

**MINUTES OF KNOWLTON TOWNSHIP
WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
Public Session Meeting Minutes
February 27, 2020**

The meeting of the Knowlton Township Committee was held on this date at the Knowlton Municipal Building, 628 Route 94, Columbia, New Jersey. This meeting was called to order at 7:01 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* as well as providing said schedule in the Municipal Clerk's office."

Roll Call

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

Also present was Township Engineer Ted Rodman

Mayor Starrs asked to have Moment of Silence for Municipal Judge Dominick Santini.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

2020-42- 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. Personnel- Interviews Court Violation Clerk& Municipal Judge

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 go back into public session at 7: 40 p.m.

Committeeman Van Horn said a few words about Municipal Judge Dominick Santini

PRESENTATION

Nature Conservancy Beth Styler Barry- Columbia Dam Update

Beth Styler Barry presented a slide show regarding Columbia Dam. The slide show had a mockup of the Historic Signage, trees that were planted, and where the trail will be. Ms. Barry explained that the NJDEP owned the powerhouse and has demolished it. The area is still closed and will not be open to the public until January 2021 the earliest.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Resident Rene Mathez asked if there were any plans with the Coronavirus going around. Mayor Starrs explained that she spoke with the Warren County Health Dept. and they are on top of it. Their primary concern is the schools. They will be meeting with all the Emergency Management Teams to give them guidance. The Health Department also suggested the municipalities have a plan. Committee agreed to have Frank Makowski to put a plan in writing.

Resident Fred Kessler has concerns about the Knowlton Athletic Association. He is asking to see the current terms on KAA to have a term limitation. He feels that since Knowlton's tax dollars are going toward paying KAA insurance, that the committee should have a say. Mayor Starrs explained to Mr. Kessler that this is an attorney question and that she will ask the Township Attorney at the next meeting.

Resident Tracy Albertson questioned why School schedule was on the Agenda. Committeeman Van Horn explained that he asked for it to be put on the Agenda because a change in school calendar could affect local farmers and their farm help. Ms. Albertson said that the calendar has not been approved yet and that it was a matter to be discussed at the school board meeting. Majority of the Committee agreed that is not a discussion that the committee should be having and it should be addressed with the school board.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Township Engineer Ted Rodman

Mr. Rodman discussed with the Committee regarding the erosion under Route 80. Mayor Starrs read an email that she received from NJDOT which said that the erosion is not an immediate safety issue but does need repair. NJDOT will be evaluating the erosion. Mr. Rodman will go look and invite DPW Supervisor Brian Peck. State Aid Paperwork is done just needs Mayor's signature. Mr. Rodman also needs Mayor Starrs signature on paperwork to be sent to NJDEP for the Four-log system. Mr. Rodman will be resubmitting the problem statement for Simpson Rd.

ORDINANCES

Amended Ordinance from February 10, 2020 meeting to be read by Title Only

2020-02 An Amended Ordinance "Fixing the Salaries and Wages of the Officials, Appointees and Employees of the Township of Knowlton in the County of Warren and State of New Jersey" by Salary Range

RESOLUTIONS

2020-43- Resolution Adopting a Domestic Violence Policy

WHEREAS, on or about October 15, 2019, the New Jersey Civil Service Commission issued a Statewide Domestic Violence Policy (DVP) for Public Employers, which is attached hereto; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 11A:2-6a(b)(1), "The [Civil Service Commission] shall develop a uniform domestic violence policy, which all public employers shall adopt and distribute to their employees, regardless of whether a public employer is subject to the provisions of Title 11A, Civil Service, of the New Jersey Statutes;" and

WHEREAS, the Township of Knowlton seeks to update its Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual to comply with N.J.S.A. 11A:2-6a(b)(1).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the governing body of the Township of Knowlton, in the County of Warren, that the Township of Knowlton Policies and Procedures Manual is updated as follows:

1. The Statewide DVP (which is attached hereto) shall be included in the Manual.
2. Kristin Shipps, Clerk for the Township of Knowlton shall be designated as Primary Human Resources Officer (HRO).
3. Adele Starrs, Mayor of the Township of Knowlton shall be designated as Secondary HRO.
4. The Table of Contents shall be updated to reflect the inclusion of the DVP.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of the updated Township of Independence Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual is on file with the Clerk's office; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution shall be forwarded to the Township Clerk for distribution to all Township employees.

Motion made by Mayor Starrs, second by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to approve Resolution 2020-43.

