

AGREEMENT

BETWEEN

TOWN OF NEWTON

AND

COMMUNICATION WORKERS OF AMERICA, AFL/CIO

LOCAL 1032

January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2027

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PREAMBLE

This Agreement entered into this 20th day of March, 2023, by and between the Town of Newton, in the County of Sussex, a municipal corporation of the State of New Jersey, hereinafter referred to as the "Town", and the Communications Workers of America, AFL/CIO, hereinafter referred to as the "Union", represents the complete and final understanding of all bargainable issues between the Town and the Union.

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ARTICLE I
RECOGNITION

A. The Town hereby recognizes the Union as the sole and exclusive collective negotiating agent and representative for all full-time and part-time Public Safety Telecommunicators employed by the Town of Newton and excluding all other employees of the Town, managerial executives, confidential and craft employees, professionals, police, and supervisors, within the meaning of the Act.

B. The title “employees” shall be defined to include the plural, as well as the singular, and to include males and females.

C. Part-time Public Safety Telecommunicators shall include any individual who works more than four (4) hours per week in this capacity.

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ARTICLE 2
MANAGEMENT RIGHTS

A. The Town of Newton hereby retains and reserves unto itself, without limitation, except as hereinafter provided, all powers, rights, authority, duties, and responsibilities conferred upon and vested in it prior to the signing of this Agreement by the Laws and Constitution of the State of New Jersey and of the United States; including but without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the following rights:

1) The executive management and administrative control of the Town government and its properties and facilities, and activities of its employees by utilizing the personnel, methods, and means of the most appropriate and efficient manner possible as may from time to time be determined by the Town.

2) To make reasonable rules of procedure and conduct, to use improved methods and equipment, to determine work schedules and shifts, to decide the number of employees needed for any particular time, and to be in sole charge of the quality and quantity of the work required.

3) The right of management to make such reasonable rules and regulations as it may from time to time deem best for the purposes of maintaining order, safety, and/or the effective operation of the Department after advance notice thereof to the employees to require compliance by the employees is recognized.

4) To hire all employees, to promote, transfer, assign, or retain employees in positions within the Town.

5) To suspend, demote, discharge, or take any other appropriate disciplinary action for just cause & according to law against any employee.

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6) To lay off employees in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:11a in the event of lack of work or funds, or under conditions where continuation of such work would be inefficient and non-productive, as long as such lack of work or funds is bona fide.

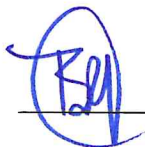
7) The Town reserves the right with regard to all other conditions of employment not reserved to make such changes as it deems desirable and necessary for the efficiency and effective operation of the Department.

8) In the exercise of the foregoing powers, rights, authority, duties, and responsibilities of the Town, the adoption of policies, rules, regulations, and practices and the furtherance thereof, and the use of judgment and discretion in connection therewith, shall be limited only by the specific and express terms of this Agreement and then only to the extent such specific and express terms hereof are in conformance with the Constitution and Laws of New Jersey and of the United States.

B. Nothing contained herein shall be construed to deny or restrict the Town of its rights, responsibilities, and authority under R.S. 40A and R.S. 11 or any other national, state, county, or local laws and regulations.

C. The Town's rights are restricted by and shall not exceed those granted under the New Jersey State Statutes.

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ARTICLE 3

UNION RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES

A. The Union shall have the right to designate such members of the Union as it deems reasonably necessary as Union representatives who shall not be discriminated against due to their legitimate Union activity. The Union agrees to furnish the Town with the names of Union representatives in writing. Employees who are designated as Union representatives shall be permitted to investigate and process grievances during regular working hours without loss of pay or benefits.

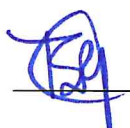
B. Union representatives, not to exceed two (2) in number, may participate in mutually scheduled collective negotiations and meetings provided every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that these meetings and sessions are not scheduled during the member’s scheduled hours of work. If they are scheduled during scheduled work hours, then the member shall inform his supervisor as soon as possible.

C. Authorized Union representatives shall have the right to enter upon the premises of the Town during working hours for the purpose of conducting normal duties relative to the enforcement and administration of this Agreement, so long as such visits do not interfere with the work being performed, or with the proper service to the public.

D. The Union may use Town buildings and designated facilities at reasonable hours when not otherwise in use when authorized and scheduled by the proper authorities.

E. An employee may request use of vacation leave or unpaid leave to attend Union activities. Such leave shall be granted, provided that it will not interfere with the efficient operation of the Town and is requested in accordance with standard operating procedures for vacation and unpaid leave.

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ARTICLE 4

WORK RULES

A. Proposed new rules or modifications of existing terms and conditions of employment shall be provided to the Union representative at the earliest possible time and under no circumstances in less than five (5) calendar days before they take effect.

B. Rules and regulations shall be in writing and copies shall be provided to the Union.

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ARTICLE 5

NON-DISCRIMINATION

A. The Town and the Union agree that there shall be no discrimination against any employee because of race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, nationality, political affiliation, age, marital status, sex, affectional or sexual orientation, atypical heredity, domestic partnership status, civil union status, cellular or blood trait, religion, genetic information, disability (including AIDS or HIV infection), gender identity or expression, physical or mental disability that does not interfere with the ability to do the work required, liability for service in the Armed Forces of the United States and/or any other characteristic protected by law.

B. The Town and the Union agree that all employees covered under this Agreement have the right, without fear of penalty or reprisal, to form, join and assist in Union activity, or to refrain from such activity. There shall be no discrimination by the Town or the Union against any employee because of the employee's membership or non-membership, or activity or non-activity, in the Union.

C. The Town and the Union agree that all employees covered by this Agreement have the right to form, join and assist any fraternal or charitable organization, or to refrain from such activity.

