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

(Condensed version of taped minutes of Regularly Scheduled  
Monthly Meeting of Newton Housing Authority  
Commencing at 5:18 P.M.)

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Chairman Richard Bitondo  
Vice-Chairman Karen Crossley  
Commissioner Mary Ann Carlson  
Commissioner Wendy Vandermaas

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

Excused: Commissioner Joseph 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 6, 2023. 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 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. Generally, we have two public comment sessions, but in the interest of time this evening because we do have some special guests, we're going to limit the comments to items on the Agenda. All members of the public should be cognizant of the rights and feelings of any individual they feel compelled to discuss at an Open Public Meeting. General comments and statements should be made in a calm and civil manner. Comments that violate the rights of employees, residents or members of the public could be subject to a civil law suit for damages. The individual making such statements will be personally liable for any monetary damages resulting from their statements.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS – nothing at this time**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – FEBRUARY 2024**

2024 MARCH 11

Motion to approve made by Commissioner Crossley; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Carlson.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5)

Excused: Ricciardo

### **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT – Executive Director Snyder**

Resident Service Advisory Committee met for first time on February 28<sup>th</sup>. Meeting went well; Karen taking notes; other dates set up for quarterly meetings. Estimate presented to redo garden area - \$1,800 – it was approved. Garden as of this date has already been updated – planters, liners and 9 planting areas. Memo sent to every resident asking if they want to plant, please fill out form and sign up. First 9 will do planting, then waiting list. Two people have already signed up.

(Commissioner Ricciardo came from his meeting to inform Chairman Bitondo that Chairman is DCA appointment according to records that Council has {Governor's appointment to NHA Board}. Chairman Bitondo said he specifically requested to be Mayor/Council appointment last year and it was switched. Commissioner Ricciardo: They never changed the record; according to Council, you're DCA appointment. Chairman Bitondo: Their records are inaccurate. ED Snyder: Board requested I reach out to Democratic Chairperson, which I did, and supposedly he's been communicating with DCA to get someone appointed to that spot – Wayne McCabe. Commissioner Bitondo: I was originally appointed by Governor Christy 6 years ago, filling that term, then appointed by Council. Commissioner Ricciardo: Appointed by Council to fill the term as the Governor's appointment, which is what they're telling me. ED Snyder: Council doesn't approve someone for DCA appointment; it's the DCA Commissioner. So unless they made a reappointment, then technically they could replace him at any time. Chairman Bitondo: If they're looking to appoint two tonight --- Commissioner Ricciardo: No, they're appointing one. Chairman Bitondo: Because Resolution has two blanks for Commissioners. Commissioner Ricciardo: I'll ask them again, before they go on the record. Chairman Bitondo: Just make sure they only officially appoint one this evening. Commissioner Ricciardo: Between now and next Council meeting at end of the month, we'll get it straightened out. ED Snyder: I'll speak with Kathryn also. Chairman Bitondo: I intentionally gave up my gubernatorial appointment.}}

(At this point in the meeting, Commissioner Ricciardo left the room.)

An item coming out of this meeting, which we have known, Resident Association not very active; spoke with Joan today about upcoming meeting next week. I'll attend that meeting trying to help them reorganize so it's more active, and more activities, get some others involved, more social activities. Improvements and better communication was discussed.

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NHA has 5 vacancies which happened quite quickly; with recertification going on now, they're difficult to fill. One gentleman signed a lease and will move in.

Fire inspection done last month in February. Maintenance is taking care of all the items, notified Fire Department to re-inspect, but they haven't been back yet.

Roof air handler is still off as part is still on order. It is a new heating coil.

Streamline Conversion – many emails going back and forth; asking us for some final items, which led me to believe this is what NHA needs to get a final approval from them. Newark Field Office of HUD has sent their Field Office Certification saying NHA is good to go. One final item of an



appraisal, getting the assessed value as they needed that number and hope that will be it. One of the things NHA has to do is obligate the existing reserves, which is about \$1.2 million. Two other projects being done here are air-conditioning being installed in all apartments and new roof. Architect coming next week to do final measurements and discuss what their plans are. We're going with tapered insulation on roof to enable draining water properly off the roof; cost estimates were given. I think cost estimate is half of what it's going to be, but there may be some additional funding that we need to obligate so I want to be prepared for that. I'm asking for authorization to go out and get architectural proposals for list of other projects we have as back-up. One being parking lot, which will redirect storm water, changing elevations on catch basins and then repairing parking lot; milling and putting in new lot, repairing it in the back, whether or not we expand the spaces or not, speaking with architect first.

