

NEWTON HOUSING AUTHORITY
32 LIBERTY STREET
NEWTON, NEW JERSEY 07860

JULY 20, 2026

(This is a condensed version of the
SPECIAL MEETING of the
Board of Commissioners)

Chairman Richard Bitondo called the meeting to order at 5:35 P.M.

ROLL CALL:

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

Also Present: Executive Director William Snyder

Absent: Commissioner Mark Fiedorczyk

FLAG SALUTE

(Chairman Bitondo requested a moment of silence in remembrance of Shelby Wilson, she will be missed and was a great fan of country music, filling Liberty Towers with that music for a long time. Her daughter was a guest at this meeting.)

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS STATEMENT

Open Public Meetings Act pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, Adequate Notice as defined by Section 3D of Chapter 231, P.L. 1975, has been provided by the filing of a special meeting notice. Such notice being submitted on July 15, 2026, from the Newton Housing Authority located at 32 Liberty Street, Newton, New Jersey to the following: New Jersey Herald and Star Ledger. It is also posted on the Newton Housing Authority website and bulletin board maintained in the Newton Housing Authority Building for public announcements.

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

lawsuit for damages. The individual making such statements will be personally liable for any monetary damage resulting from their statements.

At this time, please mute all electronic devices.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – ED WILLIAM SNYDER

We have no vacancies currently.

Air-conditioning in Community Room was out and working fine now. It was fixed right before heat wave hit. Residents were notified to come down here if they had a problem with their own a/c.

I've reached out again to cable company re: rewiring the building; keeps saying same thing: they'll be in touch any day. I'm waiting to hear when they'll upgrade wiring. When I find out when, I'll meet with them to go over everything we spoke about that we want and possibly meeting with residents to see if there are any deals that we can get.

RAD Program – On agenda tonight, and we didn't need to get quotes as HUD does change things on and off – now wanting Phase 1 environmental study. Company that did Part 58 Environmental gave us a proposal and will do this. I tried to get out of doing it, reason being when we do financing, also on agenda tonight, bank generally wants a Phase 1, but typical of government fashion, we'll pay for Phase 1 now and bank will want Phase 1 also. Duplication, but we don't have a choice in the matter. Still shooting for closing by end of this year – you never know when dealing with government.

Resident Advisory Committee – Next meeting will be in September.

Activities – Pizza with A Cop held on June 15th. Walk with Ease was held until June 24th. Meet & Recreation – Tech support will resume in Fall. Mahjong on Tuesdays from 1-3 PM. Chair Yoga on Thursdays at 10 A.M., Senior Social was held on 16th. Some Medicare events coming also.

Commissioners given separate printout on financing. RAD Program requires we get financing, hoping to get \$5 million. Two proposals received after the RFP – Provident Bank and Connect One – Connect One came in at \$6 million. I'm recommending Provident Bank. Term of loan longer – 20 years as opposed to three 5-year terms on Connect One. Fees: \$18,750 is loan origination fee; they're charging ½%, which is way over \$18,750. Interest rate is 150 basis points plus T-Bill rate with a 5% minimum. On Connect One is 220 basis points on Federal Home Loan Bank rate with a minimum of 6%. Provident Bank is eminently better; I'm recommending you go with

that. We don't need it yet, but I like to be ready, so we can get this closed by end of the year.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – Agenda Items

Bill list is \$60,129.40. We have Resolution to provide a blanket consent to settle law suit we've been facing for months. Resolution to approve financing proposal. Resolution re: Phase 1 Environmental Study approval so we can proceed with RAD requirements.

(No comments or questions from members of the public regarding Agenda items.)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JUNE 8, 2026

Motion to approve made by Commissioner Crossley; 2nd by Commissioner Vandermaas.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5) Absent: Fiedorczyk

OLD BUSINESS

Chairman Bitondo: Asked ED Snyder re: heat during week of "hell" and 4th of July storms. ED Snyder: Notices sent to tenants to notify Office is their air-conditioning wasn't working, need assistance and to come down to Community Room if they wanted to cool off. No power outages or trees down.

Chairman Bitondo: Last month potholes in parking lot were discussed. ED Snyder: That has been addressed.

