

**MINUTES OF KNOWLTON TOWNSHIP
WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
May 23, 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: Committeeman McNinch, Deputy Mayor Shipps (arrived at 7:25 pm), Committeeman Van Horn, and Mayor Starrs

Also present was Township Engineer Ted Rodman

PUBLIC COMMENT

Resident Pam Rusweiler stated that the village is having issues with stray cats. There are a few residents feeding them and they seem to be multiplying. Mr. Rusweiler asked if there is anything that the township can do to possibly license cats or trying to catch them and send them to a shelter or neuter them. Committeewoman Cuntala is going to reach out to a resident who caught a few cats and had them adopted to see what she did and where she bought them.

Mayor Starrs mentioned that she received a complaint from a resident that there was 17 dump trucks traveling on Decatur St. The resident did get the name of the company and Mayor Starrs reached out to the company, notifying them that no trucks over 4 tons were allowed on Decatur St.

Resident Keith Stouch suggested having the resident write up a summons. Mr. Stouch said that if the resident has all the information, including the name of the company, license plate etc. they can go to the courts and fill out a ticket to be mailed. Mayor Starrs will reach out to the Court Administer regarding this matter.

Resident Keith Stouch commented on farm tractors driving unsafely, cutting off drivers on main roads. Mr. Stouch is concerned that someone is going to get hurt. Mayor Starrs suggested that he call the state police or even the Warren County Agriculture Development Board. She said farmers are exempt from many nuisance actions and municipal regulations and the Agricultural Board steps in many times in those situations.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Township Engineer Ted Rodman

Bruglar Rd.— NJ DOT problem statement still no response from DOT.

Warren County Soil Conservancy issued a violation to a property on Route 46 that is importing soil. Mr. Rodman will be going to inspect the property.

Meadow Ridge Weeds—There are weeds coming up through the pavement and cracks that is causing a resident to complain. Mayor Starrs said that a resident of Meadow Ridge explained that when the development was put in back in 1995 the residents had put money aside for the township to seal and pave the road. Mr. Rodman pulled the resolution which says money was put aside for “off tract” purposes but does not specify it is for sealing the road or to be used for the pavement.

Alpine Road—Mr. Rodman received a complaint from the owner of 6 Alpine regarding a drainage problem. He is going to meet with the owner of property.

Deputy Mayor Shipps told Mr. Rodman that the Fire & Rescue is going to be reaching out him regarding specs for a tanker.

RESOLUTIONS

2019-77- Resolution to Approve the Submission of a 2019 Grant Application and Execution of a Grant Contract with the County Warren

WHEREAS, this Warren County Municipal & Charitable Conservancy Trust Fund Grant is intended for historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic structures; and

WHEREAS, the Ramsaysburg Homestead on the Delaware River is listed as a site on the NJ and National Registers of Historic Places; and

WHEREAS, in recent years Knowlton’s Historic Commission has renovated the exterior of the Ramsaysburg Homestead with funding obtained through grants; and

WHEREAS, the site has become host to a half-dozen grant-funded annual events that serve to bring Knowlton’s community together; and

WHEREAS, the 2019 grant application will include letters from local businesses that support the continued restoration of the Ramsaysburg Homestead because it benefits the area economically, visually, and encourages tourism; and

WHEREAS, the above mentioned grant will fund the continued restoration and rehabilitation of the Tavern, Cottage, Barn and Shed including site utilities upgrades; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Committee of Knowlton formally approves the

grant application for the above stated project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Knowlton Township Historic Commission and Clerk are hereby authorized to submit a grant application identified as a 2019 Stabilization/Restoration Project Application to the Warren County Municipal & Charitable Conservancy Trust Fund in an amount of \$ 365,725 utilizing matching funds provided through a 2016 USDOT TAP grant as administered through the NJDOT.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and Clerk are hereby authorized to sign the grant agreement on behalf of Knowlton and that their signatures constitute acceptance of the terms and conditions of the grant agreement and approve the execution of the grant agreement.

Motion was made by Committeeman McNinch, second by Mayor Starrs and carried to approve Resolution 2019-77.

2019-78- Award Contract Survey of Block 47 Lot 7 Kitchen Farm

WHEREAS, the Township of Knowlton wishes to Survey Block 47 Lot 7 (also known as Kitchen Farm); and

WHEREAS, the Township has solicited quotes. Van Cleef Engineering Associates, LLC. of Phillipsburg New Jersey was the lowest quoted amount in the amount of \$6,300; and

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Officer has certified that funds are available within the Open Space Trust Fund.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Knowlton, County of Warren, and State of New Jersey that a contract to Survey Block 47 Lot 7 (also known as Kitchen Farm) be awarded to Van Cleef Engineering Associates, LLC, 755 Memorial Parkway, Suite 110, Phillipsburg, New Jersey 08865 not to exceed \$6,300.

