

**PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES OF THE KNOWLTON TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
November 13, 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 7:01 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, Committeeman Farber, Committeewoman Shipp, Committeeman Van Horn and Mayor Starrs

Also present was Township Engineer Ted Rodman, Fire & Rescue Chief Dean Hill and Township Attorney Dick Cushing

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

Personnel

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 approved by an all-in-favor vote to come out of Executive Session at 7:40 p.m. and return to Regular Session.

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and approved by roll call vote: Cuntala--yes, Farber--yes, Shipps--yes, Van Horn--yes, Starrs--yes to have the CFO extend the 2017 cost-of-living salary increases to seasonal part-time workers.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and approved by all-in-favor to open to public comment.

Resident Rene Mathez- asked for an update regarding COAH. Mayor Starrs explained that at the last township meeting a check was cut for \$15,000.00 for a property on Clinton St. Attorney Dick Cushing stated that they are going through the final process regarding the litigation.

Resident Nancy O'Neill read her comments to the committee regarding the Draft Music Ordinance. Concerns that Mrs. O'Neill had were filing for a permit, fines associated with violations, parking, and enforcement of the ordinance.

Resident Becky Day asked what the time process was for the renewal of the 2019 Master Plan. Attorney Cushing explained that the Master Plan is done by the Planning Board. Mayor Starrs stated that she and Deputy Mayor Cuntala are both on the Planning Board and the Planning Board is going to start in the new year.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Fire & Rescue-- Chief Dean Hill

It has come to Chief Hill's attention that Fire & Rescue does not have Mutual Aid agreements with Upper Mount Bethel and Portland fire departments. Attorney Cushing thought that this was taking care of already. Mr. Cushing will look into the matter and take care of the agreements.

Mayor Starrs asked Acting Clerk Shipps for an update on the Knox box waivers. Acting Clerk Shipps said that all the information has been sent out and we have received only one signed waiver from a business.

Mayor Starrs had asked Chief Hill for his input regarding complaints that the committee members have received regarding St. Luke's responding to emergency calls in Belvidere, which are happening more frequently and may hurt response time in Knowlton. Mr. Hill explained that there is a mutual aid agreement with Belvidere and St. Luke's may not be willing to station the squad in Knowlton if they respond to only Knowlton calls; St. Luke's needs the extra call volume to be profitable. Committeeman Van Horn and Shipps will approach Belvidere Township Committee about the problem.

Ted Rodman- Township Engineer

Salt Shed—Once building permits are issued the salt shed will be started.

Storm water Management update. Watershed Ambassador will visit the Elementary School on December 15th. Total points 9 with three more to go.

Polkville Road—Will be on hold until 2018.

RESOLUTIONS

2017-117- Resolution Approving Refund For Overpayment Block 66, Lot 2.20

WHEREAS, the new owner of the above property qualified for tax exemption as a totally disabled veteran which made the property exempt starting January 1st. The mortgage company unaware of this paid the February taxes late in the amount of \$2,589.27(\$2503.23 taxes and \$86.04 interest).

WHEREAS, the bank has requested this overpayment be refunded to them since there are no taxes due on the property.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Township Committee of the Township of Knowlton, County of Warren, New Jersey on this thirteenth day of November 2017, approves the bank's request to refund the overpayment of \$2,589.27. The CFO is hereby authorized and directed to prepare a check made payable to PNC Bank in the amount of \$2,589.27. The check will be returned to the tax collector who will mail it.

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Cuntala, seconded by Committeewoman Shipps and approved by roll call vote: Cuntala—yes, Farber—yes, Shipps—yes, Van Horn—yes, Starrs—yes Resolution 2017-117

2017-118 - Resolution Approving Refund for Duplicate Payment Block 31, Lot 5

WHEREAS, the owner of the above property used the online payment system to pay past due and current taxes on the property in the amount of \$322.96 on Monday October 16th. Due to computer problems at their house they were not sure the payment had been completed. On Wednesday October 18th, their computer worked again and checking their bank account the payment had not been deducted from their account so they made the payment again. They did not realize the payment system is not automatic in posting and processing payments. Both payments have been received and an overpayment of \$322.96 now exists.

WHEREAS, the tax collector is requesting this duplicate payment be refunded to the owner.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Township Committee of the Township of Knowlton, County of Warren, New Jersey on this thirteenth day of November 2017, approves the tax collector's request to refund the overpayment of \$322.96. The CFO is hereby authorized and directed to prepare a check made payable to Joann Hoffman in the amount of \$322.96. The check will be returned to the tax collector who will mail it.