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ARTICLE 6

MAINTENANCE OF WORK OPERATIONS

A. The Union hereby covenants and agrees that during the term of this Agreement, neither the Union nor any person acting on its behalf will cause, authorize or support, nor will any of its members take part in any strike, (i.e., the concerted failure to report for duty or willful absence of any employee from his position, or stoppage of work, or absence in whole or in part, from the full, faithful and proper performance of the employee’s duties of employment), work stoppage, slow down, walk-out, or other illegal job action against the Town.

B. In the event of a strike, slow down, walk-out or job action, it is covenanted and agreed that participation in any such activity by any Union member shall be deemed grounds for termination of employment of such employee or employees.

C. The Union agrees that it will make every reasonable effort to prevent its members from participating in any strike, work stoppage, slow down, or other activity aforementioned, or supporting any such activity by any other employee or group of employees of the Town, and that the Union will publicly disavow each action and urge all such members who participate in such activities to cease and desist from same immediately and to return to work.

D. Nothing contained in this Agreement shall be construed to limit or restrict the Town in its right to seek and obtain such judicial relief as it may be entitled to have under the law.

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ARTICLE 7
GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

A. The purpose of this procedure is to secure, at the lowest possible level, an equitable solution to the problems which may arise affecting the terms and conditions of employment under this Agreement.

B. Nothing herein shall be construed as limiting the right of any employee having a grievance to discuss the matter informally with any appropriate member of the Department.

C. The term “grievance” as used herein means an appeal by an individual employee, or the Union on behalf of an individual employee or group of employees, from the interpretation, application or violation of policies, agreements, and administrative decisions affecting them.

No grievance may proceed beyond Step 3 herein unless it constitutes a controversy arising over the interpretation, application, or alleged violation of the terms and conditions of this Agreement. Disputes concerning terms and conditions of employment controlled by statute or administrative regulation, incorporated by reference in this Agreement, either expressly or by operation of law, shall not be processed beyond Step 3 through this grievance procedure.

D. Grievances concerning oral or written reprimands shall only be processed through Step 3 of this grievance procedure.

E. The following constitutes the sole and exclusive method for resolving grievances arising under this Agreement, and shall be followed in its entirety unless any step is waived by mutual consent:

Step 1: The aggrieved or the Union shall institute action under the provisions hereof within ten (10) calendar days after the event giving rise to the grievance has occurred, or after the date on which the grievant may reasonably have known of the event.

An earnest effort shall be made to settle the differences between the aggrieved employee and his immediate supervisor for the purpose of resolving the matter informally. Failure to act within said ten (10) calendar days shall be deemed to constitute an abandonment of the grievance in this procedure.

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Step 2: If no agreement can be reached orally within ten (10) calendar days of the initial discussion with the supervisor, the Union may present the grievance in writing within ten (10) calendar days thereafter to the Department Head, or his designated representative. The written grievance at this step shall contain the relevant facts, the applicable section of the contract violated, or the violation, misapplication, or misinterpretation of existing policy or regulations, and the remedy requested by the grievant. The Department Head or his designated representative will hold a grievance meeting within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of the written grievance, unless an extension is mutually agreed to by the parties, and shall answer the grievance in writing within twenty (20) calendar days of the grievance meeting.

Step 3: If the Union wishes to appeal the decision of the Department Head, such appeal shall be presented in writing to the Town Manager or his designated representative within fifteen (15) calendar days thereafter. This presentation shall include copies of all previous correspondence related to the matter in dispute. The Town Manager may schedule a grievance meeting within fifteen (15) calendar days after receipt of the grievance. The Town Manager shall respond in writing to the grievance within twenty (20) calendar days of the submission. This response shall be considered the final administrative decision.

F. If the Union wishes to appeal the decision of the Town Manager and the grievance constitutes a controversy arising from the interpretation, application, or alleged violation of the terms and conditions of this Agreement, the Union may petition the New Jersey Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC) to use its procedures for selection of an arbitrator to hear the dispute. Said petition must be made within thirty (30) calendar days after the Town Manager's decision was due. The arbitrator shall conduct a hearing, and make his findings and award in writing, which shall be final and binding on the parties. The cost of the arbitrator's fee shall be borne equally by the parties.

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ARTICLE 8

DUES DEDUCTION AND AGENCY SHOP

A. The Town agrees to deduct from the salaries of its employees subject to this Agreement, dues for the Union. Such deductions shall be made in compliance with Chapter 123, Public Laws of 1974, N.J.S.A. (R.S.) 52:14-15.9e, as amended.

B. A check-off shall commence for each employee who signs a properly dated authorization card, supplied by the Union and verified by the Town Manager's designee, during the month following the filing of such card with the Town.

C. If, during the life of this Agreement, there shall be any change in the rate of membership dues, the Union shall furnish the Town written notice thirty (30) calendar days prior to the effective date of such change, and shall furnish to the Town either new authorization cards from its members showing the authorized deduction for each employee, or an official notification on the letterhead of the Union and signed by any officer of the Union, advising of such change in the deduction for dues.

D. The Union will provide the necessary "check-off authorization" form, and the Union will secure the signatures of its members on the forms and deliver the signed forms to the Town Clerk.

E. The filing of notice of withdrawal shall be effective to halt deductions, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 52:14-15.9e, as amended. Dues deductions, along with a list of said employees and the amounts deducted, shall be sent to the address on file, and may be changed during the course of the contract when informed by the Union in writing to the Town Manager.

F. If at any time under the United States Constitution mandatory agency fees can be imposed without employee consent, then the Town agrees to deduct from all eligible CWA members who opt out of the unit the required agency fee amounts.

G. The Union shall provide advance written notice to the New Jersey Public Employment Relations Commission, the Town and to all employees within the unit, of the information necessary to compute the fair share fee for services enumerated above, at least once a year.

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H. The Union shall establish and maintain a procedure whereby any employee can challenge the assessment as computed by the Union. This appeal procedure shall in no way involve the Town, or require the Town to take any action, other than to hold the fee in escrow pending resolution of the appeal.

