



NEWTON HOUSING AUTHORITY  
32 LIBERTY STREET.  
NEWTON, NEW JERSEY 07860

MARCH 16, 2026

(This is a condensed version of the  
Regular Scheduled Meeting of the  
Board of Commissioners)

Chairman Richard Bitondo called the meeting to order at 5:22 P.M.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Chairman Rick Bitondo  
Commissioner Wendy Vandermaas  
Commissioner MaryAnn Carlson  
Commissioner Karen Crossley

Absent: Commissioner Mark Fiedorczyk

Also Present: Executive Director William Snyder

(Moment of Silence in Remembrance of Jennie Switzer, who passed at the age of 108. Jennie was an amazing woman, oldest Liberty Towers resident ever, one of longest tenured residents here amassing 30 years; one of longest term of employees devoting 11 years in the Office up until her retirement as the result of an injury just a few years ago. Jennie was loved by everyone; heart of gold and will of steel. **Jennie, may you rest in Peace.**)

FLAG SALUTE

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS STATEMENT

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by the filing of an Annual Meeting Notice with the Municipal Clerk, posting on the official bulletin board and delivery of same to the New Jersey Herald & Star Ledger on December 3, 2025. The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advanced notice 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 the meeting to be advertised by having the date, time and place posted on the Newton Housing Authority website.

Members of the public are welcomed and encouraged by Newton Housing Authority to comment during the public comments 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 portion of the meeting and general subjects of interest during the public comments General Items of the portion.

All questions and comments from the public will be directed to the Chairperson. When addressing the Board of Commissioners, please give your name and address. All members of the public should be cognizant of the rights and feelings of any individuals they feel compelled to discuss at an open public meeting. General comments and statements should be made in a common and civil manner. Comments that violate the rights of employees, residents and members of the public can 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.

#### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – ED William Snyder

Letters for 3<sup>rd</sup> floor Recertifications are going out. Vacancies – there is only one vacancy, now have 3 more – 4 vacancies in all; we are turning units over and painting them ourselves. Maintenance Man John is doing that. Flooring company is putting new flooring in them.

Regarding cold in hallways: There was a part that took months to get here. It is for air handler on the roof. That has been installed and will work now and prevent it from getting extremely cold.

Elevators are done. There were a few breakdowns, but we are teaching maintenance men, if the door is held open (somebody holds it open on a floor too long), elevator goes out of service; men have to go to room where there is a reset button, push that and get elevator back in service. It's happened numerous times.

RAD Program – good news on that. Today we had a concept call with HUD. When you have that call, if everything is in place, they invite you to submit your financing plan. There were 4 small items needing addressing. Two I have already done, rent increases from HUD that will give us more money for the program. Other is: since we started this in 2023 under a program called Streamline Voluntary Conversion, we had to have an environmental study done: Part 58. They wanted us to do a different environmental study, called Part 50. I convinced them that no, we can stay with the Part 58, just update it. I reached out to engineering firm, TTI Environmental from Morristown, asking them to give us a price to update it. We need to do that and submit it.

I'm hopeful, after we get these documents in, we're looking at Capital Needs Assessment; sent it to B&G Committee today. I work with AEI Environmental a lot; this is what they do, you will see the difference in their report, in the format that HUD likes. My partner and I are looking now to see what we can finance; putting it in a financial

pro forma, which shows where we get the money from, mostly a first mortgage, and what it will be used on. I sent old list of items that need to be done here, largely as a result of what our knowledge is here, working with maintenance men and meeting with residents, things that they'd like us to do. I refined and honed it down into some items, which I think we can afford. There are certain things in the report we are required to do: One is that this building, because of when it was built, is not ADA compliant. There are certain ADA things we have to do, including revising a few units to make them wheelchair accessible. I have started to do some things: we have to have 3 units here capable for people who are hearing impaired. We've already contacted alarm company; we're ordering strobe smoke detectors so when an alarm goes off in that apartment, also lights go off so they can see it.

