

**TOWNSHIP OF KNOWLTON  
COUNTY OF WARREN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

**TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING  
January 12, 2015**

A regular meeting of the Knowlton Township Committee was held at the Knowlton Municipal Building. Present were Mayor Starrs, Deputy Mayor Cuntala and Township Committee Members Farber and Shipp. Also present were Ted Rodman, Township Engineer and Tara St. Angelo, Gebhardt & Kiefer. The minutes were recorded by Lisa Patton, Municipal Clerk.

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act by publishing notice of all regularly scheduled meetings in the Star Gazette, Star Ledger or Express Times as well as providing said schedule in the Municipal Clerk's office.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm.

**SWEARING IN OF TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEMBER:**

Committeeman Farber was sworn into office by the municipal clerk. A salute to the flag was led by Mayor Starrs. Roll call was taken by the municipal clerk.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Resolution 15-14 (copy attached)

A motion was made by Mayor Starrs and seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala to enter executive session for the purpose of discussion of personnel. Roll Call: Mathez – absent, Cuntala – yes, Farber – yes, Shipp – yes, Starrs – yes.

The Township Committee returned to public session at 7:30 pm.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

Recreation Committee

Dennis Lembeck, Recreation Director, and George Trongone, Recreation Committee Member, stated they have not received a police report for the crashed fence along Route 94. A written request will be sent to the NJSP to obtain the report. Mr. Trongone reported the driver's insurance should cover the damage.

Mr. Lembeck and Mr. Trongone stated a problem exists with the NJDEP SEP (supplemental environmental projects) Wish List. They explained the SEP committee met to address project priorities and procedures. They believe the wish list was changed by Committeeman Mathez. Mr. Trongone stated that one item added was refurbished tennis courts at the Knowlton United Methodist Church which is not Township property. Another project at Ramsaysburg was not approved by the SEP committee. Mr. Lembeck and Mr. Trongone questioned the veracity of Committeeman Mathez.

Deputy Mayor Cuntala stated that the wish list is ultimately approved by the Township Committee; she was not aware of changes to the projects. Mayor Starrs was also not aware of changes and requested that the matter be addressed at the first meeting in February when Committeeman Mathez will be present.

Municipal Engineer

Ted Rodman, Municipal Engineer, reviewed a Sprint project on Koeck Road. Fiber optic cables will be installed underground along the Koeck Road right of way. The construction will cross through driveways.

Engineer Rodman suggested that he draft an ordinance with a fee schedule following county procedures to address insurance and road opening concerns. He will provide the draft ordinance at the next Township Committee meeting.

**ORDINANCES:**

**Ordinance 15-01**  
**An Ordinance to Exceed The Municipal Budget Appropriation Limits**  
**And To Establish A Cap Bank (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-4.5.14)**  
(copy attached)

A motion was made by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and seconded by Committeeman Farber to introduce Ordinance 15-01. Roll Call: Mathez – absent, Cuntala – yes, Farber – yes, Shippis – yes, Starrs – yes. A public hearing on Ordinance 15-01 will be held on February 9, 2015.

**Ordinance 15-02**  
**Ordinance Adding Chapter 128 Entitled “Abandoned / Vacant Properties”**  
**Of The General Ordinances Of The Township Of Knowlton , County Of Warren , State Of New Jersey**  
(copy attached)

Attorney St. Angelo explained the purpose of the ordinance is to address maintenance concerns at vacant properties. The ordinance also provides a mechanism to establish maintenance funds. Committeeman Farber stated his concerns with unworkable insurance requirements and excessive fees. Township Committee members present were in agreement to table Ordinance 15-02.

Attorney St. Angelo stated the Township Committee could also consider amending the nuisance code. Ms. St. Angelo will provide the draft ordinance at the next meeting.

Mayor Starrs noted that 23 Decatur Street is unsafe. Committeewoman Shippis stated 150 Vail Road is unsafe. Committeewoman Shippis said she would be willing to purchase the lot which adjoins her property.

Mayor Starrs suggested that the construction official provide a list of abandoned, vacant and unsafe structures. The municipal clerk will follow up with the construction official.

**RESOLUTIONS:**

**Resolution 15-03**  
**Resolution Approving Non-Compensated Appointments**  
(copy attached)

A motion was made by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and seconded by Committeewoman Shippis to approve Resolution 15-03. Roll Call: Mathez – absent, Cuntala – yes, Farber – yes, Shippis – yes, Starrs – yes.

Bill Clifford, Koeck Road, stated that he was not upset that he was not reappointed to the Planning Board. He questioned why he as a member who attended classes and all meetings was not reappointed when Hal Bromm is regularly absent from meetings.

Mayor Starrs stated that board members should be reasonable and cool.

Committeeman Farber said he believes attendance should be considered in reappointments because members who do not regularly attend meetings are ineffective.

George Trongone stated that the Board of Adjustment also has members who do not regularly attend meetings.

Mayor Starrs will follow up with Clayton Taylor, Planning Board Chair and Rich Tillman, Board of Adjustment Chair regarding attendance.

**Resolution 15-02A**  
**Resolution Appointing Compensated Appointments**  
(copy attached)

A motion was made by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and seconded by Committeewoman Shipps to approve Resolution 15-02A. Roll Call: Mathez – absent, Cuntala – yes, Farber – yes, Shipps – yes, Starrs – yes.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

### DPW Snowplowing

Mayor Starrs stated that the DPW does not plow the municipal building parking lot prior to the building being opened. This creates a liability for the Township. Deputy Mayor Cuntala, DPW liaison, will follow up.

### Personnel Evaluations

Discussion took place regarding personnel evaluations. The personnel subcommittee chair will maintain personnel records. Mayor Starrs will turn over 2014 evaluations to Committeewoman Shipps.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### Township Committee Subcommittee Appointments

Township Committee members present discussed subcommittee appointments. The municipal clerk will provide an updated list.

### Donation of Township Committee Compensation

Committeewoman Shipps explained that she cannot accept compensation for serving on the Township Committee due to her employment. She would like to suggest an increase to a budget line item in the amount of her Township Committee salary.

### Land Conservancy

Mayor Starrs reported that the Land Conservancy of New Jersey offered to write an environmental resources inventory grant application at no charge if they would be awarded the contract to draft the document.

Attorney St. Angelo advised this is not an allowable practice.

### Fire Truck Repairs

Mayor Starrs reported that Hardwick Township has offered to give \$30,000 to the Fire Company for repairs to the fire truck. This donation will cover the next six years donation of \$5,000 per year for Hardwick Township fire service.

Engineer Rodman explained Hardwick received funds from the electric company for road repairs.

Mayor Starrs noted that Hardwick was concerned that a precedence will be set for future vehicle repairs. She explained Mayor Perry from Hardwick Township said their attorney will amend the shared service contract. Mayor Starrs also indicated a concern that the fire company may request an increase to their annual donation because they will not receive the \$5,000 yearly.

Committeeman Farber stated the fire company was previously responsible for vehicle repairs.

Committeewoman Shipps asked if the Fire Company provided financial reports to the Township. Mayor Starrs said they received a written request to provide the information, but have not yet done so.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

There was no public comment.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business, a motion was made by Mayor Starrs and seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 pm. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa K. Patton  
Municipal Clerk