

TOWNSHIP OF KNOWLTON  
WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES  
September 22, 2016

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 7:04 p.m. by Mayor Adele Starrs.

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.

Mayor Starrs led the public in the pledge of allegiance.

**Roll Call**

**Present:** Committeewoman Shipps, Committeeman Farber, Committeewoman Cuntala and Mayor Starrs

**Also present:** Township Engineer Ted Rodman

**Absent:** Committeeman Mathez

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** No executive session

**PRESENTATION: Historic Commission**

Hal Bromm, chairman of the Historic Commission explained that the Historic Commission is applying for a 2016 Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) and asked the Committee to sign a resolution to approve the submission for this grant. This grant does not require matching funds from the Township. The Historic Commission applied for this same grant back in 2014. Mr. Bromm said the application was disqualified because the township letter was not signed.

The grant will be used for well/septic work, put in a restroom, electricity for all the buildings, interior reconstruction, possibly some heating so in the winter the building does not get damp like it does now. Exterior improvements may include the walk ways and parking.

**2016-99 Resolution to Approve the Submission of a Grant Application and Execution of a Grant Contract with the New Jersey Department of Transportation for the 2016 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Grant Project**

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, Seconded by Committeewoman Shipps and carried to approve by roll call vote resolution 2016-99 as follows:

**WHEREAS**, the DOT's TAP grant is intended for "Historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities"; and

**WHEREAS**, the Ramsaysburg Homestead was once a transportation hub on the Delaware River and is listed on the New Jersey and National Register of Historic Places as a site with commercial and architectural significance; 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 2016 TAP grant application, like the previous one, 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 interior renovation including the installation of plumbing, which is essential to the continued use of the facility; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2016 Transportation Alternatives Grant requires no matching funds from the Township.

**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 an electronic grant application identified as TA-2016-KNOWLTON TOWNSHIP-00021.

**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 Mayor Starrs, Seconded by Committeewoman Shipps and carried to approve resolution 2016-99 as follows:

**ROLL CALL:**

**Shipps-- yes, Farber yes, Mathez absent, Cuntala yes, Starrs yes**

Motion was made Committeewoman Cuntala, seconded by Committeeman Farber and the motion carried for Mayor Starrs to sign the Maintenance Commitment letter for the Ramsaysburg Homestead Historic Site.

**DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS**

**Ted Rodman- Township Engineer--** addressed the committee regarding road work that will be going on Route 46 east- and westbound mile marker 2.40 to 7.14. The road work will begin on October 10. The nature of the work is milling, paving, striping, wall construction, traffic signal removal and guide rails. They will maintain one lane at all times. This project is a federal funded project.

**Walnut Rd. & 46** - Mr. Rodman reached out to Joe Popalucca of the DOT about the damaged catch basin. Joe Popalucca believes that he will get to this project this winter.

**150 Vail Rd.** - Has been demolished.

**Salt Shed**- Mr. Rodman has drawn up plans from what DPW Supervisor Brian Peck has requested. Committee asked Mr. Rodman to have other options available for the October 27th meeting.

Mayor Starrs addressed with the committee that she would like to have Township Engineer Ted Rodman, DPW Supervisor Brian Peck and CFO Christine Rolef at the October 27th meeting. Mayor Starrs also addressed with the committee notifying residents to advertise at the October 27th meeting. The DEP will be at the meeting with results of the well water testing.

Committeewoman Cuntala addressed with Mr. Rodman a letter that she received from Superintendent Jeannine Defalco from Knowlton Township Elementary requesting a bus stop ahead of 13 Delaware Rd., in Delaware, NJ. She wants the sign to go before number 9 Delaware Rd.