Motion was made by Committeeman McNinch, second by Mayor Starrs and carried to approve by roll call vote Cuntala—yes, McNinch—yes, Shipps—abstain, Van Horn—yes, Starrs—yes to Resolution 2019-78.

2019-79- Resolution of Commendation for Eagle Scout Jacob Summers

WHEREAS, Knowlton Township resident Jacob Summers of Troop 140, Boy Scouts of America, has earned the rank of Eagle Scout; and

WHEREAS, to do so Jacob passed a two-hour Board of Review with four district-level Boy Scout Committeemen; and

WHEREAS, Jacob joined the Boy Scouts in first grade and since then has held positions of responsibility within Troop 140 such as Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Patrol Leader, Troop Guide, Troop Instructor, Den Chief and Scribe; and

WHEREAS, Jacob spent 129 hours on his Eagle Scout project to build a fire pit with benches and water stand at Knowlton Presbyterian Church; and

WHEREAS, Jacob has attained a total of 35 merit badges, 14 more than was required, demonstrating his commitment to ideals that benefit our community; and

WHEREAS, the rank of Eagle Scout is the highest award a boy can attain in scouting and is earned by only 5 percent of all Boy Scouts; and

WHEREAS, in all these actions Jacob Summers has demonstrated strong leadership abilities and exhibited a strong sense of duty, honor, and service, making him a clear example of the best qualities of American youth.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that on this day, May 23, 2019, the Knowlton Township Committee commends Jacob Summers on achieving the rank of Eagle Scout and awards him with this Certificate of Merit.

Motion was made by Committeeman Cuntala, second by Committeeman McNinch and carried to approve Resolution 2019-80.

2019-80-Resolution Designating Knowlton Township as a Stigma-Free Community

WHEREAS, the Warren County Stigma-Free Communities Initiative is a county-wide program that aims to eradicate the stigma associated with mental illness and substance use disorders; and

WHEREAS, the Warren County Board of Chosen Freeholders and County Department of Human Services supports the designation in every municipality; and

WHEREAS, Warren County recognizes that 1 in 4 Americans has experienced mental illness, including substance use disorders, in a given year according to the National Institute of Mental Health; and

WHEREAS, given the serious nature of this public health problem, we must continue to reach the millions who need help; and

WHEREAS, the stigma associated with the disease of mental illness is identified as the primary reason individuals fail to seek the help they need to recover from the disease; and

WHEREAS, Stigma-Free Communities aim to inspire public interest and open dialogues about stigma, raise awareness of mental illness and create a culture wherein residents who have the disease of mental illness feel supported by their community and feel free to seek treatment for the disease

without fear of stigma; and

WHEREAS, promoting awareness that there can be no “health” without mental health will break down barriers and encourage residents of all ages to be mindful of their mental health and ask for help when needed; and

WHEREAS, local resources are available to treat the disease of mental illness so no one resident needs to suffer alone; and

WHEREAS, establishing a Stigma-Free Community will raise awareness of resources and encourage residents to engage in care as soon as the need is identified so recovery can begin, hope is inspired, and tragedies are avoided.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Knowlton Township recognizes the community need for and supports the efforts of the County in Warren in designating Knowlton Township as a Stigma-Free Community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Township Committee welcomes any residents interested in volunteering to coordinate awareness-raising activities in Knowlton and asks them to contact a member of the governing body for more information.

Motion made by Mayor Starrs, second by Committeeman McNinch and carried to approve Resolution 2019-80.

2019-82-Award Contract-Catch Basin Project-Hemlock Rd

WHEREAS, the Township of Knowlton advertised to receive sealed bids on Thursday May 16, 2019 for a Catch Basin Project involving 7 catch basins on Hemlock Road; and

WHEREAS, The Township Attorney and Township Engineer have reviewed the bid packets and K&A Paving, Belvidere New Jersey appears to be the lowest responsive and responsible bidder; and

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Officer has certified that funds are available for said project;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Knowlton, County of Warren, and State of New Jersey award a contract for a Catch Basin Project, involving 7 Catch Basins on Hemlock Road not to exceed the amount of \$43,999.99 is awarded to K&A Paving 453 Delaware Avenue, Belvidere, New Jersey 07823

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, second by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to approve by roll call vote: Cuntala—yes, McNinch—yes, Shipps—yes, Van Horn—yes, Starrs—yes to Resolution 2019-82.