I. The Union shall indemnify, defend, and save the Town harmless against any and all claims, demands, suits, or other actions taken by the Town in reliance upon salary deduction authorization cards or the fair share assessment information as furnished by the Union to the Town, or in reliance upon the official notification on the letterhead of the Union, signed by any officer of the Union, advising of such changed deduction.

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ARTICLE 9


HOURS OF WORK

A. All full-time Public Safety Telecommunicators of the Town of Newton Police Department shall work a twelve (12) hour Pittman Schedule as set by the Chief of Police or his designee.

B. In the event municipal offices are closed by the Town Manager or his designee, CWA employees scheduled to work will be required to report for duty as they are deemed to be essential personnel. Only personnel who are scheduled to report and who do report for duty will be compensated at their regular rate of pay for hours worked. In addition, those employees who work will receive extra compensation in the form of one (1) vacation hour for every one (1) hour the municipal offices are closed. Employees who do not work while the municipal offices are closed shall not receive compensation for such closure. Personnel who are out due to vacation leave or sick leave shall only receive compensation based upon use of accrued leave time.

C. Part-time employees shall accrue a single credit for every full hour they work from January 1 to December 31 each year. Any part-time employee who by December 31 accrues 350 or more stipend credits shall receive a \$1 per credit payment in January of the following calendar year. The part-time employee must be employed with the Town through December 31 to be eligible for the following January calendar year stipend payment. Additionally, the part-time employee must be in active employment with the Town of Newton at the time of payment in January.

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ARTICLE 10

OVERTIME


A. All full-time employees shall be entitled to overtime pay for all hours worked in excess of forty (40) hours in any scheduled work week at the rate of one and one-half (1 1/2) times their regular base hourly rate of pay. The Town will use its best efforts to ensure that each employee covered under this agreement shall be given an equal opportunity to work overtime.

B. Part-time or temporary employees will be paid on a straight time basis for hours worked, with no allowance for over-time pay. Routinely, part-time or temporary employees are not scheduled to work more than twenty (20) hours in a work week. In the event that a part-time or temporary employee works more than forty (40) hours in any scheduled work week, he will be paid time and one-half for all hours worked in excess of forty (40) hours.

C. Employees may accrue up to a maximum of thirty-six (36) hours of compensatory time at any given time. Any overtime hours worked when an employee already has thirty-six (36) hours of compensatory time accumulated shall be paid in cash.

D. In the event an employee is called back to work outside of his regularly scheduled hours, he shall be paid a minimum of three (3) hours at the overtime rate. Overtime performed immediately before or immediately after regularly scheduled hours, or immediately before or immediately after a meal recess, shall not be subject to the minimum. No employee shall have the right to call out another employee without permission from his immediate supervisor, except in a major emergency.

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ARTICLE 11

SALARIES

A. During the term of this Agreement, the base hourly and salaried rates of pay for each of the steps show below shall be as follows:

Full-Time Salaried


	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2026</u>	<u>2027</u>
Step 1. Training/Starting:	\$40,124	\$41,047	\$41,950	\$42,831	\$43,688
Step 2. After Completion of Six (6) Months Police, Fire, & EMS Dispatch Experience:	\$42,837	\$43,822	\$44,786	\$45,727	\$46,642
Step 3. After Completion of One (1) Year Police, Fire, & EMS Dispatch Experience:	\$46,274	\$47,338	\$48,379	\$49,395	\$50,383
Step 4. After Completion of Two (2) Years Police, Fire, & EMS Dispatch Experience:	\$56,344	\$57,640	\$58,908	\$60,145	\$61,348
Step 5. After Completion of Three (3) Years Police, Fire, & EMS Dispatch Experience:	\$65,252	\$66,753	\$68,222	\$69,655	\$71,048
Step 6. After Completion of Four (4) Years Police, Fire, & EMS Dispatch Experience:	\$75,270	\$77,001	\$78,695	\$80,348	\$81,955

Part-Time Hourly

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2026</u>	<u>2027</u>
Step 1. Training/Starting:	\$19.29	\$19.73	\$20.16	\$20.58	\$20.99
Step 2. After Completion of Six (6) Months Police, Fire, & EMS Dispatch Experience:	\$20.59	\$21.06	\$21.52	\$21.97	\$22.41
Step 3. After Completion of One (1) Year Police, Fire, & EMS Dispatch Experience:	\$22.25	\$22.76	\$23.26	\$23.75	\$24.23
Step 4. After Completion of Two (2) Years Police, Fire, & EMS Dispatch Experience:	\$27.08	\$27.70	\$28.31	\$28.90	\$29.48
Step 5. After Completion of Three (3) Years Police, Fire, & EMS Dispatch Experience:	\$31.35	\$32.07	\$32.78	\$33.47	\$34.14
Step 6. After Completion of Four (4) Years Police, Fire, & EMS Dispatch Experience:	\$32.96	\$33.72	\$34.46	\$35.18	\$35.88

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B. The Civil Service job title of Public Safety Telecommunicator shall be conferred upon employees in this unit after completion of twelve (12) months of service.

C. Additional compensation of \$1.00/hr. for the Senior Operator shall be paid in an annual lump sum in January of the following calendar year.

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ARTICLE 12

BREAKS

A. Employees are entitled to one (1) paid fifteen-minute break for every four (4) hours the employee works in any given day, to be taken at a reasonably convenient time during the shift with supervisory authorization.

B. Employees are entitled to a thirty (30) minute meal break during each eight (8) or twelve (12) hour shift scheduled, to be taken at a reasonably convenient time during the shift with supervisory authorization.

C. Reasonable effort shall be made to provide breaks and meal breaks, which will be taken within the communications center unless a second employee is on duty assigned to the same function and then said employee shall remain on the premises during their break. With this understanding, the Town agrees to continue to maintain the serviceability of the kitchen and lavatory within the Communications Center.