2020-44- Preserve New Jersey Historic Preservation Fund Administrated by The New Jersey Historic Trust

The Governing body of Knowlton Township Historic Commission desires to further historic preservation through a grant from the New Jersey Historic Trust, State of New Jersey in the amount of \$365,725 for the following project Ramsaysburg Homestead.

Therefore, the governing body authorizes Hal Bromm Knowlton Township Historic Commissioner to execute a grant agreement with the State in an amount up to that awarded for the proposed project, and the seal the grant agreement.

Motion made by Committeeman McNinch, second by Committeewoman Cuntala and approved by roll call vote: Cuntala—yes, McNinch—yes, Shipps—yes, Van Horn—yes, Starrs--yes Resolution 2020-44, subject to mayor’s review.

2020-45-Resolution Approving Person to Person Transfer of Liquor License for Plenary Retail Consumption License Number 2112-33-002-005 from LaHoud Enterprises to Chefs LLC.

WHEREAS, an application has been filed for a person to person transfer of LaHoud Enterprises Consumption License 2112-33-002-005 heretofore issued to Chefs LLC, for premises located at 411 Route 94, Columbia, NJ 07832; and,

WHEREAS, the submitted application form is complete in all respects, transfer fees have been paid, and the license has been properly renewed for the current license term; and,

WHEREAS, the New Jersey State Police Alcohol Beverage Control investigation clearance is complete, and the applicant is qualified to be licensed according to all standards established by Title 33 of the New Jersey Statutes, regulations promulgated thereunder, as well as pertinent local ordinances and conditions consistent with Title 33; and,

WHEREAS, the applicant has agreed to disclose to the issuing authority the source of all funds used in the purchase of the license and the licensed business and all additional financing obtained in connection with the licensed business and provided an affidavit of qualification for ownership interest in a New Jersey alcoholic beverage license;

NOW THEREORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Township Committee of the Township of Knowlton, County of Warren, State of New Jersey hereby approves the transfer of the aforesaid LaHoud Enterprise to Chefs LLC. for operation under the license.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that approval is subject to completion of all State of New Jersey, Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control regulations.

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, second by Deputy Mayor Shipps and carried to approve Resolution 2020-45.

2020-46- 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 made by Mayor Starrs, second by Committeeman McNinch and approved by roll call vote: Cuntala—yes, McNinch—yes, Shipps—yes, Van Horn—yes, Starrs—yes to Resolution 2020-46

2020-02b- Resolution Appointing Compensated Appointments

WHEREAS, it is necessary to appoint various persons to fill the numerous positions of authority in the Township of Knowlton for the year 2020; and

WHEREAS, Resolution 2020-02(a) reflected appointments in certain positions, such as Municipal Judge and Violations Clerk, which, for various reasons require an amendment; and

WHEREAS, the instant Resolution reflects the current status in connection with the positions of authority within the Township and the persons chosen to fill the numerous positions in the Township of Knowlton for the year 2020.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Knowlton, Warren County, New Jersey, that the following appointments be made with terms being until December 31, 2020:

Municipal Clerk	Kristin Shipps
Shared Services/Grant Administrator	
Assessment Search Officer	
Deputy Clerk	Doreen Apgar
Registrar of Vital Statistics	Kristin Shipps
Deputy Registrar of Vital Statistics	Doreen Apgar
Office Assistant	
Finance Assistant	Doreen Apgar
Recycling Coordinator	JoAnn Fascenelli
Chief Financial Officer	Christine Rolef
Tax Collector	Evan Howell
Tax Search Officer	Evan Howell
Assistant Tax Collector	Doreen Apgar
Tax Assessor	Richard Motyka
Tax Assessment Assistant	Kenna Pearson
Code Enforcement /Zoning Officer	Eric Snyder
Driveway Inspector	Eric Snyder
Temporary Code Enforcement/ Zoning Officer (January 8 th – April 5 th)	George Boesze
Alternate Driveway Inspector (January 8 th – April 5 th)	George Boesze
Fire Official	Glenn Wilson, Jim McAleer
Planning Board Secretary	Alfia Schemm
Board of Adjustment Secretary	Alfia Schemm
Animal Control Officer	Alan DeCarolis

***Municipal Judge**
Court Administrator
Deputy Court Administrator
Temporary Court Administrator

Violations Clerk
Court Attendant
Municipal Court Bookkeeper

Public Works Manager
Public Works Assistant Supervisor
Public Works Driver/Laborer I
Public Works Driver/Laborer II
Public Works Driver/Laborer III
Public Works Driver/Laborer-Part Time
Recreation Director
Recreation Laborer
Alternate Recreation Laborer
Community Service/Clean Comm. Supervisor

