

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

**TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING
July 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, Farber and Shippis. Also present was Ted Rodman, Municipal Engineer and Richard Cushing, Municipal Attorney. 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 15-66

A motion was made by Mayor Starrs to enter executive session at the advice of the municipal attorney for discussion of personnel, on-going litigation and potential litigation. . The motion was seconded by Committeeman Mathez. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber – yes, Shippis – yes, Starrs – yes.

The Township Committee returned to public session at 7:50 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion was made by Committeeman Mathez and seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala to approve the June 8, 2015 meeting minutes. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber – yes, Shippis – yes, Starrs – yes.

A motion was make by Deputy Mayor Cuntala to approve the June 25, 2015 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Committeeman Mathez. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber – yes, Shippis – yes, Starrs – yes.

A motion was made by Mayor Starrs and seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala to approve the October 23, 2014 meeting minutes. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber – yes, Shippis – abstain, Starrs – yes. Mayor Starrs will provide a copy of a supplement of the minutes drafted by Attorney Cushing to the municipal clerk.

DEPARTMENT REPORT:

Joe Rossi, Zoning Department

Mayor Starrs compared the Knowlton Township and Pohatcong Township nuisance ordinances. Committeeman Mathez stated the Pohatcong ordinance language is broad as it related to lawn and landscaping overgrowth. Committeeman Mathez noted there are many farms in the township.

Mr. Rossi suggested that agriculture could be exempt. He explained the ordinance is in place for enforcement measures.

Discussion took place regarding complaints of garbage trucks parked at Route 46 truck stops. Committeeman Mathez stated the issue is enforced through Board of Adjustment resolutions. Gary Gray, Route 46, stated NJDEP regulations prohibit storage of garbage in transit for more than 24 hours. Committeeman Mathez also stated that Pete Summers, Warren County Health Department, also offered to enforce the NJDEP regulations.

Mr. Gray reported he called the Warren County Health Department but did not receive a response. Attorney Cushing suggested that the Township elicit support from County Freeholders if Warren County Health Department resources are needed to address the problem.

Mayor Starrs noted the Knowlton ordinance stated the municipal clerk shall notify the resident.... Attorney Cushing suggested that the ordinance be changed to have the zoning officer issue notifications. Additionally, Attorney Cushing suggested that wording indicating the Township Committee would take action after 10 days should also be changed to the zoning officer.

Discussion also took place regarding the abandoned property ordinance. Mr. Rossi stated the ordinance allows 30 days notice to the property owner. Mr. Rossi explained banks often cannot comply with the time constraint. Attorney Cushing stated Mr. Rossi could allow a time extension if reasonable explanation is given by the bank. Attorney Cushing also recommended an alternate approach could be to extend a 60 day notice to all banks.

Committeeman Farber suggested that it may be helpful to obtain a written explanation for the file. Township Committee members present were in agreement to leave the level of enforcement in the existing ordinance and change the notification process to the zoning officer only. The ordinance change will be introduced at the August 10th Township Committee meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Ralph Campbell, Delaware Campground

Mr. Campbell, requested the installation of a campground sign off Route 80 at the end of exit 4B. Mayor Starrs will contact Debbie Hirt, NJDOT. A motion was made by Committeeman Farber to write a letter in support of placement of a campground sign at the end of exit 4B off Route 80. The motion was seconded by Committeeman Mathez. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber – yes, Shipps – yes, Starrs – yes.

Bob McNinch, Vail Road, asked Mayor Starrs to share with the public the general subjects discussed (within state law parameters) and the approximate date meeting notes of the session would be issued. Mayor Starrs deferred to Attorney Cushing. Attorney Cushing advised he could only say subject was personnel and potential litigation and that meeting notes may or may not be issued because of potential privacy concerns.

Nelson Albert of Hunters Lodge stated his concern with being approached by Township Committee members outside the township for discussion regarding Hunters Lodge. After consideration, Mr. Albert realized whoever approached him at North Warren High School were not Knowlton Township Committee members. Discussion took place regarding the status of the Hunter's Lodge liquor license renewal and outdoor events planned for the summer.

A motion was made to approve renewal of the 2015/2016 Hunters' Lodge liquor license by Mayor Starrs and seconded by Committeewoman Shipps. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber – yes, Shipps – yes, Starrs – yes.

ORDINANCES:

ORDINANCE 15-07

An Ordinance Amending Section 174-14 Of The Knowlton Township General Code And Adding Section 174.14.1 In Order To Restrict Parking On Station Road To Permit Holders

(copy attached)

Mayor Starrs reviewed Ordinance 15-07. Discussion took place regarding placing notices on cars parked along Station Road to alert them of the new ordinance. Committeeman Mathez suggested that NJSP could give a warning before issuing summonses.

Committeewoman Shipps suggested a notice be put on cars. The municipal clerk will draft a notice. Committeewoman Shipps also inquired if permits could be obtained by mail. Township Committee members were in agreement to issue permits by mail if applicants provide proper documentation.

Attorney Cushing stated a typo in Section 4(9) should read invalid instead of valid. He will forward a corrected copy of the ordinance to the municipal clerk.

A motion was made by Mayor Starrs to introduce Ordinance 15-07. The motion was seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber – yes, Shipps – yes, Starrs – yes.

