

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

TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING

April 13, 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 Mathez and Farber. Committeewoman Shipps arrived at 7:30 pm. Also present was Ted Rodman, Municipal Engineer, Richard Cushing, Municipal Attorney, John Madden, Township Planner and Theresa Tamburro, COAH Administrator. 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 with a salute to the flag and roll call.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Resolution 15-36 (copy attached)

A motion was made by Mayor Starrs to approve Resolution 15-36 and enter executive session for the purpose of discussion of pending litigation. The motion was seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Farber – yes, Cuntala – yes, Shipps – absent, Starrs – yes.

The Township Committee returned to public session at 7:20 pm.

A motion was made by Committeeman Mathez to reenter executive session at 7:20 pm for the purpose of discussion of further pending litigation. The motion was seconded by Mayor Starrs. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Farber – yes, Cuntala – yes, Shipps – absent, Starrs – yes.

PRESENTATIONS:

Theresa Tamburro, John Madden – COAH

Attorney Cushing reviewed the status of COAH. He explained Knowlton Township is in category 1 having achieved 3rd round substantive certification from COAH. Mr. Cushing stated the Township can file a declaratory judgement by July 8, 2015 seeking judicial approval for 3rd round numbers.

Mr. Madden, Township Planner, also recommended filing a declaratory judgement with housing plan and progress report attached.

Committeeman Farber noted a compliance plan is required. He asked if the compliance plan has been defined. He also asked if COAH categories such as gut rehab, rehab, market to affordable and new construction are still required.

Attorney Cushing stated he believes judges will apply a COAH template to the new numbers. Discussion took place regarding rental bonus credits.

Mr. Madden and Mr. Cushing will follow up with Theresa Tamburro and Committee Members Farber and Mathez. Mr. Cushing will prepare a resolution authorizing Mr. Madden to proceed with preparation of a declaratory judgement.

Mike Bates, Fire Chief

Mr. Bates reported he has found a suitable fire truck for refurbishment. The vehicle which could be purchased for \$100,000 to \$125,000 would be refurbished for an additional \$100,000 - \$125,000. The work would have to be put out for bid. The 1996 ambulance may be included as a trade in.

Committeeman Mathez stated the Township Committee will need to allocate the 5% down for bonding of the refurbished truck. Committeewoman Shippis will check with the CFO on the bonding process.

Mr. Bates also reported he met with other area fire chiefs to initiate discussions regarding a regional fire company or fire district. Allamuchy, Blairstown, Hope, Belvidere and Knowlton departments discussed improvements needed, cooperative purchasing and interdisciplinary training. A follow up meeting will be scheduled later this year.

Additionally, Mr. Bates reported Knowlton Rescue Squad, which now covers Monday evenings, is expanding to two nights per week. Discussion took place regarding Hackettstown Regional Medical Center ambulance service response time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion was made by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and seconded by Mayor Starrs to approve the March 9, 2015 Township Committee meeting minutes. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber – yes, Shippis – yes, Starrs – yes.

A motion was made by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and seconded by Committeeman Farber to approve the March 26, 2015 Township Committee meeting minutes. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber – yes, Shippis – yes, Starrs – yes.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Brian Peck, DPW Supervisor

Discussion took place regarding salt usage and costs. Brian Peck, DPW Supervisor, noted there were 31 storms in 17 weeks. Mr. Peck stated he is not spreading any more road material per mile than was previously spread. He noted that roads can be treated quicker with salt alone.

Also discussed was the purchase of a mason or regular dump truck. Mr. Peck stated he does not have use for another mason dump truck. A mason dump costs approximately \$50,000; a regular dump truck costs approximately \$150,000.

A part time DPW employee will be hired this year for mowing, snow plowing and miscellaneous labor. The municipal clerk will draft an employment ad for Mr. Peck's approval. Current staffing will remain until the additional DPW worker is hired. Mr. Peck stated he believes the DPW supervisor certification courses begin again in the fall.

A motion was made by Committeeman Mathez and seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala to approve advertising for a DPW worker for 3 days per week. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber – yes, Shippis – yes, Starrs – yes.

Mayor Starrs will follow up with the CFO regarding the purchase of a dump truck.

RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution 15-35

Resolution Approving Contract with TD Bank For Internet Tax Payments

(copy attached)

A motion was made by Mayor Starrs and seconded by Committeewoman Shipps to approve Resolution 15-35. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber – yes, Shipps – yes, Starrs – yes.

Resolution 15-37

Resolution Approving Payment Of Vouchers

(copy attached)

Discussion took place regarding fire company attorney fees, recreation department spending, postage meters and a speaker phone. A motion was made by Mayor Starrs and seconded by Committeewoman Shipps to approve Resolution 15-37. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber – yes, Shipps – yes, Starrs – yes.