D. Employees understand that they shall not leave the Communications Center or take a break during times of an emergency and employees may be called back during their break or meal break if there is an emergency during that time.

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ARTICLE 13

LONGEVITY

A. In addition to designated salary or hourly wages, all full-time permanent Public Safety Telecommunicator employees are entitled to additional longevity pay at the following rate:

<u>Years of Cumulative Service w/ Town of Newton</u>	<u>Longevity Pay</u>
5 Years	2%
10 Years	4%
15 Years	6%
20 Years	8%
25 Years	10%


B. Longevity pay is to be effective on the July 1st or January 1st following the anniversary date of employment.

C. In the event that additional longevity benefits are granted to Town of Newton employees by the Town Council, employees covered by this Agreement shall receive those benefits as well.

D. Effective January 1, 2003 new employees hired under this union contract will no longer be eligible for longevity pay.

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ARTICLE 14

PAY PERIOD

A. All personnel are paid bi-weekly on Thursdays, or the closest day thereto if said pay day falls on a holiday. All payments are made by direct deposit, accompanied by a stub showing detailed deductions from employee wages.

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ARTICLE 15**HOLIDAYS**

A. All full-time employees shall be granted thirteen (15) paid holidays annually. Those holidays are as follows:

- 1) New Year's Day
- 2) Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday (Third Monday in January)
- 3) Presidents' Day (Third Monday in February)
- 4) Good Friday
- 5) Memorial Day (Last Monday in May)
- 6) Juneteenth (Federal Holiday, June 19th)
- 7) Independence Day
- 8) Labor Day (First Monday in September)
- 9) Columbus Day (Second Monday in October)
- 10) November General Election (Tuesday after the 1st Monday in November)
- 11) Veterans' Day (November 11th)
- 12) Thanksgiving Day
- 13) Day After Thanksgiving
- 14) Christmas Eve
- 15) Christmas Day

B. If a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, it shall be observed on either the preceding Friday or the following Monday.

C. At the beginning of each year, full-time employees shall be allotted twelve (12) hours of Holiday Time for each of the above listed holidays which they can schedule to use during the course of the calendar year. Any time not used during the year shall be allocated as vacation time for the following year and must be used during the following year or be forfeited.

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D. In the event that an official holiday is observed during an employee's vacation, they shall be entitled to an additional vacation day, and should an official holiday occur while an employee is on sick leave, they shall not have that holiday charged against their sick leave.

E. In the event that any additional holidays are granted to Town of Newton employees by the Town Manager, employees covered by this Agreement shall receive those additional holidays as well.

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ARTICLE 16

VACATION LEAVE

A. Every permanent full-time employee shall be granted the following annual vacation time with pay during the calendar year:

<u>Years of Service w/ Town of Newton As a Public Safety Telecommunicator</u>	<u>Earned per Month</u>
One month to five years	One day
Sixth year to ten years	One and one-fourth days
Eleventh year to fifteen years	One and one-half days
Over fifteen years	One and three-fourths days

B. All vacation time must be taken in the year accrued. If an employee is unable to take vacation time in the year it accrues because the Town does not allow the employee to take the vacation, based upon the manpower needs of the Town, then any vacation accrued and not taken by the employee shall be carried into the next succeeding calendar year only.

C. Vacation time may be taken as earned at the convenience of the departmental work schedule and with the approval of the Department Head and the Town Manager.

D. An employee may not use more than one hundred four (104) consecutive vacation hours without written approval of the Department Head or the Town Manager.

E. Conflicts in scheduling vacation leave shall be resolved by seniority.

F. Employees desiring to use their vacation time will notify the Chief of Police or his designee seventeen (17) calendar days in advance and the Chief or his designee will schedule the vacation, unless an extreme emergency makes it impractical to do so, or unless the employee has been issued a subpoena to appear in court as a result of his employment.

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G. On January 1st of each year, employees shall be credited in advance with all vacation time to be earned in that year. An employee who has used more vacation time than he has earned up to the time of termination of employment shall have an amount equal to his daily rate multiplied by the number of vacation hours used in excess of earned vacation time deducted from his final pay.

H. Any employee covered under this Bargaining Agreement whose service with the Town terminates in good standing shall have unused vacation time paid to him, or the employee's legal representative, in the event of the employee's death. Employees "in good standing" refers to employees who are not terminated for cause and fulfill the terms of Article 36, Resignation, of this Agreement. If any employee covered under this Bargaining Agreement, whose service with the Town terminates as result of the forfeiture statute, N.J.S.A. 2C:51-2, then said employee shall not be paid for any accumulated, unused vacation time.

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ARTICLE 17

SICK LEAVE

A. In the first year of full-time employment, an employee shall be entitled to one (1) day sick leave for each month of employment. Thereafter, sick leave shall accumulate on the basis of one and one-quarter (1 1/4) days per month, or fifteen (15) days per year. Sick leave may be accumulated from year to year. On January 1st of each year, employees shall be credited in advance with that year's sick leave allotment. An employee who has used more sick leave time than he has earned at the time of termination of employment shall have an amount equal to his daily rate times the number of sick leave days used in excess of earned sick leave time deducted from his final pay.

B. Accumulated sick leave may be used by an employee for personal illness, illness in his immediate family which requires his attendance upon the ill person, quarantine restrictions, pregnancy, or disabling injuries.

C. For the purpose of this Article, "immediate family" shall be defined to include the member's spouse, domestic or civil union partner, parent, grandparent, or biological or adoptive child, and other relatives residing in the employee's household or any other individual whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship, such as a step-relative.

D. If an employee is absent from work due to illness for a period of three (3) consecutive workdays, or more than ten (10) days in any calendar year, he may be required to furnish a medical certificate from a physician in support of the employee's absence from work.

