

**MINUTES OF KNOWLTON TOWNSHIP
WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
April 8, 2019**

The monthly meeting of the Knowlton Township Committee was held on this date at the Municipal Building, 628 Route 94, Columbia, New Jersey. This meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Starrs.

Mayor Starrs led the public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Starrs read the following statement: "This meeting of the Knowlton Township Committee is being held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act: P: 1975, Chapter 231, noting that notice of all regularly scheduled meetings has been published in the New Jersey Herald and/or the Star Gazette and/or the Star Ledger as well as providing said schedule in the Municipal Clerk's office."

Roll Call

Present: Committeewoman Cuntala, Committeeman McNinch, Committeeman Van Horn, and Mayor Starrs

Also present was Township Engineer Ted Rodman and Attorney Tara St. Angelo from Gebhardt & Kiefer

Absent: Deputy Mayor Shipps

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, second by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to approve to go into Executive Session at 7:02 p.m.

Resolution 2019-62 Authorizing an Executive Session

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act; N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq., declares it to be the public policy of the State to insure the right of citizens to have adequate advance notice of and the right to attend meetings of public bodies at which business affecting the public is discussed or acted upon; and

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act also recognized exceptions to the right of the public to attend portions of such meetings; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Township Committee find it necessary to conduct an executive session closed to the public as permitted by the N.J.S.A. 40:4-12; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Township Committee will reconvene in public session at the conclusion of the executive session;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Township Committee of the Knowlton Township, County of Warren, State of New Jersey that they will conduct an executive session to discuss the following topic (s) as permitted by N.J.S.A. 40:4-12:

A. Attorney Advice

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and Township Committee hereby declare that their discussion of the subject (s) identified above may be made public at a time when the Township Attorney advises them that the disclosure of the discussion will not detrimentally affect any right, interest or duty of the Township or any other entity with respect to said discussion.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and Township Committee, for the reasons set forth above, hereby declare that the public is excluded from the portion of the meeting during which the above discussion shall take place.

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, second by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to approve to return to public session at 7:11 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Resident Keith Stouch provided pictures to the committee coming out of the T&A truck stop. Mr. Stouch stated that coming out of the truck stop, there is no sign saying no righthand turn for trucks going to Route 46. GPS will direct truckers right through the town of Columbia to get to Route 46. Once you are over the bridge, there is a small sign that says no trucks over 40 tons, however, it can be overlooked.

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, second by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to approve to have Township Engineer Ted Rodman to submit problem statement to NJDOT specifically for signs regarding trucks turning on to Decatur St.

Resident Keith Stouch also commented on stakes that are along Polkville Rd. He said that they are located before the little bridge going west on Polkville Rd. Committeewoman Cuntala stated that DPW Brian Peck will go out again and take care of it.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Township Engineer Ted Rodman

Bruglar problem statement has been submitted. Mayor Starrs stated that Warren County Freeholder Jason Sarnoski is going to be sending a letter of support regarding this matter.

Polkville Rd. paper work has been submitted.

State Aid for Stark Rd. was approved for \$155,800.00 which is short from the \$200,000.00 that was asked for.

Kill/Station Rd. we have till February 2020 to award that contract.

Discussion regarding driveway on Polkville Rd. if the township should fix the driveway. Committee members Van Horn and McNinch would like the DPW to replace the berm that was there prior to repaving. Committeewoman Cuntala will reach out to DPW Supervisor to address this.

RESOLUTIONS

2019-63 Resolution Approving Refund of Duplicate Tax Payment Block 3 Lot 41.01

WHEREAS, the above property was sold in early November. The November taxes in the amount of \$1,866.61 were paid twice once by the former owner's bank and once by the title company handling the purchase. The title company has requested their payment be refunded to them and did not wish

to apply it to February 2019 taxes since it would affect the new owner's escrow for taxes which is included in their mortgage. Once refunded the title company will refund their client.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Township Committee of the Township of Knowlton, County of Warren, New Jersey on this eighth day of April 2019, approves the refund of the duplicate November payment to Sunrise Title Services, Inc. in the amount of \$1,866.61. The CFO is hereby authorized to prepare a check in that amount made payable to Sunrise Title Services, Inc. The check will be returned to the tax collector for mailing.

Motion was made by Committeewoman Cuntala, second by Mayor Starrs and carried to approve by roll call vote: Cuntala—yes, McNinch—yes, Shipps—absent, Van Horn—yes, Starrs—yes to Resolution 2019-63.