There was an issue with braille signs on bathroom doors, common bathrooms, HUD wants rails around the toilet; pipes underneath sinks put in. The ADA have to be insulated in case someone using a wheelchair goes under there, they could burn their leg. Those items we are doing on our own. Those are critical items, which have to be done before closing. According to the report, they are about \$250,000. We got the doors done, but other items we have to do before we close. Money is in our reserve to get it done. They noted also that all panel boxes in apartments are old "stab locks". Now all obsolete; we have to replace those – estimating about \$75,000.

Parking lot repaving – talking about just resurfacing it. I think it needs to be milled, all taken out. I added what they had in there, but I'm taking everything out and then extend parking lot into back and do drainage there; things that we want. There were some minor items – dry wall cracking and heat shield in one of the apartments. Total for what they call – total for **critical repairs** which is the ADA stuff is \$250,000. Total for **non-critical repairs**, which we can finance or do on our own is \$140,000. Repair totals from them is \$400,000. What I did to that list is, I added things we talked about here, which is restoring the "pea tack type units" in apartments. With that we would replace power boxes, as we have to upgrade them anyway; expand parking lot in back; reconfigure entrance to building as ambulance can't get out; curbing repair and replacement of sidewalks that are damaged currently. Retaining walls in back need to have some work; finish elevator upgrades. As you know, we only did one car totally. Other car needs to have piston done – also on my list. Exterior lighting. With new program, every dollar we save in energy goes to the bottom line. It doesn't work that way currently the way the program is funded under Public Housing Program. So interior/exterior upgrades to that. Replacing all waste lines in the building – from the building out to the street and then all vertical waste lines inside. We need to figure out how to do that. My thought is that at the same time, replace all of the kitchens and bathrooms. So what would happen is – generally wall between them is where pipes are located. Usually, you start at the top floor – one side they'll take the dry wall off and cut cast iron pipe; put a new PVC pipe in and at floor level they connect it to old cast iron; then they'll put the kitchen in. Kitchens go in usually in one day; then do bathrooms, which may take a little bit longer.

In addition to kitchens and bathrooms, I have flooring in there. Many tenants want their floor replaced, as they have old carpet or flooring. We are going to put new laminate floors in all apartments.

We've talked about enclosing dumpster out back, it's in there also. Including everything, it is about \$4.5 million worth of work. Can we afford more work? Maybe, but these are things we talked about, which means other things we talked about won't get done, but this work we will do now. That pretty much capsulizes everything. I sent list to Rick, Karen and Mark to look at.

In addition to that, through financing, we will have to put \$640,000 into a Reserve for Repair & Replacement Account (like an escrow account) that can't be used for anything other than things in this report in out years. We also have to put \$40,000 a year in that account. If you see in schedule I gave you, there's a 20-year schedule, which says Initial Deposit - \$640,000; every year \$40,000. Let's say in year 10, it is decided something else needs to be done, it would be in that report and enough money there to do it. It is a good planning tool, which you don't have now. Now we get about \$100,000 from HUD. As you know, \$100,000 doesn't even do 1/3 of one elevator. This gives us the ability to do a one shot deal of \$4.5 million; put some money away and a good planning tool. Based upon HUD's tool, the additional cash flow from conversion will be over \$800,000/year – a lot more money. That allows us to go to a bank and take a loan.

I have to put together a Request for Proposals for financing. We will go to a bank, get proposals from them with a term sheet. Term sheet will say interest rate, life of mortgage, etc. and what they want from us. We review that, select bank that gives us best deal for Housing Authority. I will send report to everyone else. I didn't bring hard copies, it's a thick report, which also has pictures in it. My analysis of this shows you how much we can finance based upon HUD's calculator; work items we discussed and pictures of non-critical items that they discussed.

My goal is to get environmental report done, updates ASAP, get that to them; work on a financial pro forma with my accountant; get that on web site; then ask for another call from HUD and be prepared to close by July. We can probably hire an architectural firm to prepare public bidding documents. B&G Committee will get together and we'll decide whether it's going to one GC or multiple contracts. Maybe "pea tacks" unit could be one. We do parking lots, sidewalks and curbing and exterior lighting – one trade that do that. That's my goal and we get underway, construction before end of the year.

