

**MINUTES OF KNOWLTON TOWNSHIP
WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
February 22, 2018**

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 is a meeting of the Knowlton Township Committee. 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 and/or Express Times as well as providing said schedule in the Municipal Clerk's office."

Roll Call

Present: Deputy Mayor Cuntala, Committeeman McNinch, Committeewoman Shipps (arrived at 7:26), Committeeman Van Horn and Mayor Starrs.

Also present was Township Engineer Ted Rodman, Recreation Supervisor Dennis Lembeck and CFO Christine Rolef.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Mayor Starrs read the following statement: "The Township received sad news last week. Former Clerk Lisa Patton passed away on February 14. Lisa was the Township Clerk for about 15 years and as such was a central figure in keeping Knowlton Township running. She leaves behind two children, Todd and Dana, and one grandchild Allanna, who was the apple of her eye. Our thoughts go out to Lisa's family and friends in this difficult time. May she rest in peace."

PRESENTATION--2018 Budget Discussion

CFO Christine Rolef presented the committee with a printout and discussed changes to be made to this year's budget. Committeeman McNinch asked if there could be a 3% cut in the overall budget this year. The Committee agreed to \$60,000. \$50,000.00 would already be cut from the budget from last year's reverse osmosis. Ms. Rolef suggested separating part of recreation's budget, such as work that is done on the fields, to buildings and grounds. Discussion took place regarding the recreation budget, KAA budget, employee cost-of-living increases and upcoming road projects. Ms. Rolef will look into see where she can cut another \$10,000. Contribution to capital Improvements will be raised to \$30,000.00.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Officer Chris Madia from the Hope Barracks was present in order to hear some speeding complaints that are going on in Knowlton Township.

Resident Donna Dioro explained the speeding that goes on at Washington St. Resident Sharon Valentine explained that many people run the stops signs going down Decatur St. Resident Jeff Milesky also said that there is speeding on Route 46.

Officer Madia stated that you will see an increase present in police officials in our local schools because of recent events in Parkland, Florida.

Resident Pam Rusweiler stated that the road dept. has ruined her lawn with the recent storm. Deputy Mayor Cuntala will follow up with DPW Supervisor Brian Peck on this matter.

Resident Jeff Milesky asked about the Wastewater Collector conversation that was in the minutes. Mayor Starrs explained that the Wastewater Collector is a current employee who sends out billing and will be reading the meters on the current truck stop and the new truck stop.

Resident George Trongone asked about Polkville Road, which was not paved correctly and that the sides of the road are cracking. Deputy Mayor Cuntala will ask DPW Supervisor Brian Peck regarding drainage.

Resident Dr. Emma Rainforth asked about the new federal tax code that caps property tax deductions at \$10,000 and if the township will be looking into residents being able to use a charitable deduction. Mayor Starrs said that the state has to approve it first.

Resident Bill Clifford commented on the cracks on Koeck Rd. and maintaining the roads.

Mr. Milesky also suggested hiring summer help.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Township Engineer Ted Rodman

Updated the committee on the Storm water management.

Engine breaking on 46 — problem statement was amended to include from the Route 80 ramp to the fence on 46. No response from NJDOT yet.

Trucks entering route 80 from Simpson Rd problem statement— No response from NJDOT yet.

Repairs needed on Hemlock Road— still gathering information on how to repair Hemlock Rd.

Recreation Supervisor Dennis Lembeck

Mr. Lembeck asked the committee to reconsider the Ordinance regarding the rental fees for the pavilion. He feels the fees from the old ordinance are too high. Deputy Mayor Cuntala will take a look at the ordinance and bring it to the committee.

Easter Egg Hunt will be on March 24th rain date on March 25th will be at 11am.

RESOLUTIONS

2018-54- Resolution Authorizing the Subordination and Postponement of Mortgage Between the Township of Knowlton and Frederick Bauer

WHEREAS, on or about July 17, 2006, Frederick Bauer (the “Applicant” or “Mr. Bauer”) made a mortgage to the Township of Knowlton Housing Rehabilitation Program for property identified as 116 Hainesburg River Road, Columbia, New Jersey (the “Property”), said mortgage being recorded on August 7, 2006 in Mortgage Book 4480 at Page 243 in the Warren County Clerk’s Office, which mortgage was second and subordinate to a certain First Mortgage the “First Mortgage”); a

WHEREAS, Mr. Bauer now seeks to refinance the First Mortgage on the Property by paying off the First Mortgage and entering into a new first mortgage with First Hope Bank Mortgages, Inc. in the amount of \$185,000 the (“New First Mortgage”); and

WHEREAS, a condition of the refinance is that the mortgage held by the Township of Knowlton be subordinated to the New First Mortgage and become the second priority mortgage; and,

WHEREAS, the governing body of the Township of Knowlton has reviewed the proposed form of Postponement of Mortgage and has been advised by the Township Attorney that the form is acceptable;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the governing body of the Township of Knowlton that the Mayor and Clerk, and all other necessary officers or officials of the Township are authorized on behalf of the Township of Knowlton to execute the approved Postponement of Mortgage in the form annexed hereto; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a signed copy of the Postponement of Mortgage shall be placed in the Applicant's file; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Township Clerk will advise the Applicant when the Postponement has been signed and is available for pick up and shall receive a receipt for its delivery.