Township Engineer stated that they are starting the preliminary paperwork for Stark Rd. It must be

sent to NJDOT.

Mr. Rodman also mentioned that he is meeting with Recreation Director Dennis Lembeck regarding the water issue at Tunnel Field.

2019-83-Resolution in Support of Fireworks Display by the Laracuenta Family on July 13, 2019

WHEREAS, a fireworks display will be held in Knowlton Township at 18 Ivan Rd by the Laracuenta Family on July 13, 2019 and

WHEREAS, a rain date of July 20, 2019 has been requested; and

WHEREAS, Knowlton’s Fire Official has verified the NJ state requirements are satisfied; and

WHEREAS, discussions between the Governing Body and the Township attorney in 2017 confirm that the firework display requirements of N.J.S.A. 21: 3-9 regarding “public” displays and “groups of individuals” are being met for fireworks in this location; and

WHEREAS, the State of New Jersey requires a resolution of support from the Township Governing Body for the issuance of a fireworks permit.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Knowlton, County of Warren, State of New Jersey that this resolution serves as a resolution of support for conducting fireworks in Knowlton Township on at 18 Ivan Rd by the Laracuenta Family on July 13, 2019 from 9:30pm - 9:50pm with a rain date of July 20, 2019.

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, second by Committeeman McNinch and carried to approve Resolution 2019-83.

2019-84-Resolution in Support of Fireworks Display by the Knowlton Lions Club July 13, 2019

WHEREAS, a fireworks display will be held in Knowlton Township by the Knowlton Lions Club on July 13, 2019; and

WHEREAS, they will be arranging for the fireworks; and

WHEREAS, the State of New Jersey requires a resolution of support from the Township Governing Body in order to arrange for an inspection and approval of the fireworks display.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Knowlton, County of Warren, State of New Jersey that this resolution serves as a resolution of support for conducting fireworks in Knowlton Township by the Knowlton Lions Club on July 13, 2019.

Motion was made by Committeewoman Cuntala, second by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and carried to approve Resolution 2019-84. Committeeman Van Horn abstained.

2019-85 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—yes, Van Horn—yes, Starrs—yes to Resolution 2019-85.

2019-87- Resolution Authorizing Use of Municipal Property By the Knowlton Fire and Rescue Company #1, Station 41

WHEREAS, Knowlton Township (the “Township”) is the owner of certain property located at 37 Route 46 (designated as Block 48, Lot 7 on the Tax Maps of the Township of Knowlton) and 33 Route 46 (designated as Block 48, Lot 5 on the Tax Maps of the Township of Knowlton); and

WHEREAS, the above-referenced properties were donated to the Township by the County of Warren (the “County”); and

WHEREAS, both of the above-referenced properties include residential structures that are scheduled to be demolished by the County; and

WHEREAS, the Flood Mitigation Assistance Grant Program (“FMA”) provides funding to local communities for projects and planning that reduces or eliminates long-term risk of flood damage to structures insured under the National Flood Insurance Program (“NFIP”) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (“FEMA”)

WHEREAS, the County was awarded a FMA Grant to acquire the above-referenced properties and demolish the associated residential structures; and

WHEREAS, the Township authorized its participation in the FMA Grant opportunity and agreed to acquire by donation the Properties pursuant to an Agreement of Donation with the County of Warren; and

WHEREAS, Knowlton Fire and Rescue Company #1, Station 41(the “Fire Company”) has requested to use the above-referenced properties and associated residential structures prior to demolition for training that will not involve any live fires; and

WHEREAS, the County, through its Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator, has consented to the Fire Company's use of the above-referenced properties; and

WHEREAS, the Township has determined that the above-referenced properties are not needed for public use prior to demolition and that allowing the Fire Company to use such training is in the best interests of the residents of the Township.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Knowlton, County of Warren, New Jersey, as follows:

1. The Fire Company shall be permitted to use the following properties and associated residential structures for training purposes:
 - a. 37 Route 46 (designated as Block 48, Lot 7 on the Tax Maps of the Township of Knowlton)
 - b. 33 Route 46 (designated as Block 48, Lot 5 on the Tax Maps of the Township of Knowlton)
2. Such training shall not consist of any live fires.
3. This permission is granted subject to review by the Township's insurance carrier.
- 4.

Motion was made by Committeewoman Cuntala, second by Deputy Mayor Shipps and carried to approve Resolution 2019-87.

