

**TOWNSHIP OF KNOWLTON
COUNTY OF WARREN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

**TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING
FEBRUARY 18, 2016**

A meeting of the Knowlton Township Committee was held at the Knowlton Municipal Building. Present were Mayor Starrs, Deputy Mayor Cuntala and Township Committee Members Shipps and Farber. The minutes were recorded by Lisa Patton, Municipal Clerk.

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act by publishing notice of all regularly scheduled meetings in the Star Gazette, Star Ledger or Express Times as well as providing said schedule in the Municipal Clerk's office.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm with a salute to the flag and roll call.

2016 MUNICIPAL BUDGET

Township Engineer Rodman addressed the catch basin on Route 46 and Walnut Road. He stated that they have a \$12,000 estimate to do the repair. The catch basin is located outside of the DOT right of way and over 50 percent of the drainage is from State Highway Route 46. He stated that he spoke with the Deborah Hirt of the DOT and although they are sympathetic, they are stating that there is nothing that they can do about it. He said the catch basin is collapsing and there is a steel plate over it right now. He suggested that perhaps the Township can contact Senator Oroho to put some pressure on the DOT. He distributed some photographs that were taken. The Committee asked if Township Engineer Rodman could provide a report that can be attached to a letter requesting relief from the State.

A motion was made by Mayor Starrs and seconded by Committeeman Farber to have the Township Committee request relief from the State. Discussion on the motion: Chief Financial Ordinance Rolef asked if the repair would be a capital item, if the Township were to be responsible for the repair. Township Engineer Rodman stated that he has approached the DOT and they feel that it is the Township's responsibility. It was stated that there is no mechanism to share the cost of the repair.

Township Engineer Rodman then addressed the demolition on 150 Vail Road. Mayor Starrs stated that the draft Unfit Building Ordinance should be on next month's agenda. Township Engineer Rodman stated that he spoke with Gary Gray and he is going to do the demolition at no cost, although the tipping fee, grading, top soil can cost up to \$5,000. He stated that he would have to go inspect the site. He stated that he spoke to Kleindienst in regards to disconnecting the plumbing. He also stated that a Soil Erosion Plan and Permit would need to be filed. The Committee discussed whether the WCSCD would be willing to waive their fee. Township Engineer Rodman stated the electric has been removed.

A motion was made by Mayor Starrs to reject the one Bid received for Air Conditioning and seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala. Roll Call: Cuntala – yes, Shipps - yes, Farber - yes, and Starrs – yes.

Mayor Starrs stated that she is getting quotes to replace the pipes in the building and she recommended that the Committee wait on the air conditioning discussion until the pipe replacement quotes are available. The Board then discussed the procedure. Township Engineer Rodman reviewed that Tunnel Field is covered budget wise. He then addressed the drain on Decatur Street. He stated that no one is claiming jurisdiction on the issue. DPW Supervisor Peck stated that it can be corrected with additional asphalt. He stated that the catch basin on Mt. Pleasant also needs work.

CFO Rolef provided a budget printout where she will input budget information for the Committee to review. She stated that she would like to create a COAH line item and she asked if the Committee is aware of any expenses for 2016. Mayor Starrs stated that they are working on trying to resolve the Affordable Housing issue. Township Engineer Rodman asked if the Committee has decided on what they are doing with the building next door. Committeeman Farber stated that the septic needs to be upgraded first before anything can be done. The Committee discussed some options. Committeeman Farber stated that the garages could be used for storage. CFO Rolef discussed the funding of the Gypsy Moth spraying. She then reviewed the capital items that have come up: building security, pipes downstairs, roads, and catch basins. Mayor Starrs said that the roads are a priority. DPW Supervisor Peck stated that the high priority roads are: Wishing Well, part of Station Road, Kill Road and part of Hemlock Road. CFO Rolef reviewed that the debt service will drop in 2018. The status of the Dump Trucks was discussed. CFO Rolef questioned the Recreation allocation to the KAA and the payment of the KAA insurance, which was discussed. CFO Rolef then questioned any improvements to Buildings and Grounds. The following items were discussed: concrete work, dampness and steam that is coming into the building from the boiler, and dry proofing. DPW Supervisor Peck stated that the DEP wants to pull the well and then put a camera down it. Mayor Starrs stated that they want to do testing. CFO Rolef questioned the status of the DPW part time employee, lawn mowing, and clean communities. She then reviewed the difference between a 1.5 and 2 percent salary increase, which was discussed with the Committee. She went on to state that Township Engineer Rodman's services have been used a lot and she asked if the Township would consider an increase in his retainer, as he has not gotten an increase in 8 years. The tax rate and surplus was discussed. CFO Rolef asked if it is possible to leave the DPW budget line item the same as last year. DPW Supervisor Peck stated that would be fine. The status of the conditions of the roads was briefly discussed.

OLD BUSINESS:

Truck Appraisal

Mayor Starrs stated that they received a \$2,000 increase from the insurance company. CFO Rolef asked if she could get a copy of the police report so that she can file a claim on loss of property. Committeeman Farber questioned the status of the safety review. DPW Supervisor Peck stated that all of the information has been provided. The repurchase of the totaled truck and the need for a new dump truck was then discussed.