Mayor Starrs read an explanation from Attorney Tara St. Angelo. Acting Clerk Shipps reached out to COAH representative Teresa Tampura and explained to the committee that Mr. Bauer is just looking to refinance because he had to put a new septic system in.

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and approved by roll call vote: Cuntala—yes, McNinch—yes, Shipps—yes, Van Horn—abstain, Starrs—yes

2018-55 -Resolution Approving 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 Deputy Mayor Cuntala, seconded by Committeewoman Shipps and approved by roll call vote: Cuntala—yes, McNinch—yes, Shipps—yes, Van Horn—yes, Starrs—yes

OLD BUSINESS

DOT Route 80 Rock Mitigation

Mayor Starrs explained that there has been some great progress gathering support to oppose the fence proposed by the NJDOT through the Delaware Water Gap. Resident Pam Rusweiler has prepared a petition that had 80 signatures after only being up for a few hours. There has been coverage in 3 newspapers and Hardwick Township is 100% on board. Mayor Starrs has reached out to many organizations, most of which had not heard of this project. Committee agreed to put the petition on the Township website.

Open Space Update

Committeeman McNinch asked former Committeemen Rene Mathez to give an update on Open Space. The Conti property overlooks the town of Delaware and they are within a month of closing on

this project. Labarre farm is 50 acres in Knowlton and 50 acres in Hope. This project is a Warren County preservation project. Mazza project is 20 acres on Koeck Rd. Committeeman McNinch and Mr. Mathez met with one of the two appraisers. Once both appraisals have been presented to the township they will then be presented to the homeowner to see if they would like proceed in preserving the land. Mr. Mathez also talked about one of two projects that he is working on, which is the piece across from Brook Hollow Winery. Mr. Mathez did look into the property on Starlite Hill Road, which is about the 7-8 acres, and spoke with a representative from Green Acres. They are not sure if this continues to Green Acres land but they will take a look at it.

Street Light Feedback

Committeeman McNinch had reached out to three residents regarding changing current streetlights to LED. None of the 3 residents would like brighter street lights near their homes. Deputy Mayor said that some of the residents that she spoke with said they were concerned about the glare. Mayor Starrs did some research and there is a health risk factor associated with LED lights. After discussion each committee member said no to having LED lights installed.

NEW BUSINESS

Mobile Office Hours from Congressman Gotthimer's District Office

Acting Clerk Shipps explained that a representative from Congressman Gotthimer's District office will be at the Knowlton Municipal Building on March 7, 2018 from 5:00-6:00 pm.

Knowlton Township Organization Chart

Mayor Starrs prepared an Organization Chart for the committee to review, which is a part of the policy and procedures required for a grant the Historic Committee received to go toward Ramsayburg.

Employee Appreciation Dinner

Committeewoman Shipps suggested having an Employee Appreciation dinner for all township employees. Mayor Starrs explained that they have a Christmas Luncheon every year.

Peddlers Permit

Motion was made by Committeeman McNinch, second by Committeewoman Shipps and approved by an all-in-favor to issue a Peddler's permit to Fred Kessler.

Resident Speeding Concerns- discussed during public comments.

CORRESPONDENCE

Committeeman Van Horn spoke with NJDOT and a letter needs to be sent out to a representative from NJDOT requesting for notification. Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and approved with an all-in-favor authorizing the township to send a letter to NJDOT requesting to be notified if there is going to be any lane closures or work being done through the Gap on Route 80 in Knowlton.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

February 12, 2018 Executive Session Minutes— tabled until next meeting

February 12, 2018 Public Meeting Minutes

Motion was made by Deputy Mayor Cuntala, seconded Committeewoman Shipps and approved by roll call vote for the February 12, 2018 Public Meeting Minutes

PUBLIC COMMENT

Resident Donna Diorio asked what the next steps are regarding the speeding on Washington St., for example with stop signs and speed humps. Ms. Diorio asked when the Freeholders' meetings are so she can express her concerns with them.

Resident Jeff Milesky spoke with his insurance company regarding the sludge that he is worried will be on his property from the removal of the Columbia dam. There was a survey done which was done incorrectly and the sludge will just get worse when the dam is removed. Mr. Milesky asked if there were any documents that are public regarding the township being against the dam removal. Acting Clerk Shipps will get copies of those resolutions to give to Mr. Milesky.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion to go into Executive Session: Mayor Starrs, seconded by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried by an all-in-favor at 9:15pm

Resolution 2018-56 Authorizing the Executive Session for the Purpose of:

A. Litigation

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. Litigation

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, seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and approved by an all-in-favor vote to come out of Executive Session at 9:45 p.m. and return to Regular Session.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala, and carried to adjourn tonight's Township meeting at 9:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristin Shipps
Acting Municipal Clerk