

**MINUTES OF KNOWLTON TOWNSHIP  
WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
January 26, 2017**

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.

The Mayor read the following statement in compliance with the "Open Public Meetings Act":  
"In accordance with Chapter 231 of the Public Laws of 1975, notice of this meeting was given by way of publication with the Star Gazette and/or the Express-Times, filed in the Municipal Clerk's Office and posted in the Knowlton Municipal Building."

**Roll Call**

Present: Deputy Mayor Cuntala, Committeewoman Shipps, Committeeman Van Horn and Mayor Starrs  
Committeeman Farber was absent

Also present was Township Engineer Ted Rodman.

**PRESENTATION**

Jeff Martell, Engineer for Stonefield Engineering, presented to the committee and residents plans on upgrading the existing Shell Station on Route 46. Petroleum Marking Group (PMG), the new owners of the Shell station, purchased the property adjoining their current location. They plan to have more fueling stations for both cars and trucks. The fueling station for trucks will be able to accommodate fueling for three trucks and also have a separate entrance and exit for those trucks. There will be no amenities for truck drivers, for example, no overnight parking, showers, or sitting areas for truck drivers. Both fueling stations would have overhead canopies and the plans include a larger convenience store for grab-and-go type items.

PMG is aware that they are in a flood zone and state law requires that new facilities may not negatively impact flooding. The project involves tearing down the existing building and replacing it with all new equipment and sound barriers for residents that live behind and on either side of the gas station. When PMG's plans are final, they will go before the Planning Board or Board of Adjustment for approval.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Residents were able to express their concerns and recommendations to the committee. There were many concerns about enforcing the no truck parking at the new location, along with safety, and traffic being backed up on 46 as it is now. Other residents welcomed a change to the rundown gas station.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

**Ted Rodman, Engineer**

Mr. Rodman does not have an answer from DOT regarding the catch basin at the end of Walnut St. Mr. Rodman will contact Debbie Hirt at DOT.

Mr. Rodman also stated that he will be submitting a state application for the overlaying on Kill road to Station Rd.

Mr. Rodman also addressed that the NJ DOT will not let Knowlton Township use their salt shed.

**RESOLUTIONS**

**2017-24 -Resolution Approving Waiver of Permit Fees for Knowlton Township Non-Profit**

**Organizations**

**WHEREAS**, the Ordinances of the Township of Knowlton impose fees for certain permits and applications which must be filed in conjunction with public events; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Knowlton Township non-profit organizations provide significant benefit to the citizens of Knowlton Township;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Mayor and Knowlton Township Committee that the Township of Knowlton does hereby waive all Township fees pertaining to permits and applications that can be waived under present laws for the aforementioned nonprofit groups.

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Cuntala seconded by Committeewoman Shipps and approved by roll call vote Cuntala – yes, Farber –absent, Shipps –yes, Van Horn-abstain, Starrs –yes Resolution 2017-24

**2017-25- Resolution Designating *The Express Times* and *The Star Gazette* as Official Newspapers of the Township**

**WHEREAS**, the Local Public Contracts Law (“LPCL”) (N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq.) and Municipal Land Use Law (“MLUL”) (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-1) require certain notices be published by a municipality in an “official newspaper”; and

**WHEREAS**, for the purposes of the Open Public Meeting Act (“OPMA”), the Township designated *The Express Times*, *The Star Gazette*, and *The Star Ledger*, as newspapers to receive notices thereunder; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:53-2, an official newspaper must be widely circulated within the Township and must be published within Warren County; and

**WHEREAS**, there is no newspaper that meets such criteria; and

**WHEREAS**, upon information and belief, *The Express Times* is the most widely circulated newspaper in the Township, but is published out of state in Pennsylvania; and

**WHEREAS**, *The Star Gazette* is published in Hunterdon County, New Jersey, and is, therefore the newspaper that is published at a location closest to the Township within the state of New Jersey; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township acknowledges that publication of notices in *The Express Times* would effectuate the purposes of the LPCL, MLUL, and OPMA of notifying the public and ensuring transparency in government processes; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township Committee acknowledges that the publication of notices in *The Express Times* would effectuate and purposes regarding utilizing local New Jersey businesses; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township Committee believes it is in the best interests of the public to designate both *The Express Times* and *The Star Gazette* as the official newspapers of the Township.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Mayor and Council of the Township of Knowlton, Warren County, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. *The Express Times* and *The Star Gazette* are hereby designated as the official newspapers of the Township of Knowlton.

2. All public notices required to be published by the Township of Knowlton shall be published in both *The Express Times* and *The Star Gazette*.
3. Additionally, all public notices required to be published by the Township of Knowlton shall be posted on the Township's website.