HUD people on the call, which was from Office of Recapitalization in D.C. and Jennifer Williams, our engineer in Newark, they all agreed that we were well onboard and ahead of where we should be in terms of our submissions. I will have to get it to Town, current Mayor and go over explanation and get Mayor to sign off on it.

Commissioner Vandermaas: When you designate certain apartments for hearing impaired, does that mean when person moves out, do you then wait for someone who is hearing impaired to go into that apartment? ED Snyder: No. We have to have 3 apartments; strobe light would blink. If someone asked for that, I don't think it's that expensive, we'd put it in their apartment, if they wanted it. One person here now has phone service where you type the message. Commissioner Vandermaas: What about the intercom boxes near their doors? ED Snyder: No, I didn't put that in, but we can look at it. Chairman Bitondo: Will they do an assessment of the drainage underneath parking lots? ED Snyder: No, they did not. That will be part of our stuff when we hire architect to see whether we need to repatch; we redid the drains, but when we tear it up, that might be time to repitch\* it properly. Drains are redone in the back as they were collapsing under cars. We did 2 drains in front, 2 or 3 in back that were collapsing. Question is piping, but I don't see major backups. Architect will be shooting elevations because of new parking in back, new drains put in there.

Other items: another major sewer backup in bathrooms here. Just got drains cleaned – something popped out and blocking main line. Tonight on Agenda is sewer drain cleaning proposal. We want to do preventive maintenance, meaning that 2 times a year, we're going to have main drain to building cleared. As part of this we will do vent stacks from roof down as we did 2 years ago, which should help clear out lines so we don't get backups.

Other 2 items: last month we discussed Community Room Rental Policy. A draft agreement done for Commissioners; there is a lot to it and with Resident Association here, they use it and are exempt. Local groups - you may have an interest in allowing them to use the room. Whatever comments you have or changes to be made, next month maybe adopt it. Chairman Bitondo: We'll address it under Old Business.

For your review, and as you know, cable company came back and put an agreement in there. Agreement is fairly standard one, giving us \$4,000 up front; but understand this is a 10-year agreement with an automatic 2-year renewal at the end of 10 years; giving themselves exclusive marketing rights – fairly typical with these. If you have Planet Network now, I'm sure you could stay with them. New company doesn't want to put the wiring in and marketing say well, you got the wiring now, you change to us, we're cheaper. Wiring here is antiquated and a way to get it done for free, but up to you whatever your preference is. New company is Optimum. Planet Network spoke with me, but they want 10s of thousands of dollars to rewire here. There was also an internet connection fee. I didn't understand it, but at end of year they reconcile how many people are hooked up and maybe some kind of reimbursement to us for those hooked to internet service. For tenants, cable service is really not wired properly. Person at end of the line pays for high definition TV, person at end of the line has terrible service.

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JANUARY 2026

Motion to approve January 2026 minutes made by Commissioner Crossley; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Carlson.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4)

Absent: Fiedorczyk

## OLD BUSINESS

Chairman Bitondo requested Community Room Usage be on Agenda for April meeting. There is a regulation regarding alcohol use. I think drug use should be added to that same clause: alcohol and legal controlled substances. Send ED Snyder an email if you think more should be added. It only requires one reading, have it approved at April's meeting.

We spoke about modifying Open Public Meetings statement so it's briefer. Commissioner Crossley will send over a modified one before next month.

Chairman asked ED Snyder about an issue with Apartment 5J and mold testing. ED Snyder did an inspection and nothing was found. What tenant considered to be mold was not mold, but glue coming out of the floor. It looked like bad flooring job where glue is coming through. Over the years, it gets black from people walking on it. Tenant is next on list to transfer; she was shown another apartment; offered ability to transfer; she declined the offer. She was to get us the report, but had a problem with contractor although she paid him an no report received.

## NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Bitondo suggested that whenever a tenant has passed, a Moment of Silence be held. Today we will set that precedent. Moving forward we will have a Moment of Silence and memory of that resident.