Committeeman Farber addressed with the committee, and by consensus they agreed, to purchase and put a dehumidifier in the basement of 622 Route 94.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

No public comment

**RESOLUTIONS:**

**2016-95 Resolution of the Mayor and Committee of Knowlton Township, County of Warren, State of New Jersey Authorizing the Signing of Government Energy Aggregation Program Agreements**

Motion was made by Committeewoman Cuntala, seconded by Committeewoman Shipp and carried to approve resolution 2016-95 as follows:

**WHEREAS**, the State of New Jersey has been engaged in a process to establish a competitive market place through deregulation and restructuring the electric and natural gas utility markets; and

**WHEREAS**, the establishment of a governmental energy aggregation program ("GEA Program") to purchase electric generation service and natural gas pursuant to the Government Energy Act of 2003, *N.J.S.A. 48:3-93.1 et seq.* ("Act") and the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities' implementing rules at *N.J.A.C. 14:4-6.1 et seq.* ("Rules") will increase competition for the provision of electric power and natural gas to residential and non-residential electricity and gas ratepayers, thereby increasing the likelihood of lower electric rates and natural gas rates for these users without causing an interruption in service; and

**WHEREAS**, under a GEA Program the residential ratepayers may have the opportunity to receive a direct reduction in their electric bills through the bulk purchase of energy from a third-party energy supplier; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to an ordinance adopted by Knowlton Township on (September 22, 2016), Knowlton Township publicly declared its intent to commence a GEA Program by participating in the Sussex-Warren Area Energy Cooperative ("SWAEC"); and

**WHEREAS**, the Township of Fredon is the Lead Agency for the "SWAEC" program and shall accept or reject pricing on behalf of the Cooperative and its participant members; and

**WHEREAS**, Knowlton Township, as a participating member of the "SWAEC" program hereby agrees to proceed with the program, by signing the Supplier Agreement, should the Township of Fredon accept pricing, which provides a savings on the supply portion of the electric bill for the residential energy aggregation program; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township of Fredon appointed Concord Energy Services ("CES") for the "SWAEC" to serve as Energy Agency to assist and administer the GEA program at no cost to the Township of Fredon or "SWAEC" participating members; and

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Mayor and Committee of Knowlton Township, in the County of Warren, New Jersey, duly assembled in public session, as follows:

Pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 40A:11-11(5), the Mayor is hereby authorized to enter into a Cooperative Pricing Agreement with the Lead Agency.

1. The Lead Agency shall be responsible for complying with the provisions of the Local Public Contracts Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq.) and all other provisions of the revised statutes of the State of New Jersey.
2. Knowlton Township as a participating member of the "SWAEC" program hereby agrees to proceed with the program, by signing the Supplier Agreement, should the Township of Fredon accept pricing, which provides a reduction on the supply portion of the electric bill for the residential energy aggregation program;
3. The Mayor, Chief Financial Officer, Treasurer or other municipal officer is hereby authorized and directed to execute, on behalf of Knowlton Township any documents necessary to carry out the purpose of this Resolution including the Supplier Services Agreement providing a reduction is achieved at the time of auction.

ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the Mayor and Committee of Knowlton Township, County of Warren, State of New Jersey held on September 22, 2016.

#### **2016-96 Resolution to Refund 2016 Duplicate Payment**

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Committeeman Farber, and carried to approve by roll call vote resolution #2016-96 as follows:

**WHEREAS**, Lynn Banik owner of Block 44, lot 39 paid her August tax bill twice. Prior to receiving the new bill she paid August Taxes using the 2015 tax bill. When the new bill arrived she forgot that she had already paid taxes for August and paid the taxes again. Since people do pay ahead and the payment came from her the payment was processed and credited to November taxes. After talking to the collector she was fine with this, however a water heater failure has created a need for funds and she now requests the payment be refunded instead of being credited to November.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Mayor and Township Committee of the Township of Knowlton, County of Warren, New Jersey on this twenty second day of September 2016, the home owner's and Tax Collector's request to refund this duplicate payment is hereby approved. The CFO is hereby authorized to prepare a check in the amount of \$2,256.26 made payable to Lynn Banik.