OLD BUSINESS

Salt Subcommittee Letter—Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, second by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to approve that the Salt Subcommittee letter be sent on Township official letterhead to all 5 agencies with clarification that it is coming from the Salt Subcommittee.

NJDEP Letter—Mayor Starrs read the letter she had drafted aloud. Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, second by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to approve the NJDEP letter pending on Steve Barnett, Esq. salt attorney approval.

Budget Adoption

Acting Clerk Shipps advised the committee the dates that the introduction of the Budget was published in *the Star Gazette* and *The Express Times*.

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, second by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to approve by Roll Call vote: Cuntala—yes, McNinch—no, Shipps—yes, Van Horn—yes, Starrs—yes to the adoption of the 2019 Budget.

Resolution

2019-81- Cancellation of 2019 Budget Appropriations to General Capital Fund

WHEREAS, The Knowlton Township Committee wishes to cancel \$50,000 from Improvements to Roads currently located in the 2019 Budget to the General Capital Fund – Reserve for Road Improvements; and

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Officer has determined that said balance is available and eligible to be cancelled; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that \$50,000 of the 2019 Budget Improvements to Roads is cancelled to the General Capital Fund – Reserve for Road Improvements.

Mayor Starrs explained that this moved money from one part of the budget to another so that it can be used for road paving. Committeeman McNinch said Stark Road appeared to be sound and asked why it was being paved with 2-inch overlay rather than 1-inch. Engineer Rodman explained the problems with 1-inch. **Motion was made by Committeewoman Cuntala, second by Mayor Starrs and carried to approve by roll call vote: Cuntala—yes, McNinch—yes, Shipps—yes, Van Horn—yes, Starrs—yes to Resolution 2019-81.**

Old Business

Delaware Beach—Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, second by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to approve the waiver form for volunteers working at Delaware Beach.

Auction of Municipal Asset—Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, second by Deputy Mayor Starrs and carried to approve to have Committeeman McNinch to move forward and selling the recreation mower on the Govdeals website.

K-12 Consolidation/ Regionalization Feasibility Study—Mayor Starrs stated that Frelinghuysen Township Committee voted no to the feasibility study. Since the study required the approval of all the involved townships, she said to her knowledge, the volunteer feasibility study will not move forward.

Route 80 Rockwall—NJDOT Public hearing for the Route 80 Rockwall is on June 18th from 4-8 pm at North Warren Regional High School. Mayor Starrs said this is the same day as Knowlton Elementary's graduation and asked the DOT to move the date. They denied her request. Mayor Starrs also stated that Warren County Freehold Sarnoski stated that the project needs to be approved by the NJTPA. Sarnoski, who is Warren County's representative on the NJTPA, has written a letter asking that the project be removed from the upcoming DOT plans.

Water Tank for furnace—Committeewoman Cuntala received 2 quotes fro the water tank. She called 7 businesses, 3 of the businesses came to look at the furnace, and 2 provided quotes. The quotes will be put on the Agenda for next meeting.

Knowlton Township Elementary School Community Clean up—Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, second by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to approve to have a flyer placed on the Knowlton Township website regarding KTES Community clean up which will be June 8th and volunteers are needed.

NEW BUSINESS

Tree Trimming —JCP&L will be doing tree trimming on 10 roads starting June 3rd. More information will be put on the township website.

Knowlton Fire & Rescue—Deputy Mayor Shipps met with Knowlton Fire & Rescue. They are going to need new air packs. They are working with Blairstown Fire & Rescue to see if they can get a group discount. The tanker has met its 20 year cycle which needs to go out for refurbishment. Deputy Mayor Shipps also mentioned that she will be meeting with Knowlton Fire & Rescue at their quarterly meetings. They are looking for volunteers.

CORRESPONDENCE—No Correspondence

PUBLIC COMMENT

Resident Mitchell Pfeiffer inquired about a catch basin in front of his house. Committeewoman Cuntala said that she spoke again with DPW Supervisor Brian Peck and will ask again.

Resident Pam Rusweiler had approached the Elementary school last year regarding their budget. Ms. Rusweiler said that she was giving the run around and every excuse on why their budget was so high. Ms. Rusweiler said that someone needs to be educated with the system when speaking with the Board of Education.

Resident Keith Stouch said that he would be interested in being part of a committee for the Stigma-Free Community.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, second by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to approve to go into Executive Session at 8:30 p.m.

2019-86 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

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 8:57 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, second by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to adjourn tonight's Township meeting at 8:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristin Shipps
Acting Municipal Clerk