Chairman Bitondo: We also discussed Emergency Plan. ED Snyder: Emergency Plan being updated. We are going to post it on our website so it's available to everybody. (A tenant noted she was stuck in elevator and Fire Department got her out.) (Commissioner Carlson: Fire Department coming here on July 27th.) ED Snyder: They are coming to talk about procedures, what to follow in event of a fire. Chairman Bitondo: Requested a presentation re: Emergency Plan be at next meeting for Commissioners and members of the public. Can Heather be involved in that also? ED Snyder: Certainly. Chairman Bitondo: Will we need to approve revised version at our next meeting? ED Snyder: Yes, minor stuff. Chairman Bitondo: I know Fire Department coming on July 27th and in early Fall, we could have meeting with residents regarding Emergency Plan so that they're fully in tune as well. A piece of paper means nothing, if we can't implement it. Schedule some drills as well.

Commissioner Crossley: Recreation Commission – we had Social with phenomenal turnout. Everybody enjoys them. Past one we asked residents what they might like to do: they brought up pottery, bingo – even outdoor things. We ran with it and will get

hopefully, the pottery idea and Paint & Sip Mocktail. Chairman Bitondo: I'm seeing a lot of print via social media on activities.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Bitondo: Did Commissioners receive copy of audit? Mailed directly to your homes. Can auditor provide in September or October a brief presentation, even if it's a zoom presentation from him? I think it will be helpful for Missy as well. ED Snyder: Yes. Chairman Bitondo: Presentation during the meeting; before we address our own business, we'll have the Emergency Plan Presentation and also auditor's report. We will leave time at 5:30 P.M.

I've also asked ED Snyder if he could report status of Commissioners' progress towards their required course work. I know you've reached out to Rutgers; have you heard back from them yet. ED Snyder: Yes, I have, they won't give me the information. The individual Commissioner has to request it themselves, which I have gotten in the past.

Chairman Bitondo: What is protocol if Commissioner has not completed required course work with 18-month period? ED Snyder: No protocol per se, Statute is very clear. You need to resign your position if you haven't taken them within 18-months. Chairman Bitondo: So, if Statute required work has not been completed within 18-month period, said Commissioner has resigned. How is that implemented? ED Snyder: Different ways: policy of Board here or Town. In some instances, DCA has gotten involved if someone has reached out to DCA and filed a complaint. Letter would be sent to person. In some instances, person has been allowed to take courses after the fact, but at their own expense. They are not as rigorous as they used to be – before being very fastidious with this on an annual basis notifying with letters are not done any more. Chairman Bitondo: I remember, less than 10 years ago, it was a big deal. Your courses were completed and you received your certification and to turn it into Housing Authority. Commissioner Crossley: I got certificates, we gave copies to the Office.

Chairman Bitondo: Discussion amongst members of Board of Commissioners here in terms of how to handle it, as we may have a Commissioner who has failed to complete requirements in allotted time, time prescribed by law. ED Snyder: I could ask Commissioner to resign. If Commissioner says he has, at that time I could develop a form for all of the Commissioners or I could do it now and you sign it, and that would give authorization to send transcripts here. Chairman Bitondo: You could request it as long as you have signature? Is there still such a thing as a Final Certificate like one I received? Commissioner Crossley: We got one for each class. Commissioner Carlson: That's what I got too. ED Snyder: We give out certificates for each class also. We have no coordination with Rutgers. If you took 2 of our courses and 3 Rutgers classes, you'd have 5 certificates. Chairman Bitondo: That may be part of why Rutgers can't give you that information. Commissioner Crossley: Town is starting to look at this: we have these Boards and we need people to be compliant. ED Snyder: I had one

Authority that became a problem. Three Commissioners – 1 and 2 (inaudible) and as a result of that, the 1 Commissioner disputed accused them of not completing their training and they didn't answer yes or no. So, what happened is: it was a 6-member Board. He filed something with the State; State came back and said these 2 Commissioners have resigned. I had to go back over a year – as those 2 votes are now nullified for the time that they didn't take the classes – so we only had 6 Commissioners. In instances where the vote was only 3 votes, I had to go back and redo all of those Agendas and everything else and have it all recused. It became a problem.