#### **ROLL CALL:**

**Shipp-- yes, Farber yes, Mathez absent, Cuntala yes, Starrs yes**

#### **2016-97 Resolution Approving the 2016 Shared Services Agreement for a Shared Municipal Court Between Knowlton Township and Franklin Township**

Motion was made by Committeewoman Cuntala, seconded by Committeewoman Shipp, and carried to approve Resolution 2016-97 as follows:

**WHEREAS**, Knowlton Township and Franklin Township have shared municipal court operations for the past five years pursuant to N.J.S.A. 2V: 12-1(c); and

**WHEREAS**, such shared service agreements are authorized by the Uniform Shared Services and Consolidation Act, N.J.S.A. 40A: 65-1, et seq; and

**WHEREAS**, both Townships have set forth the administrative and financial responsibilities of each member for the shared court services in the shared services agreement; and

**WHEREAS**, the Knowlton Township Committee unanimously approved a motion in public session on August 8, 2016, authorizing the mayor to sign the agreement with Franklin; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township Committee wishes to memorialize that motion in resolution form.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Mayor and Township Committee of the Township of Knowlton that approval is hereby given for the shared service agreement for continued shared municipal court between Knowlton Township and Franklin Township that extends from January 1, 2017, and terminates on December 31, 2020.

**2016-98 Resolution Approving the 2016 Shared Services Agreement for a Shared Municipal Court Between Knowlton Township and Frelinghuysen Township**

Motion was made by Committeewoman Cuntala, seconded by Committeeman Farber and carried to approve Resolution 2016-98 as follows:

**WHEREAS**, Knowlton Township and Frelinghuysen Township have shared municipal court operations for the past five years pursuant to N.J.S.A. 2V: 12-1(c); and

**WHEREAS**, such shared service agreements are authorized by the Uniform Shared Services and Consolidation Act, N.J.S.A. 40A: 65-1, et seq; and

**WHEREAS**, both Townships have set forth the administrative and financial responsibilities of each member for the shared court services in the shared services agreement; and

**WHEREAS**, the Knowlton Township Committee unanimously approved a motion in public session on June 23, 2016, authorizing the mayor to execute the agreement with Frelinghuysen; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township Committee wishes to memorialize that motion in resolution form.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Mayor and Township Committee of the Township of Knowlton that approval is hereby given for the shared service agreement for continued shared municipal court between Knowlton Township and Frelinghuysen Township that extends from January 1, 2017, and terminates on December 31, 2020.

**2016-100 Payment of Vouchers**

Motion was made Mayor Starrs, seconded by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to approve by roll call vote Resolution 2016-100 as follows:

**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.

**ROLL CALL:**

**Shipp-- yes, Farber yes, Mathez absent, Cuntala yes, Starrs yes**

**2016-101 Fixing the Salaries and Wages of Officials, Appointees and Employees of the Township of Knowlton in the County of Warren, State of New Jersey for 2016**

Resolution is to be held for review by CFO Christine Rolef.

## **ORDINANCE**

### **2016-11 An Ordinance of Knowlton Township Establishing An Energy and Natural Gas Aggregation Program in the Township Of Knowlton, County Of Warren, New Jersey**

#### **2nd reading /public hearing/ adoption**

Motion was made by Committeewoman Cuntala and seconded by Mayor Starrs and carried to go into public hearing.

Resident Bill Clifford asked if everyone will be enrolled and then opt-out if desired and if it was only for residential customers. Mayor Starrs said that everyone who does not have solar power will be enrolled and it is only for residential.

Resident Bob McNinch asked what the additional charge is being added by Concord Energy per kilowatt. Mayor Starrs will contact Wendy Molnar from Concord Energy Services (CES) and get back to him.

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to come out of public hearing.

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs and seconded by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried by roll call vote to adopt Ordinance #2016-11 as follows:

**WHEREAS**, the State of New Jersey has been engaged in a process to establish a competitive market place through deregulation and restructuring the electric utility market and natural gas market; and

**WHEREAS**, the Government Energy Aggregation Act, N.J.S.A. 48:3-93.1 et seq., (the "Act"), governs the establishment of a government energy aggregation program ("GEA Program"), which is a government-operated purchasing cooperative through which multiple energy consumers purchase energy together under the auspices of a government aggregator; and

**WHEREAS**, the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities has promulgated rules, N.J.A.C. 14:4-6.1 et seq., for the implementation of GEA Programs ("BPU Rules")

**WHEREAS**, the Act and BPU Rules permit the Township of Knowlton (the "Township") to participate in a GEA Program in order to provide electric generation service for use by residential and non-residential customers within the municipality's geographic boundaries; and