E. The Town may require proof of illness of an employee on long-term sick leave, whenever such requirement appears reasonable. Abuse of sick leave shall be cause for disciplinary action.

F. When an employee is absent from work due to illness, they are expected to report that fact to their Department Head two (2) hours prior to their scheduled starting time. This procedure must be followed for the absence to qualify as a valid charge against accumulated sick leave.

G. Sick leave must be used while an individual is still employed. Any unused sick leave is forfeited upon termination of employment, except as paid out pursuant to Section J or K below.

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H. In case of leave of absence due to contagious disease, a certificate is required from a valid health agency. In case of death in the family of an employee, any reasonable proof will be sufficient.

I. Each employee covered by this Agreement may utilize three (3) days per annum as personal days; which days shall be deductible from sick leave on a day-for-day basis. These days are non-cumulative and, if unused at the end of the calendar year, the remaining days shall revert to sick leave and be placed in the employee’s accumulated sick leave bank.

To be eligible to receive said personal days, the employee must give reasonable notice of their request to utilize personal days. Approval shall not be unreasonably withheld.

J. Upon eligibility for full retirement or disability retirement, pursuant to the Public Employees’ Retirement System, individuals covered by this Agreement, unless otherwise required by law, will be reimbursed for sick time as outlined below. However, no employee may receive more than \$15,000, or maximum amount allowed by law, for sick time reimbursement.

<u>Years of Service w/ Town of Newton As a Public Safety Telecommunicator</u>	<u>Percentage of Accrued Sick Time</u>
10 Years	5%
15 Years	10%
20 Years	15%
25 Years	20%

K. For new employees hired as of January 1, 2010, reimbursement for sick time at time of retirement shall be capped at a total amount not to exceed \$15,000, unless otherwise required by law.

ARTICLE 18

INJURY LEAVE

A. In the event an employee becomes disabled by reason of a service-connected injury or illness and is unable to perform their duties, they shall be entitled to only those payments allowed by the Workers' Compensation Act for a period of one (1) calendar year.

B. Any employee who is injured while working, whether slightly or severely, must make an immediate report to his Department Head.

C. It is understood that the employee must file an injury report with his Department Head so that the Town may file the appropriate workers' compensation petition. Failure to so report said injury may result in the failure of the employee to receive compensation under this Article.

D. The employee shall be required to present evidence by a certificate from a physician designated by the insurance carrier that they are unable to work, and the Town may reasonably require the employee to present such certificate from time to time.

E. If the Town does not accept the certificate of the physician designated by the insurance carrier, the Town shall have the right, at its own expense, to require the employee to obtain a physical examination and certification of fitness by a physician appointed by the Town.

F. In the event the Town appointed physician certifies the employee fit to return to duty, injury leave benefits granted under this Article shall be terminated.

G. The Town, at its option and upon certification by the Town appointed physician, may extend the disability pay for no more than one (1) additional year.

The Town appointed physician must certify the employee is incapable of performing their duties for the additional time period.

H. In the event an employee is granted injury leave, the Town shall have no responsibility to pay the employee compensation. The employee shall be limited to the payments provided by disability, workers compensation, or other payments received from other sources.

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I. If the Town can prove that an employee has abused his privileges under this Article, the employee will be subject to disciplinary action by the Town. If the employee is found to be in violation of this Article, he shall be subject to disciplinary action by the Town, to the extent which is provided within this Agreement.

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ARTICLE 19
FUNERAL LEAVE

A. In the event of a death in the employee's immediate family, the employee will be granted three (3) days' time off without loss of pay, and all three (3) days must be taken within the time period beginning with the date of death until the date of the funeral or mourning service. "Immediate family" means an employee's husband, wife, civil union partner, fiancé, fiancée, father, mother, father-in-law, mother-in-law, step-father, step-mother, grandfather, grandmother, grandfather-in-law, grandmother-in-law, grandchild, child, step-child, foster child, spouse's child, sister, brother, step-sister, step-brother, sister-in-law, or brother-in-law of the employee.

B. In the event of a death in the family of a first cousin, aunt, or uncle, all employees will be granted one (1) day off without loss of pay, with said day being taken within the time period beginning with the date of death until the date of the funeral or mourning service.

C. Funeral leave shall be available to an employee for the death of a relative of the employee residing in the employee's household. Reasonable verification of the event may be required by the Town Manager.

D. In the event of a death in the immediate family, which would cause the employee to travel considerable distance or would otherwise entail additional time off, a maximum of five (5) total days without loss of pay may be granted in unusual or extraordinary circumstances at the sole discretion of the Town Manager.

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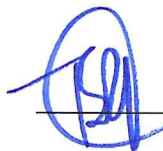
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ARTICLE 20

MILITARY LEAVE

A. Military leave will be granted in accordance with New Jersey State Statutes.

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ARTICLE 21

JURY DUTY

A. Any regular full-time employee who loses time from their job because of jury duty as certified by the Clerk of the Court shall be paid by the Town the difference between their daily base rate of pay (up to a maximum of the normal number of hours per day) and the daily jury fee, subject to the following conditions:

- 1) The employee must notify their supervisor immediately upon receipt of a summons for jury service;
- 2) The employee has not voluntarily sought jury service;
- 3) No employee is attending jury duty during an extended leave of absence. An employee who has scheduled vacation time and is called for jury duty shall be permitted to reschedule their vacation;
- 4) The employee submits adequate proof of the time served on the jury and the amount received for such service.

B. If on any given day an employee is attending jury duty and is released by the court prior to eleven o'clock (11:00am), that employee shall be required to return to work by twelve o'clock (12:00 Noon) that day in order to receive pay for that day.

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ARTICLE 22

LEAVE OF ABSENCE WITHOUT PAY

A. The Town Manager may grant an employee a leave of absence without pay for a period of up to thirty (30) calendar days. Employees must have utilized at least fifty (50) percent of their accumulated vacation time before the Town Manager will consider such a request.