ORDINANCE

Introduction

2019-03 Calendar Year 2019 Ordinance to Exceed the Municipal Budget Appropriation Limits and to Establish a Cap Bank

WHEREAS, the Local Government Cap Law, N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.1 et seq., provides that in the preparation of its annual budget, a municipality shall limit any increase in said budget to 2.5% unless authorized by ordinance to increase it to 3.5% over the previous year's final appropriations, subject to certain exceptions; and,

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.15a provides that a municipality may, when authorized by ordinance, appropriate the difference between the amount of its actual final appropriation and the 3.5% percentage rate as an exception to its final appropriations in either of the next two succeeding years; and,

WHEREAS, the Township Committee of the Township of Knowlton in the County of Warren finds it advisable and necessary to increase its CY 2019 budget by up to 3.5% over the previous year's final appropriations, in the interest of promoting the health, safety and welfare of the citizens; and,

WHEREAS, the Township Committee hereby determines that a 3.5% increase in the budget for said year, amounting to \$57,298 in excess of the increase in final appropriations otherwise permitted by the Local Government Cap Law, is advisable and necessary; and,

WHEREAS the Township Committee hereby determines that any amount authorized hereinabove that is not appropriated as part of the final budget shall be retained as an exception to final appropriation in either of the next two succeeding years.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED, by the Township Committee of the Township of Knowlton, in the County of Warren, a majority of the full authorized membership of this governing body affirmatively concurring, that, in the CY 2019 budget year, the final appropriations of the Township of Knowlton shall, in accordance with this ordinance and N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.14, be increased by 3.5%, amounting

to \$57,298 and that the CY 2019 municipal budget for the Township of Knowlton be approved and adopted in accordance with this ordinance; and,

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that any that any amount authorized hereinabove that is not appropriated as part of the final budget shall be retained as an exception to final appropriation in either of the next two succeeding years; and,

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that a certified copy of this ordinance as introduced be filed with the Director of the Division of Local Government Services within 5 days of introduction; and,

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that a certified copy of this ordinance upon adoption, with the recorded vote included thereon, be filed with said Director within 5 days after such adoption.

Township Auditor John Mooney explained the reasons to establish a cap bank. **Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, second by Committeeman McNinch and carried to approve by roll call Vote: Cuntala—yes, McNinch—yes, Shipps—absent, Van Horn—yes, Starrs—yes to the introduction of Ordinance 2019-03.**

Introduction of Budget

Mayor Starrs explained that she spoke to the Township Tax Assessor, and the income from the Delaware Travel Center was not taken into account for this year's budget since it opened late in November. Because of this rate from the Delaware Travel Center, the auditor was able to bring a budget for introduction with a two-cent increase. Mayor Starrs also said that both she and Committeeman McNinch were looking into the court rents that were due at the end of February and have not been received yet. Township Auditor stated that the audit has not been done yet and they will be looking into this. He said we can't count that for this year because we are a state exam year so if \$30,000 is added to revenue within the budget and the state sees only \$15,000.00 in receivable the state will question it and not allow it. If that revenue comes in it will be added to the surplus for next year's budget.

Committeeman McNinch reviewed the budget and would like it to be less than the cost of living increase to the taxpayers, which is 1.9%, and provided some ideas including counting the missing court revenue and decreasing expenditures with a goal of either having a 0% tax increase but no more than a 1.9% tax increase.

After discussion between the Township Auditor and committee members, committee agreed to introduce the budget with a two-cent increase.

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, second by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to approve by roll call vote: Cuntala—yes, McNinch—no, Shipps—absent, Van Horn—yes, Starrs—yes to the Introduction of 2019 budget with a two-cent increase.

RESOLUTIONS

2019-64- Resolution Recognizing April 2019 as Warren County Community College Month

WHEREAS, the more than thirteen hundred community and technical colleges, public and private, in the United States have contributed enormously to the richness and accessibility of American higher education, nearly half of all undergraduate college students in the Nation today are enrolled in community colleges; and

WHEREAS, by providing educational opportunities at costs and locations accessible to all who are qualified, community and technical colleges have greatly enhanced the opportunity for every ambitious student, young or old, to enter a postsecondary school program. As community-based institutions, our schools provide varied programs and offer specialized training for more than one thousand occupations; and

WHEREAS, this community is served well by Warren County Community College, and as Warren County Community College has been recognized by Middle States for its exceptional report and process during the March 2018 Self-Study; and

WHEREAS, Warren County Community College because of its successful reform agenda, by implementing meaningful educational change, it has reached a 45% graduation rate, highest in New Jersey as well as record retention rates, while simultaneously continuing to reduce remediation; and