**WHEREAS**, the establishment of a government aggregator and an energy aggregation program to purchase electric generation service and natural gas pursuant to N.J.S.A. 48:3-93.1 et seq. and N.J.A.C. 14:4-6.1 et seq. will increase competition for the provision of electric power and natural gas to residential and non-residential users, thereby increasing the likelihood of lower electric rates and natural gas rates for these users without causing any interruption in service; and

**WHEREAS**, under the aggregation process the residential and non-residential ratepayers may likely receive a direct reduction in their electric bills and gas bills; and

**WHEREAS**, residential customers shall be able to "opt-out" of the GEA program if they do not wish to participate (with no effect on any existing agreements they may have with an electrical generation service), and non-residential customers shall be able to "opt-in" if they wish to participate; and

**WHEREAS**, the realization of energy costs savings is in the economic and social interests of the Township residents; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township hereby finds that it is in the best interests of residential and non-residential electric ratepayers for the Township to create the opportunity for them to enter into an aggregation agreement in order to seek substantial savings on electric rates; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED**, by the Township Committee of the Township of Knowlton in the County of Warren, New Jersey, duly assembled in public session, as follows:

1. The Township publicly declares its intent to become an aggregator of electric power on behalf of its residential and non-residential users of electricity pursuant to the Government Energy Act of 2003, N.J.S.A. 48:3-91.3 to -98, and implementing regulations.
2. The Township will utilize approved vendor Concord Engineering's d/b/a Concord Energy Services Reverse Energy Auction Platform pursuant to the NJ E-PROCUREMENT Pilot program (P.L. 2001, c. 30) under the NJ Department of Community Affairs. The Reverse Energy auction will seek bids from licensed and appropriate third party suppliers. If such winning bid is selected and agreement executed, individual residential consumers would retain the option not to participate and to choose any alternatives they desire, while non-residential ratepayers would also have the right to participate.
3. The Mayor and Township Clerk are hereby authorized and directed to execute any documents necessary to carry out the purpose of the Ordinance.
4. All ordinances and parts of ordinances inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed.
5. If any portion of this ordinance shall be deemed invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder shall survive in full force and effect.
6. This ordinance shall be effective immediately upon adoption and publication in accordance with law.

**ROLL CALL:**

**Shipp-- yes, Farber yes, Mathez absent, Cuntala yes, Starrs yes**

**2016-12 Amending and Supplementing Section 127-3 Entitled "Unlawful Nuisances; Exemptions" of the General Ordinances of the Township of Knowlton, County of Warren, and State of New Jersey 1st Reading/Introduction**

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, Seconded by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to introduce ordinance 2016-12 as follows: Committeeman Farber voted No on this ordinance.

**WHEREAS**, some properties within the Township pose a threat to the public's health and safety due to the presence of abandoned storage tanks, construction materials, and unsanitary conditions presenting a hazard to the public; and

**WHEREAS**, certain properties within the Township allow those portions of the property visible from the public road or sidewalk to become so littered with trash, residue, abandoned items, like discarded items, items no longer useful or other items not reasonably related to the customary and usual use of the property which has the effect of making the property in question appear to be either abandoned or no longer properly maintained; and

**WHEREAS**, properties which appear to be abandoned or give the appearance that they are no longer reasonably and properly maintained, adversely affect the property value of the subject property and also surrounding properties and neighborhoods.

**WHEREAS**, the Township desires to remedy such dangerous, ill-kept conditions by regulating such conditions in a manner that minimally infringes on the rights of the affected property owners; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED** by the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Knowlton that Section 127-3 entitled "Unlawful Nuisances; Exemptions" of the Code of the Township of Knowlton

("Code") is hereby added as follows:

**SECTION 1.** Section 127-3-21 of the Code of the Township of Knowlton entitled "Unlawful Nuisances; Exemptions" is hereby amended and supplemented as follows (Additions indicated in boldface and italics **thus**; deletions indicated with strike-through ~~thus~~):

§ 127-3. Unlawful nuisances; exemptions.