B. A leave of absence for longer than thirty (30) calendar days must first be approved by the Town Council.

C. A leave of absence for longer than twelve (12) months must be approved by the New Jersey Civil Service Commission.

D. Approval of leaves of absence without pay shall not be unreasonably withheld. The Town and the Union agree that the manpower needs of the Town are a reasonable reason for denial unless such leave is for medical purposes.

E. An employee on any type of leave of absence, except medical, shall be responsible for reimbursing the Town for medical insurance premiums, prescription program premiums, and/or dental and vision program premiums. Failure to reimburse the Town for these premiums timely shall result in cancellation of the employee's coverage.

F. An employee on any type of leave of absence shall be responsible for the employee's share of pension and contributory insurance. Such premiums shall be deducted from the employee's paycheck upon return to work, if not previously paid and upon certification from the Division of Pensions.

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ARTICLE 23

ABSENCE WITHOUT LEAVE

A. Any permanent employee who is absent from duty for a term of five (5) consecutive days without good cause or authorized leave of absence will be subject to termination.

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ARTICLE 24
HEPATITIS "B" IMMUNIZATIONS

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ARTICLE 25

GROUP INSURANCE, DENTAL PLAN, AND VISION PLAN

A. After three (3) months of full-time employment, a new employee becomes eligible for the following coverage through the North Jersey Municipal Employee Benefits Fund (NJMEBF):

- 1. Hospitalization;
- 2. Medical/Surgical;
- 3. Major Medical which includes a Prescription Plan; and
- 4. Dental

This coverage includes single, family, and family with maternity memberships.

B. The Town reserves the right to change insurance carriers, or to self-insure any or all portions of the insurance benefits, so long as the same or substantially similar benefits are provided. The Town agrees to notify the Union of its intent to change carriers or self-insure at least thirty (30) days prior to the anticipated date of implementation and agrees to schedule a meeting with the Union to discuss the proposed change as soon as mutually possible.

C. Any member hired after January 1, 2019 will be enrolled in Aetna Choice 20/40 Open Access which shall be the employee's base plan and considered the least expensive plan for all purposes under this Agreement. If a member with Aetna Choice 20/40 Open Access as his/her base plan elects a different health insurance plan whether it has a higher or lower premium cost, he/she will pay the required c. 78 premium contribution based upon the Aetna Choice 20/40 Open Access premium, and if applicable, will also pay the difference between the Aetna Choice 20/40 Open Access premium and the premium of the higher costing selected plan.

D. All members shall be required to contribute a portion of the health insurance premium paid by the Town for Medical Health Insurance pursuant to Year 4 of c78, P.L. 2011 (N.J.S.A. 40A:10-21.1) or as otherwise required by State law based on their income level; however, the contributions shall be subject to the following cap on percentage of the employee's premium contribution:

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Year	% of Employee Premium Contribution
2023	Maximum 34%
2024	Maximum 33%
2025	Maximum 32%
2026	Maximum 31%
2027	Maximum 30%

A covered employee shall not be obligated to pay more in health insurance premium contributions than the percentage of premium set forth above regardless of the c78 Year 4 contribution requirements. The caps for active and retired members shall remain in place and effect unless and until modified through negotiations and agreement by both parties.

E. In accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:10-17.1, the Town shall offer as monetary consideration to every eligible employee who waives health insurance coverage an annual sum that is the lesser of: (a) five thousand dollars (\$5,000) or (b) twelve and one-half percent (12.5%) of the amount saved by the Town because of the employee's waiver of health care benefits as calculated using the employee's applicable, individualized level of coverage and contribution.

F. Vision Plan Coverage will be provided for all employees covered by this Agreement after three (3) full months of employment.

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ARTICLE 26

MILEAGE ALLOWANCE

A. In the event an employee is authorized to use his private automobile for Town business, he will be reimbursed for mileage at the IRS business rate in effect at the time of said travel. All reimbursements must be authorized in advance by the Town Manager.

B. Employees who use their automobiles for Town business on a regular basis may be authorized a flat monthly allowance for travel within Sussex County. This allowance may be granted only after the recommendation of the Town Manager and the approval of the Town Council.

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ARTICLE 27

DAMAGE TO TOWN EQUIPMENT

A. Whenever any employee damages Town equipment, a full written report shall be made and forwarded to the Town Manager's office.

B. When any Town-owned vehicle is involved in an accident, the Police Department must be notified immediately so an on-the-scene investigation can be conducted and an accident report prepared, as required. The driver of the vehicle must also file a full report as required by section "A" above. The driver of the vehicle must be immediately screened for drugs or alcohol at a Town-approved medical facility with all costs to be borne by the Town.

C. In the event of an accident, the Town Manager may convene a review board consisting of the Department Head and at least one (1) other bargaining unit employee to review the accident and determine if negligence was involved, or if any disciplinary action should be recommended. Employees shall be notified within forty-eight (48) hours of attendance before a review board and shall have the right to Union representation. If disciplinary action is recommended, the employee retains the right to all appeals outlined in this Agreement.

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ARTICLE 28

SAFETY

A. The Town agrees to provide safe and adequate working areas and equipment. The Union reserves the right to call upon the Town to investigate any matter involving work areas or equipment. Such requests will only be made where the Union feels that the employee is subject to possible impairment of health or safety.

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ARTICLE 29

PERSONNEL RECORDS

A. All personnel records are kept on file in the Office of the Town Manager or his designee.

B. Annually, by February 1st, each employee will be given a copy of his vacation leave and sick leave record.

C. Other personnel file information may be reviewed by appointment with the Town Manager's office.

D. The Town agrees to protect the confidentiality of the information contained in each personnel file. The Union agrees that certain job-related information is public knowledge and may be released upon request. When anyone outside of Town officials requests and receives information from an employee's personnel record, the employee will be so notified prior to the release, unless the Town is prohibited by law from doing so.