Chairman Bitondo: I think we should pursue this aggressively. We're just talking generically now. Commissioner Crossley: Give us each a form, we fill it out to allow you to get the information. Chairman Bitondo: If a Commissioner took courses through NJNARUC and then through Rutgers; how do you know how many courses they completed? ED SNYDER: NJNARUC is easy. I teach the courses. I have that. Commissioner in question took 1 course at conference. Chairman Bitondo: It's 2 organizations that have to report back to us. I don't want to be in a position where we have Resolutions that are nullified because we had a Commissioner not compliant with training. I don't want to open any other pandora box issues with Commissioner voting and doesn't have background in which to vote either. Commissioner Crossley: Missy will have 18 months to take courses. Chairman Bitondo: Most courses are now online, correct? ED Snyder: I think they went back to in-person. Chairman Bitondo: Mine were all in-person. Commissioner Crossley: Mine were on line because of COVID. You offer them all at the Conferences; all of them? ED Snyder: No, every year we do 5 courses. Chairman Bitondo: To avoid any legal entanglements, we need to proceed aggressively and take action so Commissioner can report back to us at the next meeting, then as a Board of Commissioners, take whatever action we deem necessary. It doesn't sound like there's any "case law" that guides this unfortunately; each case was individually addressed so that makes it difficult for us, but we'll address it individually like everyone else has. ED Snyder: The Statute is clear. Chairman Bitondo: Can you send that to everybody? Commissioner Crossley: It's in the By-Laws. ED Snyder: I will develop a form, Heather will send to you, you can send back or come in having signed them; I'll send them from the Authority and have authorization to send transcripts here to me. I'll make them available to you as part of the Agenda.

Chairman Bitondo: I know with new contract, we increased your hours. I'd like to know how that's going with extra time. ED Snyder: That will start in September as I have 2 other clients I have to clear up.

RESOLUTIONS #2026-7-1 THROUGH #2026-7-4

1. RESOLUTION #2026-7-1 – APPROVAL OF BILL LIST FOR JULY 2026 MEETING

Motion to approve \$60,129.40 made by Commissioner Crossley; 2nd by Commissioner Carlson.

ED Bitondo reviewed Execu-Tech's invoice and it is in order - \$20,481.02.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5) Absent: Fiedorczyk

2. RESOLUTION #2026-7-2 – BLANKET CONSENT TO SETTLE AUTHORIZATION FOR CHAIRPERSON TO SETTLE LAWSUIT

Law suit goes into mediation on August 6, 2026. Attorney for USLI prepared to come on board and chat with Board, if necessary. Chairman Bitondo: I have shared with Attorney Gangadean on numerous occasions, I have no authorization as an individual. Only power I have is with Board of Commissioners behind me. Without this Resolution, I cannot say yes, we agree to the settlement. Basically, it says as long as it's within the limits of either our policy or the opinion of letter of USLI, which we haven't received yet. We have \$1 million coverage on Employee Practices Liability; whether or not that all will be available to us is not known, but it sounds like we have a lot of latitude.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioner Vandermaas	Yes
Commissioner Helmer	Yes
Commissioner Carlson	Yes
Commissioner Crossley	Yes
Chairman Bitondo	Yes
Commissioner Fiedorczyk	Absent

Motion to approve made by Commissioner Crossley; 2nd by Commissioner Vandermaas.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5) Absent: Fiedorczyk

3. RESOLUTION #2026-7-3 – APPROVAL OF FINANCING PROPOSAL FOR RAD

ED Snyder recommends contract be awarded to Provident Bank to borrow up to \$5 million.

Motion to approve made by Commissioner Crossley; 2nd by Commissioner Helmer.

Chairman Bitondo asked if there would be a point in time when Board member signatures would be required on contract. ED Snyder: You and I will sign. It's a term sheet, no notary required.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5) Absent: Fiedorczyk

Chairman Bitondo: Provident Bank proposal has been approved and they'll be bank of record for RAD.

4. RESOLUTION #2026-7-4 – APPROVAL OF PHASE 1 ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY

Approval of Phase 1 of Environmental Study required for RAD; probably will have to do again under requirements of Provident Bank.

Motion to approve made by Commissioner Crossley; 2nd by Commissioner Vandermaas.

ED Snyder: Be prepared to have to do a Phase 2. Chairman Bitondo: Amount is \$1,900 that we're paying to firm we've already worked with – TTI Environmental, Moorestown, New Jersey.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5)

Absent: Fiedorczyk

PUBLIC COMMENTS – GENERAL ITEMS

DORIS - #3P – There is a stench in Ladies Room bathroom in hallway. Chairman Bitondo: I think we can address that problem right away. If there is an issue that's not necessarily your personal issue, you can put a Work Order in at the Office. Don't wait for a month to report something like that.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Crossley; 2nd by Commissioner Carlson.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5)

Absent: Fiedorczyk

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah L. Alvarez
Secretary/Transcriber