A. Definitions. As used in this section, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

LITTER - Any used or consumed substance or waste material which has been discarded, whether made of aluminum, glass, plastic, rubber, paper or other natural or synthetic material, or any combination thereof, including but not limited to any bottle, jar or can; or any top, cap or detachable tab of any bottle, jar or can; any unlighted cigarette, cigar, match or any flaming or glowing material; or any garbage, trash, refuse, debris, rubbish, grass clippings or other lawn or garden waste, newspaper, magazines, glass, metal, plastic or paper containers or other packaging or construction material, but does not include the waste of the primary processes of mining or other extraction processes, logging, sawmilling, farming or manufacturing.

***SOLID WASTE TRANSPORT VEHICLE - Any device used to carry solid waste (excluding hazardous waste) off-site or to a solid waste facility. A solid waste vehicle includes, but is not limited to, a solid waste single-unit vehicle, solid waste cab and/or solid waste transport unit.***

***UNSANITARY CONDITION – Condition that is likely to become a breeding place for rodents, flies, mosquitoes, and germs harmful to human health and safety.***

***UNSIGHTLY CONDITION – A condition of a property visible from the public street or public sidewalk that arises from the property owners or occupants permitting the collection of abandoned and/or unsightly items not currently stored in the portion of the property reasonably visible from the public property, including items left over after demolition, abandoned auto parts, abandoned vehicles, abandoned plumbing items, or un-kept household items not customarily stored in a front yard. These conditions do not include items that are stored or kept behind fencing or screening or kept a reasonable distance from the public street so as to sufficiently disguise the item from the view of a reasonable passerby. These conditions shall not include the storage by businesses or permitted commercial operations from storing their equipment, inventory, vehicles or other items reasonably and frequently used in their business or occupation.***

- B. Littering prohibited. It is unlawful for any person to throw, drop, discard or otherwise place litter of any nature upon any public or private property, other than in a litter receptacle.
- C. Illegal dumping. It is unlawful for any person to discard, throw, cast or dump along any street or road, on or off any right-of-way or other public place, any household or commercial solid waste, rubbish, refuse, junk, vehicle or vehicle parts, rubber tires, appliances or furniture; nor any wrecked or abandoned or unlicensed motor vehicle not carrying current New Jersey inspection approval tags; or unusable machines or parts of machines or metal trash on private property, open fields, woods and in any place not specifically designated for the purpose of solid waste storage or disposal.

- D. Motor vehicles. No person shall keep, store, abandon or leave upon any parcel of land or street in the Township of Knowlton any motor vehicle not currently being used for transportation and not being licensed for the current year or which cannot be readily operated under its own power; provided, however, that nothing contained herein shall be determined to prohibit the placing, keeping or storing of any such motor vehicle in a garage or other building within the township.
- E. Uncovered vehicles. It is unlawful for any vehicle to be driven, moved, stopped or parked on any public roadway unless such a vehicle is constructed, covered or loaded to prevent any of its load from dropping, shifting, leaking or otherwise escaping therefrom. Any person operating a vehicle from which any materials which constitute litter have fallen or escaped, which could cause an obstruction, damage a vehicle or otherwise endanger travelers or public property, must immediately cause the public property to be cleaned of all such materials and must pay the costs thereof.
- F. Construction Sites. It is unlawful for any owner, agent or contractor in charge of a construction or demolition site to permit the accumulation of litter before, during or immediately following completion of any construction or demolition project. It is the duty of the owner, agent or contractor in charge of a construction site to furnish containers adequate to accommodate flyable or nonflyable debris or trash at areas convenient to construction areas and to maintain and empty the receptacles in such a manner and with such a frequency as to prevent spillage of refuse. Salvaged building materials neatly stored on the owner's premises shall not be considered refuse or debris.
- G. Commercial Establishments and Residences. It is the duty of the owner, lessee, tenant, occupant or person in charge of any structure to keep and cause to be kept the sidewalk and curb abutting the building or structure free from obstruction or nuisances of every kind and to keep sidewalks, areaways, backyards, courts and alleys free of litter.
- H. Unsanitary Conditions. All unsanitary conditions shall be remedied or removed where necessary to eliminate such conditions with reasonable dispatch upon their discovery. It shall be the responsibility of owners and operators to take reasonable steps to discover any such unsanitary conditions which may exist on their premises.**
- I. Storage Tanks. No person shall place, deposit, keep, have, or leave in or upon any premises any abandoned or unused above-ground storage tank unless such tank shall be screened from view. Such screening shall consist of either storage within or behind a structure, an impermeable fence or impermeable vegetation.**
- J. Solid Waste Transport Vehicles. Unless an emergency, such as inclement weather, equipment breakdown or accident warrants, no solid waste shall be allowed to remain or be stored in any solid waste transport units in excess of 24 hours. No solid waste vehicle shall be used for transportation if the design of the solid waste vehicle is such that any solid waste material will spill, leak or cause emissions therefrom. No solid waste vehicle used for transportation, shall be used beyond its design capabilities or in such a manner that littering, leakage, spillage or emissions therefrom of solid wastes will occur.**
- K. Unsanitary Conditions. Unsanitary conditions defined herein shall be illegal.**