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ARTICLE 30

WORKING TEST PERIOD

A. This is governed by existing Civil Service regulations. Working test periods for newly hired employees covered by this collective bargaining agreement shall be governed by Civil Service regulations.

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ARTICLE 31

REGULAR APPOINTMENT

A. Employees who have been certified and have satisfactorily completed their working test period have attained regular appointment.

B. After regular appointment has been established, an employee can be removed from his position only by the decision of the Town Manager, and only in accordance with New Jersey Civil Service regulations, local ordinances, and this Agreement.

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ARTICLE 32

CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATIONS

A. Employees shall be allowed to take time off with pay to take open competitive and promotional examinations established by the New Jersey Civil Service system for positions in the Town.

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ARTICLE 33

EMPLOYEE TRAINING

A. In order to encourage an effective employee training program, it is necessary to distinguish among the various types of educational opportunities available to employees, and to encourage participation under the following conditions:

1) The Town will pay employees taking such courses at their regular wage rates. The Town will reimburse one hundred percent (100%) of an employee's tuition costs, mileage costs (the latter at the prevailing IRS business rate in effect at the time of said travel), and course materials costs, upon satisfactory completion of all courses which employees are required to take to obtain any specialized training, certification, licenses and/or registrations required to perform the duties of their position. The employee must obtain prior confirmation from his supervisor for said courses to be entitled to said payment.

2) The Town will reimburse one hundred percent (100%) of the tuition costs incurred by full-time employees who enroll in the accredited college level "emergency medical technician course" which is approved by the Town Manager, provided that employees complete such courses with a minimum final grade of "C."

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ARTICLE 34

ADHERENCE TO NEW JERSEY CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION RULES

A. The Town and the Union understand and agree that all rules promulgated by the New Jersey Civil Service Commission or superseded by Public Employment Relations Commission rulings concerning any matter whatever not specifically covered in this Agreement shall be binding upon both parties.

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ARTICLE 35

LAYOFF OR REDUCTION IN FORCE AND RECALL

A. The Town Manager may lay off an employee for purposes of efficiency or economy, or other valid reason requiring a reduction of the number of employees.

B. No permanent employee shall be laid off until all emergency employees, temporary employees, provisional employees, and those serving their working test period are first separated.

C. Whenever possible, at the sole discretion of the Town, employees shall be demoted in lieu of layoff, to some lesser office or position.

D. In the event the Town plans to lay off employees for any reason, the Town shall meet with the Union to review such anticipated lay off at least two (2) weeks prior to the date such action is to be taken, if possible.

E. The Town shall forward a list of those employees being laid off to the local Union President on the same date that the notices are given to the employees.

F. When the work force is increased after a layoff, employees will be recalled according to seniority. Notice of recall shall be sent to the employees at their last known addresses by registered mail. A copy of such notice shall be sent to the Union.

G. Layoffs will be effectuated in accordance with New Jersey Civil Service Commission rules and regulations.

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ARTICLE 37
RETIREMENT

A. Within four (4) months after regular or permanent appointment, full-time employees must join the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS).

B. If an employee terminates their municipal service prior to retirement, their contribution will be returned, with interest, upon application to the Retirement System.

C. For employees retiring with twenty-five (25) years in the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), the following qualifications must be met for municipally paid health benefits for life:

- a. 15 Full-Time Years' Service with the Town of Newton
- b. Minimum Age of Fifty (50) Years
- c. Coverage limited to employee and spouse only. If employee pre-deceases spouse, spouse will continue single coverage until death or re-marriage.

D. For employees hired as of January 1, 2010 and retiring with twenty-five (25) years in the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), the following qualifications must be met for municipally paid for health benefits for life:

- a. 20 Full-Time Years' Service with the Town of Newton
- b. Minimum Age of Fifty (55) Years
- c. Coverage limited to employee and spouse only. If employee pre-deceases spouse, spouse will continue single coverage until death or re-marriage.

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E. For new employees hired as of January 1, 2016 and retiring with twenty-five (25) years in the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), the following qualifications must be met for municipally-paid for health benefits for life:

- a. 25 Full-Time Years of Service with the Town of Newton in a position/title covered by this collective bargaining agreement
- b. Minimum age of Sixty (60) Years
- c. Coverage limited to retiring Town of Newton employee only.


F. Any employee hired on or after January 1, 2013, who is eligible for retiree health insurance coverage through the Town pursuant to paragraphs C, D, or E above, shall receive the same coverage as that which is provided to active Association members. These retirees shall continue to contribute to the medical health insurance premium at the same level as they contributed at the time of their retirement from the Town.

G. Any employee hired after January 1, 2019 and retiring with twenty-five (25) years in the Public Employee Retirement System (PERS), the following qualifications must be met for municipally-paid for health benefits:

- a. 25 Full-Time years of Service with the Town of Newton in a position/title covered by this collective negotiations agreement
- b. Minimum age of Sixty (60) years
- c. Coverage limited to retiring Town of Newton employee only. The Town shall terminate such coverage upon the employee becoming eligible for Medicare.

H. Covered Employees who retire during the course of this contract term shall pay C. 78 contributions for medical health insurance provided through the Town based upon their income level; however, the contributions shall be subject to the following cap on percentage of the employee's premium contribution: Maximum 30%.

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ARTICLE 38

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

A. An employee who acquires permanent status may be disciplined in accordance with New Jersey Civil Service rules and regulations, general law, and this article by any of the following actions, which are stated in order of severity, for the cause stated in this section by the Town Manager, and no employee shall be suspended or dismissed without the approval of the Town Manager:


- 1) Informal, verbal reprimand
- 2) Written reprimand
- 3) Suspension from duty
- 4) Dismissal

B. All discipline shall be progressive in nature and corrective in intent. Discipline for this purpose means any penalty greater than an oral reprimand.