Chairman Bitondo requested budget analysis explanation from ED Snyder. ED Snyder: This is through December 31<sup>st</sup>. On Revenue side NHA up over \$140,000, largely result of rental income. Down a bit on Subsidy because of HUD – it's subject to proration factor, which is how much money HUD appropriates. Budget is done before Federal fiscal year takes place; then Congress appropriates so much money. If it's less, you take the hit. On Expenses: NHA slightly over on Executech fees, largely a result of some additional work that was done in maintenance for pillars and doors, masonry work. Tom did a lot of exterior work that we didn't need contractor for. Over there by \$28,000 on Administration, more than made up by additional amount of Revenue. Gas/electricity – not a great year, over on both of those. Largely a result of weather. Generally, over course of the year, that trends itself out as we get into better weather and not using as much heat or electricity. Materials we were over again because we

did a lot of work ourselves, a good thing. We're over by \$26,000, but still in the black. Accountant will submit the financial data schedule electronically to HUD; then auditor will come in and do final audit. Chairman Bitondo: Do we have an opportunity to revise our FY2026 budget? Do we need to increase certain line items? ED Snyder: I don't think so, budget is only a planning tool.

Commissioner Crossley: On Thursday we had Rec Commission meeting; a St. Patrick's Day lunch/dessert type event. 22 signed up and 35-37 came. Numbers are increasing. Events are increasing. When we have them here, it seems like people are enjoying them. People from outside are coming in; not just residents here, which is great. They are getting information from Heather and she gets info out to everyone. Ann making a point at Resident Meetings to say upcoming events. This weekend is play, senior luncheon and egg hunt, craft & activities (seniors always invited to work with little kids). It seems to be increasing all over, having fun. Between Rec Commission as well as Association and us, it is becoming great events. Part of my wanting them using our Community Room is, it's a great facility to have these at and works well for our residents. Commissioner Carlson: I like it because outside people come in and we get to meet more people. Chairman Bitondo: It is also networking for us.

#### RESOLUTIONS #2026-3-1 THROUGH #2026-3-7

##### 1. RESOLUTION #2026-3-1 – APPROVAL OF BILL LIST FOR FEBRUARY 2026 MEETING

Motion to approve #2026-3-1 made by Commissioner Crossley; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Vandermaas.

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

Chairman Bitondo: Checks were already dispersed. I'd like to include this statement, what that review process was. ED Snyder and Commissioner Crossley reviewed vouchers and checks; all approved.

##### 1A. RESOLUTION #2026-3-1 **REVISED** – APPROVAL OF BILL LIST FOR FEBRUARY 2026 MEETING – Review Process Completed by Commissioner Crossley & ED Snyder so Checks could be dispersed in a timely manner

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

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

##### 2. RESOLUTION #2026-3-2 – APPROVAL OF BILL LIST FOR MARCH 2026 MEETING

Amount of bill list is \$71,813.47 to be approved. Motion to approve made by Commissioner Carlson; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Crossley.

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

Chairman Bitondo and Commissioner Crossley reviewed bills and checks that pay them. Everything was in order.

3. RESOLUTION #2026-3-3 – APPROVAL OF CONTRACT FOR DRAIN CLEANING

Motion to approve Resolution #2026-3-3 made by Commissioner Crossley; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Vandermaas. It is awarded to Sussex Sewer Service in East Hanover. Amount of 3 pieces (doing main sewer line 2x a year) equals \$11,265.

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

4. RESOLUTION #2026-3-4 – ADOPTING CASH MANAGEMENT PLAN

Motion to approve adopting cash management plan made by Commissioner Crossley; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Vandermaas.

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

5. RESOLUTION #2026-3-5 – RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A POLICY RESPECTING REIMBURSEMENT OF AUTHORITY COMMISSIONER/EMPLOYEES FOR COSTS OF DEFENDING AGAINST CRIMINAL/CIVIL CHARGES

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

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

Chairman Bitondo asked ED Snyder if this Resolution needed to be reviewed by NHA Attorney? ED Snyder: It could be, but I'm sure he's reviewed it already, using it where he is at also. These are fairly standard resolutions given to everyone in Ethics Class. Chairman asked other Commissioners' for their opinions. Commissioner Crossley fine with it as it is gone over in Ethics Class quite heavily.