L. Exemptions. It is further provided that this section shall not be construed to prohibit the placing of such materials as are removed from the township by the person or corporation authorized by the township through contract to remove the same when placed in suitable containers for that purpose, or recyclable materials. Farm machinery kept on the farmer's own premises is excluded from the provisions of this section. Organic gardening materials used on premises where stored are also excluded.

**M. This Ordinance may be enforced by the Zoning Officer or Health Code Officer.**

**N. The Zoning Officer shall not issue a summons to any property owner or occupant before he has issued to the property owner or occupant a Notice of Violation providing the property owner or occupant with at least twenty (20) days opportunity to cure any deficiencies found by the Zoning Officer.**

**SECTION 2.** All Ordinances or parts of Ordinances inconsistent herewith are repealed as to such inconsistencies.

**SECTION 3.** If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase or portion of this Ordinance is for any reason held invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such portion shall be deemed a separate, distinct and independent provision, and such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions thereof.

**SECTION 4.** This Ordinance shall take effect upon final passage and publication according to law.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

Demolition of 150 Vail is finally done. Mayor Starrs addressed the public, saying that 2 years ago 6 structures in the township had been deemed unfit by Building Code Office. The Township pursued these and 5 of those structures have now been removed. Only one of them, 150 Vail, was financed by the Township.

#### **Memorialize Resolution #2016-93 Resolution Authorizing Demolition of Building**

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, Seconded by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to accept and Memorialize Resolution 2016-93 Resolution Authoring Demolition of Building as follows:

**WHEREAS**, the property at 150 Vail Road (Block 40, Lot 11) ("property") in the Township of Knowlton, Warren County, has deteriorated to the point that it constitutes both a health hazard and public nuisance; and

**WHEREAS**, the Construction Code Official issued a Notice of Unsafe Structures on or about February 4, 2015; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:23-2.32(b)(2), the Construction Code Official has the power to declare that a structure is an "actual danger to human life" and order demolition of such a structure; and

**WHEREAS**, research done by the Township indicates that the property was owned by William Gouger, who died without leaving a Will that was probated, nor, to the Township's knowledge, has any person qualified as the administrator of said estate; and

**WHEREAS**, there are numerous heirs to the Estate of William Gouger which have been contacted on numerous occasions by the Township with the request that they contact the Township and either arrange to have the unsafe structures demolished or consent to the Township demolishing the structures;

and

**WHEREAS**, there is a substantial tax lien on the property which exceeds its estimated value; and

**WHEREAS**, any heirs of the Gouger Estate known to the Township have disclaimed any interest in the property and have not objected to the demolition of the unsafe structures or the entry by the Township onto the property; and

**WHEREAS**, the unsafe structure on the property is hazardous and endangering the home of a next-door neighbor who has advised the Township that his homeowner's carrier will be cancelling his homeowner's policy due to the hazardous structures at 150 Vail Road; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township has been advised by a local business that it will voluntarily demolish the house at no cost to the Township, except for certain tipping and other incidental costs which are estimated to be below \$6,000; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township has been advised that if it instituted a condemnation action against the property, it would be necessary to attempt to locate all heirs and to serve them with notice of the action and such an action would require the Township to identify and serve each heir which would burden the taxpayers of the Township with substantial municipal expense but little likelihood of being able to recover the expenditures by the Township for both the demolition and the legal costs since the property is a substandard lot with a substantial tax lien; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township has made substantial efforts to contact heirs and to notify them of its willingness to remove the house in order to ameliorate the dangerous conditions that currently exists, but with no response from the known heirs.