C. The causes for which disciplinary action may be invoked include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Neglect of duty.
2. Incompetence or inefficiency.
3. Insubordination or serious breach of discipline.
4. Use of intoxicants, narcotics, or controlled substances without a prescription; being intoxicated or narcotized while on duty.
5. Possession, sale, transfer or use of intoxicants or illegal drugs on Town property and at any time during work hours.
6. Entering the building without permission when the building is closed.
7. Soliciting on Town premises during work time.
8. Carrying weapons of any kind on Town premises and/or during work hours, unless carrying a weapon is a function of job duties.


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9. Violation of established safety and fire regulations.
10. Chronic tardiness.
11. Unauthorized absence from work area, and/or roaming or loitering on premises, during scheduled work hours.
12. Defacing walls, bulletin boards or any other Town or supplier property.
13. Unauthorized access or disclosure of confidential Town or Police Dept. information.
14. Gambling on Town premises.
15. Horseplay, disorderly conduct, and use of abusive and/or obscene language on Town premises.
16. Deliberate delay or restriction of work effort, and/or incitement of others to delay or restrict their work effort.
17. Violating any Town or Police Department Rules and Regulations or policies.
18. Violation of Federal, State or Town laws, rules or regulations concerning drug and alcohol use and possession.
19. Misuse of public property, including motor vehicles.
20. Unauthorized use of phones, cell phones, computers, fax machines, Internet, email, and voicemail.
21. Chronic or excessive absenteeism.
22. Disorderly or immoral conduct while on duty.
23. Fighting or creating a disturbance.
24. Sleeping while on duty.
25. Inappropriate touching of an employee, volunteer, or customer.
26. Absence without leave.
27. Using leave for purposes other than that for which it is granted.
28. False statements, misrepresentation, or fraud, in application forms or any other manner or matter concerning employment.

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29. Willful violation of any of the provisions of civil service statutes, rules or regulations, or other statutes relating to the employment of public employees.
30. Conviction of any criminal act or criminal offense whether employment related or otherwise.
31. Negligence of or willful damage to public property, or waste of public supplies.
32. Conduct unbecoming an employee in the public service.
33. Rude or disrespectful conduct toward the public.
34. Harassment of co-workers and/or volunteers and/or visitors.
35. Theft or attempted theft of property belonging to the Town, fellow employees, volunteers, or visitors.
36. Infringement of policies defined in this chapter.
37. Use or attempted use of one's authority or official influence to control or modify the political actions of any person in the service or engaging in any form of political activity during working hours.
38. Other actions disruptive to the effective, efficient, or economic operation of Town affairs.
39. Unauthorized outside employment while on duty and working for the Town.
40. Unauthorized use of Town equipment and property.

D. An employee shall be entitled to Union representation at each stage of a disciplinary proceeding instituted pursuant to this Agreement.

E. No employee shall be requested to sign a statement of an admission of guilt to be used in a disciplinary proceeding without having Union representation if requested.

F. Employees disciplined under the provisions of this Article shall have the right to challenge the disciplinary action through the grievance procedure.

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ARTICLE 39

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

A. Employees shall be entitled to engage in any lawful activity and obtain any lawful work while off duty.

B. It is understood that full-time employees will consider their position with the Town as their primary job. Any outside employment must not interfere with the employee's efficiency in his position with the Town and must not constitute any conflict of interest.

C. Written notification including the name of the employee seeking outside employment, that employee's address, telephone number, a description of the type of work to be performed, and the work schedule must be submitted to the Chief of Police.

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ARTICLE 40

TEMPORARY DISABILITY

A. The Town agrees to provide payroll deductions to those employees who choose to enroll in a temporary disability insurance program, fully paid for by the employee. The Union shall notify the Town of the name of the provider from whom the plan may be obtained. Only one plan shall be eligible for payroll deductions from the employees of this unit.

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ARTICLE 41**SEPARABILITY AND SAVINGS**

A. If any provision of this Agreement or any application of this Agreement to any employee or group of employees is held to be contrary to law, then such provision or application shall not be deemed valid and subsisting, except to the extent permitted by law, but all other provisions or applications shall continue in full force and effect.

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ARTICLE 42

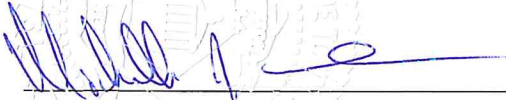
DURATION OF AGREEMENT

A. This Agreement shall be retroactive to January 1, 2023 and shall remain in full force and effect up to and including December 31, 2027. This Agreement shall continue in full force and effect from year to year thereafter, until one party or the other gives notice, in writing, of its intention to negotiate no sooner than one hundred fifty (150) days and no later than one hundred twenty (120) days prior to the expiration of this Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have hereunto set their hands and seals at the Town of Newton, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey on this 20th day of March, 2023.

TOWN OF NEWTON

COMMUNICATION WORKERS OF AMERICA, AFL/CIO



Hon. Michelle J. Teets, Mayor



Migdalia Santiago, CWA Staff Rep.



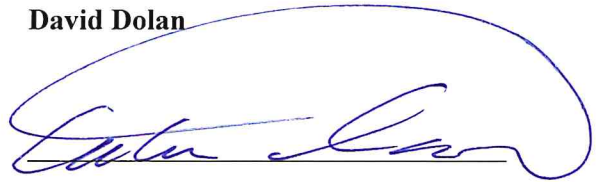
Teresa A. Oswin, RMC, Municipal Clerk



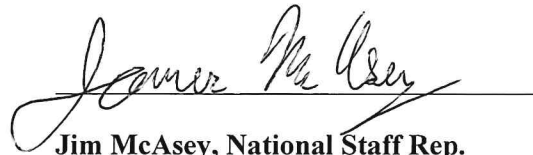
David Dolan



Thomas S. Russo, Jr., Town Manager



Adam Gourlay




Jim McAsey, National Staff Rep.

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