ORDINANCE 15-08

Ordinance Amending The Salary And Wage Ordinance Of The Township Of Knowlton, County Of Warren, State Of New Jersey For The Calendar Year 2015

(copy attached)

Mayor Starrs explained .8% increases were given with merit increases for some employees. Committeeman Farber asked what the merit increases were based on. Mayor Starrs said the increases were based on reviews, employee input, personnel committee input and comparison with surrounding municipalities. Committeeman Farber asked when the increases were discussed with the Committee. Committeewoman Shipps said a recommendation was distributed in May.

A motion was made by Mayor Starrs to introduce Ordinance 15-08. The motion was seconded by Committeewoman Shipps. Roll call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber – no, Shipps – yes, Starrs – yes.

RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution 15-63

Resolution Approving Payment Of Vouchers

(copy attached)

Mayor Starrs questioned if a Maser Consulting invoice can be paid from the COAH account. She also noted that dry cleaning of DPW uniforms and door mats cost \$3,200 per year. Township Committee members were in consensus to eliminate rental of door mats. Deputy Mayor Cuntala will follow up with the DPW Supervisor.

A motion was made by Mayor Starrs and seconded by Committeeman Farber to approve Resolution 15-63. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber – yes, Shipps – yes, Starrs – yes.

Resolution 15-64

Resolution Requesting Approval of Items And Revenue – NJDEP Clean Communities

(copy attached)

A motion was made by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and seconded by Committeeman Farber to approve Resolution 15-64. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber – yes, Shipps – yes, Starrs – yes.

Resolution 15-65

Resolution Requesting Approval Of Items And Revenue – Warren County Cultural & Heritage Commission

(copy attached)

A motion was made by Deputy Mayor Cuntala to approve Resolution 15-65. The motion was seconded by Committeeman Farber. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber – yes, Shipps – yes, Starrs – yes.

OLD BUSINESS:

Ramsaysburg

Discussion took place regarding port-a-johns for events at Ramsaysburg. Committeeman Farber suggested the commission pursue their own rentals for events. Mayor Starrs suggested they contact Blairstown Township. Deputy Mayor Cuntala will act as liaison to the Historic Commission.

2015 Snow Practices

Mayor Starrs reported meetings have been held with members of the NJDOT, Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission, NJDEP, Warren County DPW and Warren County Health Department due to salt contamination in Columbia.

Discussion took place regarding liability issues if the Township stops salting roads in Columbia. Attorney Cushing suggested other entities should be put on notice with a formal letter pursuant to Title 59.

Discussion also took place regarding the use of cranberry juice and brine. Committeeman Farber stated he spoke to Committeeman DeCarolis of Frelinghuysen. Committeeman DeCarolis reported Frelinghuysen uses grit mixed with salt. Mayor Starrs stated the DPW supervisor reported that grit clogs storm drains. Bill Clifford, Koeck Road and Gary Gray, Route 46, reported the grit would not clog drains and is used by many municipalities. Mayor Starrs suggested the NJDEP may be able to evaluate if grits clog drains.

Committeeman Mathez made a motion to issue a memo to the DPW Supervisor with instructions to make a serious effort to reduce salt application in a way consistent with public safety. Township Committee members were in agreement. Committeeman Mathez will draft the memo.

Mayor Starrs suggested that the DPW begin to record salt usage in each storm and attempt to keep salting in Columbia to once per storm.

Mayor Starrs will research calcium chloride vs. sodium chloride. Deputy Mayor Cuntala will follow up with the DPW supervisor.

Municipal Court

Mayor Starrs reported the court revenue increased \$16,000 last month due to the weigh station which is being manned with retired state troopers.

Website

Township Committee members were in agreement to post minutes chronologically on the website.

NEW BUSINESS:

Board of Adjustment Vacancy

Township Committee members noted the resignation of Arnold Kantor from the Board of Adjustment.

Delaware Beach

Mayor Starrs reported Gerry Dolan will work with the municipal clerk's office to purchase a new lock for the Delaware Beach gate. The municipal clerk's office will distribute non-duplicatable keys to residents. Mayor Starrs will provide contact information for Gerry Dolan to Committeeman Mathez.

COAH

Attorney Cushing reviewed the status of the Township application for declaratory judgement. Attorney Cushing suggested that the planner be authorized to prepare a report for Fair Share Housing Plan to be included in the master plan. Committeeman Mathez will obtain a proposal from Maser Consulting for the report.

Recreation

Dennis Lembeck, Recreation Director, presented plans for a new playground at the recreation site. The cost of the equipment is \$91,000 and will be purchased with NJDEP grant funds.

Committeeman Mathez stated the Township Committee will need to discuss maintenance costs. Mayor Starrs requested that the discussion be carried to the July 23rd Township Committee meeting.

Mr. Lembeck also announced a free movie night at the rec. site to be held on July 24th at dusk. The movie is Hook. Mayor Starrs will notify residents via a nixle alert.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Gary Gray, Route 46, reported trespassers on four wheelers in the area behind Delaware Beach. He also stated someone is living in a tent in that area by the river. Mr. Gray suggested salt mixed with grit for economical maintenance of Township roads.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 10:10 pm a fire alarm caused the building to be evacuated.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa K. Patton
Municipal Clerk