$88,104.65 made by Commissioner Crossley; 2nd by Chairman Fiedorczyk.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4)

Excused: Carlson/Ricciardo

2. RESOLUTION #2022-43 – ADOPTION OF ANNUAL BUDGET – 2023

Motion to approve Annual Budget for 2023 reflecting \$660,600; total appropriations of \$622,240 made by Commissioner Bitondo; 2nd by Commissioner Crossley.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4)

Excused: Carlson/Ricciardo

3. RESOLUTION #2022-44 – APPROVAL OF CONTRACT FOR ACCOUNTING SERVICES

Motion to approve accounting services of Polcari & Company in amount of \$20,400 made by Commissioner Crossley; 2nd by Chairman Fiedorczyk.

Commissioner Bitondo requested wording of “**highest Rated proposal**” be removed from Resolution and it state: “**be hereby awarded to Polcari & Company**”.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4)

Excused: Carlson/Ricciardo

4. RESOLUTION #2022-45 – APPROVAL OF CONTRACT FOR AUDIT SERVICES

Motion to approve contract awarded to Giampaolo & Associates in amount of \$6,840 made by Commissioner Bitondo; 2nd by Commissioner Crossley.

Chairman Fiedorczyk requested “**highest Rated proposal**” be removed from Resolution and it state: “**be hereby awarded to Giampaolo & Associates**”.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4)

Excused: Carlson/Ricciardo

5. RESOLUTION #2022-46 – APPROVAL OF ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE FOR 2023

Motion to approve made by Commissioner Vandermaas; 2nd by Chairman Fiedorczyk.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4)

Excused: Carlson/Ricciardo

6. RESOLUTION #2022-47 – ADOPTION OF DEFIANT TRESPASS AND BAN POLICY

Motion to approve made by Commissioner Bitondo; 2nd by Chairman Fiedorczyk.

ED SNYDER: On occasion in family housing where there are problems with drugs, gangs, etc., not so much in Newton, but recently there was an issue with a young man. There are cases that allow for this: essentially, someone has become a nuisance, potential danger to a resident or residents, we have a right to issue a Notice telling him that he or she are not allowed to trespass on our property, which is what happened here. A No Trespass Notice was issued by ED Snyder; followed the policy, reached out to Police Department. Police Department served notice on this young man; told if you come back you can be arrested. Chief was fabulous; gave ED Snyder his personal cell number; Captain called ED Snyder saying he has been served. As a result of that, I adapted the policy for NHA; allowing to be issued and ban people – telling different time periods for banning, also providing for that individual an Appeal Process. Young man was put on list, posted in bulletin board in Office and can be revised later.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4)

Excused: Carlson/Ricciardo

PUBLIC COMMENTS

JOYCE FRANKLIN – 2D – Asked permission to put posters in elevators as well as on bulletin board? ED Snyder asked Joyce to remind him, as bulletin boards were to be put in elevators; didn't get done as other things were being done. Come to Office and he will let Karen/Joan know.

KATHLEEN – 2L – When we believe someone hasn't been seen for 2-3 days is it okay if tenant goes into Office and requests a call be made to next-of-kin to check tenant's whereabouts. ED SNYDER; Office cannot give out private information about an individual. KATHLEEN; Man was gone 5 days; no one knew where he was; went to Office and asked them to call a relative to make sure he was okay. ED SNYDER: We reached out to his family.

JOYCE – 2D – Is it possible for Office to send around notice to tenants: **if you are going away for a week, that you tell the Office, so they know what's going on.** Discussion continued – ED Snyder suggested tenant tell a neighbor or friend in NHA. HEPA doesn't allow Office to share information.

MARY – 3D – Previously, new tenants were introduced, that doesn't take place any more.

KATHLEEN – 2L – Is it possible to get list with names of tenants in this building; can names be put on doors. ED SNYDER: Could be used for solicitation. COMMISSIONER VANDERMAAS: They could be asked if they want to be included. Discussion followed: perhaps a meeting 1x a month for new tenants, coffee hour.

CELESTE – 4J – Thanked ED Snyder and Commissioners for all that's been done in building – keeping tenants safe and warm.

LISSETTE – 3T – Wishes to relocate to another city; has problems getting to doctors' appointments; now writes letters instead of speaking directly. ED Snyder told her she has to apply to other housing authorities.

PHYLLIS – 5M – Asked about plans for security? ED SNYDER: New cameras will be installed. NHA cannot protect tenants against themselves. Someone comes that no one knows; they ring many bells and people buzz them in. It is not NHA's fault and cannot control it. If person rings bell and **is not visiting you, don't let them in**. Phyllis knocked on someone's door, person didn't realize they were taking too much medicine – after 3 days of bringing food to person, Phyllis called Adult Protective Services to help woman; ambulance was there in 30 minutes. Woman went to hospital and then nursing home.

Commissioner Bitondo asked ED Snyder about REACT inspection. ED Snyder said yes, going over items that didn't pass, and all will be resolved soon. Windows are a big problem. NHA buying balances for windows; maintenance man will slowly replace balances in windows that don't work properly.

KAREN – 3L – Seals around her windows let in air. ED SNYDER: We can take a look when balances are being replaced; make sure window is properly latched. Call for a work order – seals – it will be checked out.

MARY – 3D – Timing in dryer is off – you put in \$1.00 for 60 minutes, but only get 45. ED Snyder will check it. Kathleen noted it was #1 and #2.

DISCUSSION REGARDING HOLIDAY PARTY

Some food is coming from local restaurant – Dominic's; payment already made. Cake ordered from Shop Rite – someone called from S/R stating they had gift cards to pay for cake and whatever else. 2 lasagnas made and donated by a family member. Commissioner Crossley thought Dominic's would just cancel order. S/R cake can be canceled tomorrow. Final result was to postpone to a later date to be determined. There have been 46 residents signed up. After extensive discussion by many, ED Snyder concurred it was best to postpone Holiday Party for now. Office will meet with Joyce, Tenant Association, to help pick another date; see where NHA is in respect to COVID in building.

Motion made by Commissioner Bitondo; 2nd by Commissioner Vandermaas to postpone Holiday Party to a later date, which will be determined in the future.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4)

Excused: Carlson/Ricciardo

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by all those present.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah L. Alvarez
Secretary/Transcriber