WHEREAS, Warren County Community College was the only community college deemed uniquely qualified in Northwest New Jersey, to provide free tuition to all households earning under \$45,000 per year, Through the Governor's Community College Opportunity Grants (CCOG); and

WHEREAS, in Spring 2019, Warren County Community College is the only college in the Northeastern United States to implement Cengage Unlimited where all online learning materials are at a flat rate of \$140 annually; and, the option to receive each print book at a flat rate of \$7.99. This is estimated to save students at least \$1,200 annually in book expenses; and

WHEREAS, in 2017-2018, a robust dual enrollment program with all six Warren County high schools participating, 1,947 high school students (equivalent to 51% of the entire Warren County public high school population) successfully completed at least one dual enrollment course, saving the Warren County taxpayers an equivalent of \$1.8 million in tuition and fee expenses; and

WHEREAS, Warren County Community College is a leader in public service relationships. It currently administers Continuing Education programs, at our Phillipsburg satellite location, with a strong history of collaborating with our county human services offices, even facilitating and authoring a strategic plan for all countywide human services; and

WHEREAS, Warren County Community College trustees and staff serve the global higher education community on statewide, national, and international boards including, but not limited to: NJCCC Trustee State Chair, AACC Board of Directors, AACC structured pathways Commission Chair, the AAUA Board of Directors, the Chair Academy International Advisory Board, and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education Board; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of the important contribution of community and technical colleges to

our total educational system, in 1985 the Congress authorized and requested then President Ronald Reagan to issue Proclamation 5418 establishing a National Community College Month.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that, the Knowlton Township Mayor and Committee recognize April 2019 as Warren County Community College Month.

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, second by Committeeman McNinch and carried to approve Resolution 2019-64.

2019-65 Payment of Vouchers

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Knowlton, Warren County, New Jersey, that all claims attached are hereby approved as reasonable and proper claims against the Township of Knowlton.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that approval for payment is hereby given to the Chief Financial Officer to pay said claims, subject to the availability of funds.

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs second by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to approve by roll call vote: Cuntala—yes, McNinch—yes, Shipps—absent, Van Horn—yes, Starrs—yes to Resolution 2019-65 with the exception of Gramco and Rob Greenbaum.

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, second by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to approve by roll call: Cuntala—yes, McNinch—yes, Shipps—absent, Van Horn—yes, Starrs—yes, to pay the Rob Greenbaum bill with the exception charges for correspondence to Knowlton.

PROCLAMATION

Older American Month May 2019

Whereas, the month of May is traditionally designated Older Americans Month by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; and

Whereas, the theme for Older Americans Month 2019 is “Connect, Create, Contribute” emphasizing the importance of contributing to your community. Everyone benefits when everyone can participate. We encourage you to connect, create, and contribute for stronger and more diverse communities.

Whereas, Knowlton Township includes countless older Americans who enrich and strengthen our community; and

Whereas, Knowlton Township is committed to engaging and supporting older adults, their families, and caregivers; and

Whereas, we acknowledge the importance of taking part in activities that promote physical, mental,

April 8, 2019

and emotional well-being—no matter your age; and

Whereas, Knowlton Township can enrich the lives of individuals of *every age* by:

- promoting home- and community-based services that support independent living;
- involving older adults in community planning, events, and other activities; and
- providing opportunities for older adults to work, volunteer, learn, lead, and mentor.

Now therefore, we of Knowlton Township, New Jersey does hereby proclaim May 2019 to be Older Americans Month. Residents are encouraged to take time during this month to acknowledge and recognize older adults as vital members of our community.

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, second by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to approve the Proclamation for Older American Month May 2019.

OLD BUSINESS: No Old Business

NEW BUSINESS

Blue Light Permit

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, second by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to approve the Blue Light Permit for Michael Cestari of Knowlton Township Fire & Rescue.

Court Contracts

Mayor Starrs would like the committee to think about how they want the court contracts structured. Blairstown contract is up at the end of this year. Franklin and Frelinghuysen can also end at this year with notice from the township. Committeeman McNinch volunteered to crunch some numbers to be discussed at a later meeting. Mayor Starrs has data from prior years and will forward it to Committeeman McNinch.

CORRESPONDENCE: No Correspondence

PUBLIC COMMENT

Resident Vincent Gaeta asked who pays for the deficit when the court runs a deficit. Mayor Starrs replied Knowlton Township. Mr. Gaeta suggested inserting a “stop loss” clause into the contracts.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, second by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to adjourn tonight’s Township meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristin Shipps
Acting Municipal Clerk