Motion was made by Deputy Mayor Cuntala, seconded by Committeewoman Shipps and approved by roll call vote: Cuntala—yes, Shipps—yes, Starrs—yes, Farber—yes, Van Horn—yes to Resolution 2017-118

**2017-119- Resolution Authorizing Assignment of Tax Sale Certificate
Tabled until next meeting**

2017-120- Requesting Approval of Items of Revenue and Appropriation

WHEREAS, NJSA 40A:4-87 provides that the Director of the Division of Local Government Services may approve the insertion of any special item of revenue in the budget of any county or municipality when such item shall have been made available by law and the amount was not determined at the time of the adoption of the budget; and

WHEREAS, the Director may also approve the insertion of an item of appropriation for equal amount,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Committee of the Township of Knowlton in the County of Warren, New Jersey, hereby requests the Director of the Division of Local Government Services to approve the insertion of an item of revenue in the budget of the year 2017 in the sum of \$2,000.00 which is now available from the NJ Department of Environmental Protection – Division of Energy, Security and Sustainability – Bureau of Environmental Radiation Radon Section.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the like sum of \$2,000.00 is hereby
Appropriated under the caption Radon Grant; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the above is the result of funds from the NJ Department of Environmental Protection – Division of Energy, Security and Sustainability – Bureau of Environmental Radiation Radon Section in the amount of \$2,000.00.

Motion was made by Deputy Mayor Cuntala, seconded by Committeeman Farber and approved with an all-in-favor vote for Resolution 2017-120

2017-121- 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 roll call vote Cuntala—yes, Farber—yes, Shipps—yes, Van Horn—yes, Starrs—yes to Resolution 2017-121

OLD BUSINESS

2017 Salary Increases-motion was made when committee came out of executive session

Draft Music Ordinance

Committee agreed to hear public comments regarding the Draft Music Ordinance since there were several residents and business owners present.

Concerns that the residents of Delaware bought up were enforcement, permit fees, the frequency of events, safety issues, the quality of life that is being affected by the noise and the number of people at the event.

Business owners of Hunter's Lodge were also present and said that they have been very careful about the music that they have outdoors.

Business owner of Brook Hollow Winery is concerned about the wedding events that he has at the winery and that if there is going to be a restriction on music events that this ordinance will put him out of business.

After listening to residents and business comments and much discussion between the township committee members, Committee members Van Horn, Farber and Shipps said they were not in favor of going forward with this. Mayor Starrs said this topic had been discussed for many months without finding a compromise and there will not be enough votes for this ordinance to be introduced, so it is dead.

Abandoned Building Registry

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and approved by an all-in-favor to have Attorney Cushing compare the sample Abandoned Building Registry ordinance with other ordinance that the township has to make sure there is no conflicting parts.

Radon Grant -Quotes for Purchase of Kits

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and approved by an all-in-favor to approve the quote from Accustar Labs to purchase radon kits for \$13.33 per kit.

NJDEP Environmental Notification Reports on Website

Mayor Starrs wanted to let the committee know that the Knowlton Environmental committee will now be putting DEP Environmental notification reports on their website which is connected to the township website.

NEW BUSINESS

Reorganization Meeting Date

Committee agreed to have the reorganization meeting on January 4, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

November 2018

Due to Veterans day and Thanksgiving holiday falling on both November meeting dates in 2018, Committee agreed to have the November meeting on Tuesday, November 13, 2018.

Benefits for Retirees

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and approved by an all-in-favor not to extend post-retirement medical benefits to other departments. The benefit was given in

the past to two retired workers in the DPW department. Mayor Starrs read a statement from Pensions and Benefits showing the benefit for those two employees costs \$2,257 per month. Committee discussed the rising cost of health insurance and that Medicare is available to retirees.

Snowplow Drivers Advertisement

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and approved by an all-in-favor to advertise for snowplow drivers in *The Treasure Hunt* and on Township website. Rate will be the same as that advertised last year.

Clean Communities Grant and Graffiti on Viaduct

Tabled till the next meeting

Email Services

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and approved by an all-in-favor to switch email servers to Jean Paul Reece for the new email services.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

September 11, 2017 Executive Session

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and approved by an all-in-favor for the September 11, 2017 Executive Session Minutes

September 11, 2017 Public Meeting Minutes

Motion was made by Deputy Mayor Cuntala, seconded by Committeeman Farber and approved by an all-in-favor for the September 11, 2017 Public Meeting Minutes

October 26, 2017 Executive Session

Motion was made by Deputy Mayor Cuntala, seconded by Committeewoman Shipps and approved by an all-in-favor for the October 26, 2017 Executive Session Minutes

October 26, 2017 Public Meeting Minutes

Motion was made by Deputy Mayor Cuntala, seconded by Mayor Starrs and approved by an all-in-favor for the October 26, 2017 Public Meeting Minutes

PUBLIC COMMENT

Fire Chief Dean Hill asked the committee to consider having Knox box for the municipal building and for the DPW.

Resident Jeff Milesky stated that there was a JCP&L meeting and that he reached out to OEM Frank Makowski. He did not return Mr. Milesky's phone call yet. Mayor Starrs explained there was a leak of several hundred gallons of "oil transformer non-PCB" at the JCP&L substation on October 4, 2017. JCP&L has dismantled the substation and a licensed site remediation professional is handling the cleanup, which is supposed to be complete in 30 days. Soil testing shows contamination has not spread beyond the property. Mr. Milesky asked if someone from OEM could visit the site. Committeeman Van Horn, who is the Deputy OEM, told Mr. Milesky to call him personally if there are

any problems.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully submitted,

Kristin Shipps
Acting Municipal Clerk