6. RESOLUTION #2026-3-6 – RESOLUTION INDEMNIFYING COMMISSIONERS AND EMPLOYEES CONSISTENT WITH N.J.S.A. 59:10-4

Chairman Bitondo asked ED Snyder if this would become part of Policy Handbook? ED Snyder said yes.

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

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4)

Absent: Fiedorczyk

Discussion was there was no need to seek NHA Attorney review as it is heavily covered in Ethics Class according to State Statute.

7. RESOLUTION #2026-3-7 – AUTHORIZE ED SNYDER TO REQUEST PROPOSALS FOR FINANCING TO LOCAL BANKS AND PUBLICIZING IN NEWSPAPERS OF RECORD

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

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4)

Absent: Fiedorczyk

PUBLIC COMMENTS – General Items

ANN - #5N – Is there another company besides Optimum, as their prices keep going up. Chairman Bitondo: Optimum reached out to NHA and they are willing to do wiring free. We reached out to Planet Network, but they would charge us 10s of thousands of dollars to do wiring and not provide cable, only streaming. Commissioner Crossley: There are only 2 choices. Optimum is only one that does cable. (Discussion ensued about Optimum or Planet Network – cable/no cable and they are only 2 available.) ED Snyder: If you have Planet Network now, you can keep it. If you have Optimum, you can keep that. Only thing they are providing is new wiring. Optimum understands the majority of people living here have Optimum, but what they are offering is for an agreement for next 10 years, and their ability to market other services to tenants, is to rewire the building. (Discussion: it is believed no one in NHA has Planet Network at this time. We cannot offer residents a cheaper company that would work.) ANN asked about streaming, but she doesn't know how it works. Commissioner Crossley: We have tech classes here one time a month; they will teach you how to do it. You have to sign up for services. The ability to stream and actually have the services are 2 different things. Planet Network is \$10 more than Optimum, lose your cable and have to sign up for HULU or Netflix, which could cost an extra \$70 plus Planet Network with no cable.

ED Snyder checked online discounts and one did offer low cost internet service from \$14.99/month if over 65 and receive SSI. It was recommended to tenants they call the supplier. Chairman Bitondo: ED Snyder will call Optimum and see if they can lower the prices. ED Snyder: You should also call your legislators about getting a lower cost for senior citizens on fixed incomes.

PHYLISS - #5M – I call them when my price goes up, tell them I have to cancel and they give me a discount.

KATHLEEN - #2L – People are holding the elevator door open too long and then it won't work. Who are we supposed to call when it's stuck there. ED Snyder: Call the

maintenance number you call for work orders. Maintenance man has to come and reset it or call Lou as he lives here. Chairman Bitondo: Can we increase the amount of time door is open? Can we send out a notice – if you're trying to leave door open, it will make it worse for everybody else down the road. ED Snyder: We have same problem with doors in front. The problem is there is electric eye on elevator door. If you put your hand up like this (indicating) the door should open. They're holding the door closed and it keeps pushing to close. That's not the way it's done – if someone is coming just do like that (indicating) and it should open back up.

JOAN - #2U – The door here, I times it, it stays open until they get on other side of mailboxes and don't look back to see if door closes. Squirrels might come in. ED Snyder: I'm reluctant to do that because other people say it's perfect because they are bringing in groceries. We can't keep adjusting doors for individual people. Commissioner Carlson: I think extra time is needed for people in wheelchairs. (Discussion about timing for people with groceries or disabilities as compared to squirrels getting into building.)

PHYLISS - #5M – Man moved a while ago, but truck still here. His family is supposed to come get it. Spot #8 is open, no vehicle is assigned to that spot.

#### ADJOURNMENT

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

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

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah L. Alvarez  
Secretary/Transcriber

Meeting adjourned at 6:19 P.M.