Building & Grounds consisting of Chairman Bitondo, Commissioner Ricciardo and myself. We've noted what tenants have said.

Activities: Game Shop Social from Division of Social Services of County started on March 5<sup>th</sup> and classes are ongoing here.

Two replacements of Commissioners are to replace Rick Turdo and Maria Fiedorczyk. Chairman Bitondo believes there is a hold on this. MaryAnn Carlson and Joe Ricciardo are scheduled for April meeting for confirmation.

Chairman Bitondo requested office make sure all contractors have proper insurance; Karen takes care of that and has certificates from them with each contract. New exterminator submitted his insurance papers. Question was raised about new exterminator as his fee was \$125 for "other items". His proposal includes everything that we were currently getting, using an example of emergency – bees or carpenter ants – something unforeseen. He charges a flat \$125. Having met with him, he seems very accommodating saying he lives near High Point. His company is from Staten Island, but in an emergency he'd be here. We went over his contract, which he needs to have a specific type of person here to be patient with residents, good communication, etc. He assured me man he is assigning here will do that. If not, there will be a problem.

Parking lot holes that developed over winter, reaching out to Town Manager Tom Russo, putting me in touch with DPW Superintendent Adam Voight. Adam came right over, took pictures of everything, will meet with Tom now. Hot patch not started yet in town; has NHA on the list and will talk with Tom. If more extensive than what I discussed with him, he may charge us X-amount of dollars. Newton employees are great: Tom, Terry, Katherine, Adam – Tax Assessor answered a question right away.

Chairs set up near our table so people can move up closer and hear us better.

Two items needed by me: authorization to go out for architectural services to do additional projects and an as NHA has an agreement in resolution form with Cliffside Park Housing Authority to act as our Contract Administrator for conversion. They need to have an agreement drawn up and CPHA has an attorney firm, DeCotiis, FitzPatrick, Cole & Giblin, that specializes in many of these conversions around New Jersey. CPHA will have them draft it up and NHA will be billed hourly for our share. So authorization is needed.

Contract Administrator Agreement for Cliffside Park Housing Authority at their government hourly rate; 2<sup>nd</sup> is that I'm given authorization to go out and get proposals from architectural firms for public bidding documents for parking lot and other items. Compactor works but there are issues

with odors, etc. Reached out to company doing maintenance when it was shutdown five or more years ago, so they will show our residents how it operates; #2 to see if it needs updated maintenance; #3 is to talk about odor issues and then report back to the Board. You can decide what you want to do in that regard. My thought is as long as we can have someone on weekends to change these containers, we do it on a trial basis; meet with residents first and let them know if we have same problems as before, it will be shut down again.

I've had problems with compactors in other buildings and I'm the Sherlock Holmes of compactor mysteries, not beyond me to pull out garbage bags and look who has mail containing their address, etc. and they get called out on it, correcting the problem.

#### **RESOLUTIONS #2024-9 TO #2024-11**

##### **1. RESOLUTION #2024-9 – APPROVAL OF BILL LIST FOR MARCH 2024 MEETING**

Chairman Bitondo did review bill of Executech.

Motion to approve bill list totaling \$82,467.89 made by Commissioner Crossley; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Vandermaas.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4)

Excused: Ricciardo

##### **2. RESOLUTION #2024-10 – AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR WILLIAM SNYDER TO SOLICIT BIDS FOR ARCHITECTURAL ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR MAJOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS TO BE IDENTIFIED**

Motion to approve Resolution #2024-10 made by Commissioner Crossley; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Carlson.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4)

Excused: Ricciardo

##### **3. RESOLUTION #2024-11 – COMMITMENT TO NEWTON HOUSING AUTHORITY TO PAY THEIR SHARE OF LEGAL FEES FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A CONTRACT WITH CLIFFSIDE PARK HOUSING AUTHORITY AS CONTRACT ADMINISTRATOR FOR STREAMLINE CONVERSION**

Motion to approve Resolution #2024-11 made by Commissioner Crossley; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Vandermaas.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4)

Excused: Ricciardo

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#### **COMMENTS OF CITIZENS**

MARILYN MILLER - #4L – garden looks beautiful, perhaps take down one branch so plants get more sun. ED Snyder said they might add planters to sit on railings and residents can plant flowers in there.

LISEITE HERNANDEZ - #3T – Chairman Bitondo suggested Ms. Hernandez redirect her comments as it pertains to a legal matter and should not be addressed at this public meeting.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Crossley; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Vandermaas.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4)

Excused: Ricciardo

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah L. Alvarez  
Secretary/Transcriber

There were no questions or comments regarding Resolutions #2024-10 and #2024-11.