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Motion was made by Deputy Mayor Cuntala seconded by Committeewoman Shipps and carried to approve Resolution 2017-25

### **2017-26- Resolution Extending Retention Time for Audio Recordings of Committee Meetings**

**WHEREAS**, the Knowlton Township Committee approved the audio recording of its Township Committee Meetings on March 9, 2015; and

**WHEREAS**, audio recordings of meetings are intended to assist in the preparation and accurate drafting of written minutes; and

**WHEREAS**, audio recordings further serve to inform the public of details not contained in the minutes and represent the Committee's desire for accuracy and transparency; and

**WHEREAS**, audio recordings may assist in the insurance company's defense of the Township in the event of litigation; and

**WHEREAS**, the New Jersey Division of Archives and Records Management record series 0511-0000 provides that audio recordings must be retained for only 80 days after the minutes have been approved by the governing body; and

**WHEREAS**, subjects under discussion may take many months to resolve and recordings may be useful to the public and Committee members past the State-mandated 80-day retention period; and

**WHEREAS**, N.J.S.A. 40A: 9-133(e) provides that the municipal clerk is the "records manager responsible for implementing...records retention programs as mandated pursuant to Title 47 of the Revised Statutes."

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Knowlton Township Committee tasks the municipal clerk with preserving audio recordings of Township Committee meetings for a period of four years after the summary has been officially approved by the governing body.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that this resolution supersedes the previous Knowlton Township retention policy of one year for audio recordings.

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Committeewoman Shipps and carried to approve Resolution 2017-26

### **2017-27 Resolution for 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, Farber-- absent, Shipp--yes, Van Horn-- yes, Starrs--yes resolution 2017-27

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Municipal Attorney Fees**

Mayor Starrs explained to the Committee why the Township Attorney has raised his rate to \$165 from \$160. Gephardt and Kiefer raised their rates two years ago, but the township negotiated with Attorney Cushing to keep his rate at \$160, which is now expired.

### **Salt Update**

Multi agency meeting as been scheduled for February 27 at the Knowlton Municipal Building at 10am. NJDEP will be sending letters out to residents who were effected by the salt contamination, which will have a return address envelope to the township. Results will be kept confidential.

### **622 Route 94**

Will be addressed at the next meeting.

### **Columbia Dam**

Committeeman Van Horn addressed with the committee that the Warren County Freeholders are willing to prepare a resolution to keep the dam. Committeeman Van Horn will forward the resolutions that the township has already passed to the Warren County Freeholders. Committeeman Van Horn asked about bringing litigation to stop the dam removal. Mayor Starrs suggested to wait until the attorney is present to discuss this.

### **Speeding on Washington Street**

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, Seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and carried to approve for a letter to be sent to NJ DOT requesting a speed monitor on Washington St.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Fire & Rescue Volunteer Tuition Credit Program**

The state pays up to \$2,400 over a four-year period toward tuition for fire & rescue volunteers. The program is also extended to volunteers' spouses and children.

### **Knowlton Court 2016 Review**

Mayor Starrs explained that the court system operated by Knowlton lost approximately \$53,000 in 2016. Mayor Starrs spoke with Judge Santini regarding the loss. Judge Santini explained that because of the new bail reform system a lot of police officer were taken off the roads in order to learn the computer for the new system.

Court Administrators have asked to meet with the personnel subcommittee, regarding the effects this new system is having on the municipal court.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

### **New Jersey State League of Municipalities Annual Scholarship Competition**

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and carried to approve the scholarship letter be sent to North Warren.

### **24<sup>th</sup> Legislative District Office Response to the DWI Resolution**

Mayor Starrs read a letter from the 24<sup>th</sup> Legislative Office regarding a bill that is already in front of the State Legislature that would address the problems Knowlton raised in Resolution #2017-21.

### **Open Space Project**

To be discussed in the future.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

### **January 9, 2017 Public Meeting Minutes**

Motion was made by Deputy Mayor Cuntala, seconded by Committeewoman Shipps and carried to approve January 9, 2017 Public Meeting Minutes

### **January 9, 2017 Executive Session Minutes**

Motion was made by Deputy Mayor Cuntala, seconded by Committeeman Van Horn and carried to approve January 9, 2015 Executive Session Minutes with one correction. Committeewoman Shipps abstained.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Resident Bill Clifford asked if the resolutions that are being sent to the Warren County Freeholder have the results of November's referendum vote.

Resident Pam Russweiler asked if at all possible a resident could be present during the salt meeting. She feels that it would help if the multi agency understood what a resident goes through whose well is contaminated.

Resident Bill Clifford made a suggestion that the salt levels be tested right after the road has been salted. Other residents expressed concerns about the road salting from the other agencies during the last snow we had. Residents also have stated that the township is doing a good job on using less salt.

Resident Mark Kouda asked if there was an update from FEMA. Mayor Starrs said that Warren County Emergency Management is still waiting on the state.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and carried to adjourn tonight's Township meeting at 9:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristin Shipps  
Acting Municipal Clerk