Resolution 15-38

Resolution Authorizing Mayor To Execute Letter Allowing T-Mobile To Perform Modification Work On A Cell Tower Pursuant To A Lease Agreement

(copy attached)

Engineer Rodman explained improvements planned for the cell tower behind the municipal building. A motion was made by Committeeman Mathez and seconded by Committeewoman Shipps to approve Resolution 15-38. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber – yes, Shipps – yes, Starrs – yes.

Resolution 15-39

Resolution Approving 2014 Recycling Grant Application

(copy attached)

A motion was made by Committeeman Farber to approve Resolution 15-39. The motion was seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber – yes, Shipps – yes, Starrs – yes

Resolution 15-40

Resolution Approving Knowlton Fire And Rescue Tricky Tray Raffle September 5, 2015 At Delaware River Campground

(copy attached)

A motion was made by Committeeman Mathez to approve Resolution 15-40. The motion was seconded by Committeeman Farber. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber – yes, Shipps – yes, Starrs – yes.

Resolution 15-41

Resolution Authorizing The Filing Of A Declaratory Judgment Action In Order To Secure Approval By The Superior Court of The Township's Affordable Housing Plan Previously Approved By The Council On Affordable Housing (COAH)

(copy attached)

A motion was made by Committeeman Farber to approve Resolution 15-41. The motion was seconded by Committeeman Mathez. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber – yes, Shipps – yes, Starrs – yes.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Resolution 15-42 (copy attached)

A motion was made by Mayor Starrs and seconded by Committeeman Mathez to approve Resolution 15-42 to enter executive session at 9:00 pm for the purpose of discussion of personnel. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber – yes, Shipps – yes, Starrs – yes.

The Township Committee returned to public session at 9:10 pm
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OLD BUSINESS:

24th Legislative District Meeting

Mayor Starrs reported a 24th Legislative District meeting will be held in Hope Township on April 17th at 10:30 am.

622 Route 94

Committeeman Farber reviewed quotes for a septic design at 622 Route 94. The Township Committee was unanimously in agreement to award the work to the least expensive quote, G. Glode & Associates for \$2,650.00.

Vacant / Abandoned Properties

Committeewoman Shipps reviewed progress at 150 Vail Road. Two structures will be taken down on the property.

Mayor Starrs reported that the zoning officer issued a notice to demolish 23 Decatur Street.

Yield Signs

Discussion took place regarding Y intersections at Frog Pond and Brugler Roads. The road supervisor will convert the intersections to T intersections when time is available.

Nuisance Ordinance

Committeeman Mathez clarified that changes to the nuisance ordinance affecting vacant and abandoned buildings apply to creditors who foreclose after the property is abandoned.

Air Conditioning

Discussion took place regarding the purchase of new air conditioning units for the municipal building. Committeewoman Shipps stated air conditioning is not a priority and questioned the efficiency of the units. Bill Clifford, Koeck Road, stated the public cannot hear what is being said in meetings in the summer with the air conditioners running and particularly if it is also raining. Mayor Starrs noted efficiency is less important than sound reduction in the meeting room since the room is only used four times per month. Committeeman Mathez and Mayor Starrs will follow up.

NEW BUSINESS:

Municipal Field Rental

The municipal clerk reported a request for the rental of the field behind the municipal building for a wedding in the summer. Bill Clifford, Koeck Road, stated the party must provide a certificate of insurance. The municipal clerk will follow up with the insurance representative.

Prevailing Wage Rates

Committeeman Farber suggested that legislators be contacted regarding prevailing wage rates diving up costs in New Jersey. He cited the installation of a new furnace in the municipal building as an example. The cost of the furnace increased over \$10,000 with prevailing wage rates.

Administrative Office Of Courts

Committeeman Farber stated the AOC is making the process of shared courts too bureaucratic . He suggested that legislators could work to make it easier for shared and regional courts. An alternative approach would be to increase the municipal share of court costs to offset increasing expenses.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Bill Clifford, Koeck Road, inquired about the status of the Sprint project on Koeck Road. Engineer Rodman stated an ordinance change for digging on township road shoulders is being drafted.

Mr. Clifford also inquired about a NJDOT meeting for road signs. Committeeman Mathez stated a yield sign at exit 4A has been installed. The DOT engineer recommended a stop sign at the Route 46 exit from the Portland bridge. The engineer will forward plans for changes to the entrance/exit at the Shell gas station. He also recommended flexible bending rod to be installed at the intersection by the municipal building. Trucks may knock down the rod but it will make a loud sound.

Committeeman Mathez also stated the street light on Washington Street was turned off.

ADJOURNMENT:

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

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa K. Patton
Municipal Clerk

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