

**PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES OF THE KNOWLTON TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE**  
**WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY**  
**October 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 7:02 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":  
"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 Star Gazette and/or the Star Ledger and /or the Express Times as well as providing said schedule in the Municipal Clerk's office."

**Roll Call**

Present: Deputy Mayor Cuntala, Committeewoman Shipps (arrived at 7:15), Committeeman Van Horn and Mayor Starrs

Also present was Township Engineer Ted Rodman and EMO Frank Makowski

Absent: Committeeman Farber

**EXECUTIVE SESSION** Motion to go into Executive Session: Mayor Starrs, seconded by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried by an all-in-favor at 7:03.

**Resolution 2017-114**

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 ensure 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:

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 carried by an all-in-favor vote to come out of Executive Session at 7:48 p.m. and return to Regular Session.**

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Resident Jeff Milesky addressed the committee ~~of concerns that he has~~ regarding environmental reports that were filed with the Clerk's office regarding spills at the Shell gas station and the JCP&L substation on Route 46. He has reached out to several people and communicated the responses to the committee. Mayor Starrs said that she will address it with the Environmental Committee.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **Columbia Dam Update**

Beth Styler Barry from the Nature Conservancy was present and gave the committee and residents an update on permits that were issued for the removal of Columbia Dam.

Mayor Starrs announced that the Public hearing for objection or support for the removal of the Columbia Dam as been scheduled for November 20th at North Warren Regional High School Auditorium from 6-9 pm. Public comments will be heard; length of time for each speaker would depend on how many residents are present.

### **DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

#### **Office of Emergency Management-Frank Makowski**

Provided an update for the Discounted Flood Insurance. FEMA has indicated that no Knowlton residents meet the requirements to get the discount yet. A free flood risk evaluation work shop will be scheduled for residents who are in a flood zone area to come and learn how to make their homes compliant.

#### **Township Engineer- Ted Rodman**

Update on Salt Shed: Dutchman Contractors are preparing the plans. The time for receiving the walls for the salt shed is about 6-8 weeks. December 15th is the new date for the completion of the salt shed.

Update on Stormwater Management: three more points to go to have a total of 9 points.

Update on Polkville Road: We are going to get the grant extended for April, 2018.

#### **Hemlock Road**

Mayor Starrs addressed that the Hemlock Road was going to be paved October 30, however Tilcon cancelled and rescheduled for November 3rd.

Committee reviewed a letter that the Mayor prepared to distribute to residents on Hemlock Rd.

### **RESOLUTIONS**

#### **2017-115 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 Mayor Starrs, seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and approved by an all-in-favor to not purchase free gear such as t-shirts to be distributed at Clean Communities day but to have that money go to the organizations.**

**Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and approved by roll call vote for Resolution 2017-115: Cuntala—yes, Farber—absent, Shipps—yes, Van Horn—yes, Starrs—yes, with the exception of the playground mulch which should be coming out of the DEP grant.**

Mayor Starrs noted that the bills included a \$15,000 check for a 1-bedroom market-to-affordable unit at 9 Clinton Street with a deed restriction of 30 years. This was a property approved previously that helps Knowlton fulfill its COAH low-income housing obligation.

Mayor Starrs also addressed the vouchers for clean communities. Groups that are not Knowlton affiliated received payment and she felt this means less money is available for Knowlton groups. North Warren groups that include Knowlton participants could still be included.

**Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and approved by an all-in-favor to send a letter with the vouchers thanking them for their participation but Knowlton Township will no longer accept groups that are not Knowlton affiliated and for a memo to go out to our staff explaining the same.**

### **OLD BUSINESS**

**Award of Salt Shed Bid**—Discussed during Department Reports

#### **Nov. 1, 2017 Salt Meeting with H2M Architects & Engineers**

Mayor Starrs announced that there is a kick-off meeting regarding the salt issue on November 1, 2017 at the municipal building from 2pm- 3:30 pm.

#### **CenturyLink Internet Improvements Presentation**

Mayor Starrs presented a PowerPoint presentation that was shown at the CenturyLink meeting. The presentation showed where residents would be seeing a significant difference in their Internet service in 2018.

#### **Draft Music Ordinance**

Discussion regarding the changes that were made to the draft Music Ordinance took place. Suggestion regarding how many permits to issue per year took place. Residents in the audience encouraged the Committee to have business owners come to the next meeting to discuss the issue to avoid the appearance of impropriety. Draft will be discussed further at next meeting.

#### **Community Day Review**

Community Day was a great success. Committeewoman Shipps will look into adding more activities for older residents next year. Committeewoman Shipps will start earlier for donations for next years' event.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**Dog License Reminders** Acting Clerk Shipps asked the committee if Dog License reminders can be sent out before the end of the year. Committee agreed to have reminders sent out.

**Blairstown Animal Hospital Bill** Committee agreed not to pay the Blairstown Animal Hospital Bill which was in the amount of \$255.74.

**Radon Kits Grant** Mayor Starrs explained that there is a grant for \$2,000 to get radon kits and distribute them to residents at no charge. An application needs to be filled out to get this grant and the money would need to be paid by the township first and then they will be reimbursed for it.

**Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and approved by roll call vote Cuntala--yes, Farber--absent, Shipps--yes, Van Horn--yes, Starrs--yes to make application for the Radon Kit Grant**

### **Vacant Building Registry Ordinance**

Discussion regarding a Vacant Building Registry Ordinance took place. Committee members reviewed an ordinance that was passed in Blairstown. Committee members are going to review the ordinance and will discuss it at the next meeting.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

#### **Sussex-Warren Area Energy Cooperative Update**

Another town has been added to the group and requested an extension

#### **Countryside Road Signs**

Request for a blind driveway sign for Countryside Road

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**September 11, 2017 Executive Session** tabled due to lack of quorum

**September 11, 2017 Public Meeting Minutes** tabled due to lack of quorum

**September 28, 2017 Executive Session** Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and approved by an all-in- favor for the September 28, 2017 Executive Session Minutes

**September 28, 2017 Public Meeting Minutes** Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, second by Committeewoman Shipps and approved by an all-in-favor for the September 28, 2017 Public Meeting Minutes

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Resident Jeff Milesky suggested asking residents for a donation for community day and also maybe consider a baking contest.

Mr. Milesky also continued to address issues regarding the spills along Route 46.

Resident Bill Clifford said that it is very difficult for business owners to come to the township meetings in order to give their comments regarding the music ordinance because they are working when the township meetings are being held.

Frank Makowski suggested that the Vacant Registry could be a good idea because vacant homes with overgrown weed could be a potential fire hazard.

Catherine Staskiewicz was in attendance with her daughter Christina Gotty. Ms. Staskiewicz read a

letter that she prepared to the committee regarding concerns that she has for her daughter and the continued problems her daughter has with her neighbors on Auble Road. Mayor Starrs responded the Committee cannot comment on issues before the Board of Adjustment concerning Auble and that the Township attorney has been clear on this.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala, and carried to adjourn tonight's Township meeting at 10:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristin Shipps  
Acting Municipal Clerk