A motion was made by Mayor Starrs to repurchase the totaled dump truck from the insurance company. She asked that they move forward with the specs for the new truck so that it can go out for bid. CFO Rolef stated that she will need three quotes for the repairs. Motion seconded by Committee Member Shipp. Roll Call: Cuntala – yes, Shipp - yes, Farber - yes, and Starrs – yes.

The Committee then discussed the number of drivers available for inclement weather. CFO Rolef asked that a time log be provided by Finch for their time.

RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution #16-108

Consent Agenda – #16-109 thru #16-118

Resolution #16-109

Resolution Approving Knowlton Township Lions Club Truck Drawing – July 9, 2016

Resolution #16-110

Resolution Approving Knowlton Township Lions Club Early Bird Raffle – July 9, 2016

Resolution #16-111

Resolution Approving Knowlton Township Lions Club \$20.00 50/50 Raffle – July 9, 2016

Resolution #16-112

Resolution Approving Knowlton Township Lions Club \$10.00 50/50 Raffle – July 9, 2016

Resolution #16-113

Resolution Approving Knowlton Township Lions Club \$5.00 50/50 Raffle – July 9, 2016

Resolution #16-114

Resolution Approving Knowlton Township Lions Club \$1.00 50/50 Raffle – July 9, 2016

Resolution #16-115

Resolution Approving Knowlton Township Lions Club Wagon of Food Raffle – July 9, 2016

Resolution #16-116

Resolution Approving Knowlton Township Lions Club Harley Davidson Raffle –10/29/16

Resolution #16-117

Resolution Approving Knowlton Township Lions Club NJABC Special Affairs Permit – 7/9/16

Resolution #16-118

Resolution Approving Knowlton Township Lions Club NJABC Special Affairs Permit – 7/9/16

Township Clerk Patton stated that she did not have all of the information in order to prepare a written Resolution for this evening. Mr. Clifford stated that the dates for the ABC permits are July 15, 16, and 17. It was asked if the Resolution could be approved this evening so that the Lions Club can get the tickets printed. The procedure was discussed and it was recommended that the adoption of the Resolution be deferred until the next meeting, which is in a week, so that the Resolution can be prepared and distributed prior to the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Office Manager Recommendations

The following recommendations were made: update bereavement policy to also include part time employees; a new form created for tracking comp time to be submitted every other Thursday; the adoption of an Annual Salary Range Resolution; an Ordinance for an Emergency Recording Secretary; reconsider request for reimbursement of pension penalties; create a policy in regards to seminars/outside educational requirements for employees; the use of the municipal building on court days; and mold remediation for the downstairs. Mayor Starrs stated that the personnel policy was updated last year. Mr. Farber asked if opening the municipal building on court days would need to be approved by the AOC. Township Clerk Patton objected to working downstairs unless there was extensive mold remediation and air filtration. Mayor Starrs suggested that the Office Manager recommendations be prioritized, which was discussed. The comp time issue/procedure was reviewed and discussed.

A motion was made by Mayor Starrs to utilize the comp time form for all employees to be submitted every two weeks. Motion seconded Deputy Mayor Cuntala. Discussion on the motion: Committee Member Farber stated that he would be more inclined to vote in favor, if it was agreed to try the procedure for three months to see if it works. Mayor Starrs amended her motion to approve the comp time procedure for a period of three months. Motion seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala. Roll Call: Cuntala – yes, Shipps - yes, Farber - yes, and Starrs – yes.

It was agreed to authorize the Office Manager to work on a Salary Range Resolution/Ordinance and the back-up emergency recording secretary. Committee Member Shipps will update the Office Manager on the Committee's decision on the trial use of the comp tire form. It was stated that the Office Manager is doing a good job and she has very good ideas. Township Clerk Patton stated her concerns over the employment policy for the Office Manager as it is creating bad morale for her staff. The access to Municipal Offices on Court Days was discussed. The concern over the condition of the downstairs offices was also discussed.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Bob McNinch stated that he appreciates the Township Committee's goal for a zero percent tax increase. He asked that the Committee consider the inflation rate, the average income of NJ families, the CPI-W, and the COLA for seniors. He recommended a zero increase in expenditures as sooner or later it all catches up. Committee Member Shipps questioned the Senior Freeze Program, which was discussed. It was suggested that the CFO prepare additional increase percentages for the Committee to review.

OTHER:

Committee Member Shipps commented on the phone bill and the number of phone lines. After a brief discussion, it was agreed to have the issue analyzed.

Township Clerk Patton stated she was never approached about the comp time policy and she would really appreciate it if the Office Manager would talk to the employees that are being affected. She also commented about her missing calendar, as a copy of her office key was floating around for a brief time. The Committee stated that there is a code for the alarm system and the four cameras are now functioning. Mayor Starrs asked if the State Police were called and she stated that any security changes should be presented to the Committee. Mr. Clifford suggested that the clerk's office be secured. Township Clerk Patton asked that her office be rekeyed. It was recommended that the State Police Report findings be reviewed, prior to making any decisions.

Mr. Farber recommended that the Gypsy Moth issue be addressed at the March 14th meeting and he stated that there may be a need for a DPW employee to assist on the day of the spraying.

Mr. Clifford stated a concern over the number of street lights that are out, which was briefly discussed.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Mayor Starrs and seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m. Roll Call: Cuntala – yes, Shipps - yes, Farber - yes, and Starrs – yes.

Prepared from audio recording,

Alfia Schemm
Secretary
6/10/16