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

1. The demolition of any structures at 150 Vail Road which have been deemed to be hazardous by the Construction Code Official and the Township Engineer.
2. The Mayor is hereby authorized, effective September 12, 2016, to advise in writing Gary W. Gray Trucking, Route 46, Delaware, New Jersey, it is authorized to proceed with the demolition of any unsafe structures at 150 Vail Road, subject to that company supplying a Certificate of Insurance naming the Township as an additional insured.
3. It authorizes the Municipal Clerk and/or Chief Financial Officer to accumulate all of the costs and expenses reasonably related to the demolition of the unsafe structures on the property and to request of the Tax Collector that a lien for those costs be placed on the tax rolls.

#### **Cell Phone Policy**

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to reimburse the employees \$30 for their personal cell phones instead of township providing them with a cell phone.

Committeewoman Shipps addressed the committee regarding the stray/abandoned dogs that are picked up by Animal Control. Procedure will still remain the same with the Animal Control officer bringing any stray/abandoned dog to Blairstown Animal Hospital and if they can not place the dog in a home after seven days they will now contact Committeewoman Shipps. Committeewoman Shipps has already

reached out to Commonsense for Animals in Washington, NJ, and St. Hubert's in Readington. These shelters, will take the dogs and keep them until they are placed in a home. Several Knowlton residents have offered to volunteer to bring the dogs to a safe haven if Committeewoman Shipps is not available.

Committeewoman Shipps addressed the committee regarding the audit from last year, which she thought was overpriced. CFO Christine Rolef has provided Committeewoman Shipps with other names for auditors.

Committeewoman Shipps addressed the committee regarding the Connelly family that was at the July 11, 2016, meeting regarding their daughter's bus stop. Committeewoman Shipps was able to work with North Warren Regional High School to move the Connelly's bus stop from Victoria Crossing to the end of Woodruff Way. Committeewoman Shipps is still going to ask North Warren Regional High School if there is any way that they can move the bus stop to the center of the cul-de-sac.

Mayor Starrs was contacted by the Nature Conservancy, whom she has not heard from in months. The Nature Conservancy asked for a meeting to talk to the Township Committee but Mayor Starrs suggested that they wait until after the referendum in November. Committeeman Farber asked if they told Mayor Starrs about a meeting in Philadelphia. She said they did not.

### **Correspondence**

#### **EMS coverage for Knowlton Soccer games**

Mayor Starrs received an email from Knowlton EMS Captain David Neill and St. Luke's will be at all Knowlton Soccer games. If an emergency should take place, the Knowlton Township Fire and Rescue crew will make an effort to take their place.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to approve the September 12, 2016, public meeting minutes.

### **Public Comments**

Resident Bill Clifford commented on the new air conditioner units that are in the court room and how well they work.

Resident Bob McNinch asked how much it cost the township to demolish 150 Vail Rd., Mayor Starrs explained that a resolution was passed that it was to be no more than \$6,000.00. Mr. McNinch asked if that included professional fees. Mr. Rodman said that there were no professional fees involved, which is why the township went with Gary Gray to do the work. Mr. Gray offered the Township that deal. Mayor Starrs also stated that she justified the cost with the fines that were collected from the demolition of 23 Decatur St.

Resident Tammy Terpstra asked where the 6th structure that is unfit was located. Mayor Starrs believed it was on Lime Kiln Rd.

Resident Bill Clifford asked if chipping was not going to be done this year. Mayor Starrs explained DPW Supervisor Brian Peck has said that they are behind schedule. The committee authorized three roads to be paved, which requires a lot of preparation. Also Mr. Peck is taking classes, which is slowing him down but should not effect his team. Tammy Terpstra commented regarding one of the DPW workers, who does not have a CDL, which could also slow things down. She asked if there is a requirement for a DPW worker to have their CDL. Committeewoman Shipps responded that there is not a requirement for a DPW worker to have a CDL, but for the last employee who was hired the committee made sure that he had his CDL.

**Adjournment**

A motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Committeewoman Cuntala and carried to adjourn tonight's meeting of the Knowlton Township Committee at 8:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristin Shipps  
Acting Municipal Clerk