**Emergency Management Coordinator
911 Coordinator
***Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator
Emergency Management Assistant
Municipal Housing Liaison

*Shared Municipal Court – Knowlton/Frelinghuysen/Franklin/Blairstown – Unexpired term of Judge Santini ending 12/31/20
**term expires 12/31/2022
***term expires 12/31/2020

Louis P. Mellinger

Ruth DeGeorge
Laura Moore & Maria Molina
(January Courts)
Lynda Stadtler/**Jackie Geisheimer**
Dennis Kelley, Doug Kopen
Donna Surdich

Brian Peck
Thomas Steckel

David Quick
Michael Carpenter

Dennis Lembeck
Ryan Lembeck
George Trongone
Dennis Lembeck

Frank Makowski
Frank Makowski
Michael Bates
Kristin Shipp
Kristin Shipp

Motion made by Committeeman McNinch, Second by Committeewoman Cuntala and approved by Roll call vote: Cuntala—yes, McNinch—yes, Shipp—yes, Van Horn—yes, Starrs—yes to Resolution 2020-2b.

OLD BUSINESS

February 19, 2020 Meeting with Senator Oroho and League of Municipalities re: Vegetation Management Bill

Mayor Starrs attended this meeting regarding this bill, which was not passed, due to the League's objections about the wording "dangerous" trees and their fear that too many trees could be cut down. Mayor Starrs felt that the meeting was very productive and has hope that the Bill will be passed with the changes that were suggested.

Knowlton Fire & Rescue Truck Repair

Motion was made by Committeeman Cuntala, second by Deputy Mayor Shipps and approved by roll call vote: Cuntala—yes, McNinch—yes, Shipps—yes, Van Horn—yes, Starrs—yes to accept the Cory Brother Inc quote of \$7,515 for the repair of the Jake brake system on the Knowlton fire truck.

Knowlton Fire & Rescue Air Pack Grants

Deputy Mayor Shipps found a company out in PA that writes grants for fire departments. She was told that it takes over a year to get approval. Deputy Mayor Shipps spoke with Fire & Rescue and their Air Packs are expiring this year. Discussion took place regarding on the number of air packs that KF&R are requesting and if they can get older Air packs that are not expired. Deputy Mayor Shipps will speak with the insurance company regarding the liability issue of using older Air Packs. Committee also agreed to still try to go for the grant. The committee agrees to pay \$1,500.00. KF&R needs to come up with the remainder of the cost which totaled \$4,500.00.

NEW BUSINESS

NJ Farm Borough—tabled to future meeting

Fire & Rescue Shared Services—Motion made by Mayor Starrs, second by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to approve to have Deputy Mayor Shipps and Committeeman Van Horn to be the Subcommittee Liaisons for having a Fire & Rescue Shared Service with Blairstown, Hope and Knowlton.

2020 Census—Mayor Starrs explained that it is very important every single person needs to do the census which you can do online now. The schools are also stating how very important the census is because this is how the Federal and State determine the funding.

Sinkholes Under Route 80—Discussed during Department Reports

Salary Increase Budget— Motion made by Committeeman McNinch, second by Mayor Starrs and approved by roll call vote: Cuntala—yes, McNinch—yes, Shipps—yes, Van Horn—yes, Starrs—yes for budget purpose that 2% is used for salary increases.

School Schedule— Discussed during public comment

CORRESPONDENCE

Clerk Shipps mentioned that Spring Clean up will be the 1st week of June this year June 1 -6th.

Clerk Shipps also mentioned that she received a phone call from a resident on Meadow Ridge who would like to know who will fix his front lawn from the fire trucks that parked on his lawn while responding to house fire that happen over a month ago. Committee unanimously agreed that they will not be fixing the lawn.

MEETING MINUTES

February 10, 2020 Executive Session Meeting Minutes—**Motion made by Committeewoman Cuntala, second by Committeeman McNinch and carried to approve February 10, 2020 Executive Session Meeting Minutes**

February 10, 2020 Public Session Meeting Minutes—**Motion made by Committeewoman Cuntala, second by Committeeman McNinch and carried to approve February 10, 2020 Executive Public Session Meeting Minutes**

PUBLIC COMMENT —Resident Vincent Gaeta made a comment regarding the Employee Salary that there was going to be a tax increase in employee’s paychecks.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion made by Mayor Starrs, second by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to approve to go in to Executive Session at 9:30 pm.

Resolution 2020-47 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING 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. Contract Negotiations
- B. Potential 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, second by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to approve to go back into public session at 10:10 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, second by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to adjourn tonight's Township meeting at 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristin Shipps
Municipal Clerk