

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

**TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING  
MARCH 24, 2016**

A regular meeting of the Knowlton Township Committee was held at the Knowlton Municipal Building. Present were Mayor Starrs, Deputy Mayor Cuntala and Township Committee Members Mathez, 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 p.m. with a salute to the flag and roll call.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION: Resolution 16-40**

A motion was made by Mayor Starrs and seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala to approve Resolution 16-40 and enter executive session for the purpose of discussing personnel. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber - yes, Shipps - yes, and Starrs – yes.

The Township Committee returned to public session at 7:30 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

A motion was made by Mayor Starrs and seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala to approve the December 14, 2015 minutes. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber - yes, Shipps - yes, and Starrs – yes.

A motion was made by Committee Member Mathez and seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala to approve the December 28, 2015 minutes. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber - yes, Shipps - abstain, and Starrs – yes.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

Township Engineer Rodman

Township Engineer Rodman updated the Committee on the Milron Project and connecting to the sewer plant, which was discussed with the Committee. It was agreed that the matter should be reviewed by the Sewer Engineer and the Township Attorney. In regards to other business, Township Engineer Rodman stated that he will so a site inspection once the Unfit Buildings Ordinance is adopted.

Recreation Department

Mr. Trongone asked if the mower is going out for repair or whether the DPW will take a look at it. Mayor Starrs stated that the DPW look at it.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**ORDINANCES:**

**Ordinance #16-07**

Ordinance Adding A Chapter Entitled "Buildings, Unfit" To The General Ordinances  
Of The Township Of Knowlton, County of Warren, And State Of New Jersey

A motion was made by Committee Member Mathez and seconded by Mayor Starrs to open the Ordinance for public hearing. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber - yes, Shipps - yes, and Starrs – yes.

Mr. McNinch asked when the Ordinance was advertised and what newspaper was used. Township Clerk Patton stated that the Star Gazette was used and she does not know what date it was advertised. Mr. McNinch stated his concern over the proposed Ordinance and he cited the 4th Amendment of the Constitution. He commented that the Uniform Building Code is intended for new construction. Committee Member Farber stated that the proposed Ordinance is directed towards uninhabitable dilapidated housing.

Mayor Starrs asked if there was any further public comment. With there being none, a motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala to close the public comment. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber - yes, Shipps - yes, and Starrs – yes.

A motion was made by Mayor Starrs to adopt Ordinance #16-07, seconded by Committee Member Mathez. Discussion on the motion: Committee Member Farber stated that he does not think that the Township will abuse the Ordinance and there were other sample ordinances that were much harsher, that have been adopted in other Townships. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber - yes, Shipps - yes, and Starrs – yes.

## **RESOLUTIONS:**

### **Resolution #16-36**

Resolution Approving Payment of Vouchers

Both Committee Member Shipps and Mayor Starrs commented on the MSI invoice. A motion was made by Committee Member Farber to approve Resolution #16-36, motion seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber - yes, Shipps - yes, and Starrs – yes.

### **Resolution #16-37**

Resolution Designating the Express Times And The Star Gazette As The Official Newspapers  
Of The Township  
and

### **Resolution #16-39**

Resolution Designating The Express Times As The Official Newspaper Of The Township

Mayor Starrs reviewed the issue with the designation of the Official Newspapers and trying to meet the intent of the law, which was discussed with the Township Committee. Township Clerk Patton stated that she would like to research whether an automatic confirmation is generated with the Express Times. It was agreed to table both Resolutions #16-37 and #16-39 until the April meeting.

### **Resolution #16-38**

Resolution Regarding Competitive Contracting Proposal Solicitation

Mayor Starrs reviewed the new procedure for purchases over \$40,000.00. A motion was made by Committee Member Mathez to approve the Resolution, motion seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber - yes, Shipps - yes, and Starrs – yes.

### **Resolution #16-40**

Resolution Concerning 48 Hour Notice For Township Committee Meeting Materials

Mayor Starrs reviewed a desire to have a 48 hour cutoff for submission of materials so that the staff has time to prepare for meetings and also allows for posting to the website. Committee Member Mathez stated that there are times that something does come in last minutes and he would like to amend the Resolution to allow for "critical time sensitive items". It was noted that the 48 hour notice should be a goal and there will be exceptions. Mayor Starrs stated that she does not like feeling hurried and unprepared. She stated that everyone involved should try and comply with the 48 hour cutoff policy. A motion was made by Committee Member Mathez to approve the Resolution as amended, motion seconded by Committee Member Shipps. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber - yes, Shipps - yes, and Starrs – yes.

### **Resolution #16-33**

#### Resolution Opposing JCP&L Rate Increase

Stan Prater, JCP & L Area Manager, was present and he stated that he was not aware of any rate increase. Committee Member Farber stated it was advertised in the Star Ledger. Mr. Prater stated that he can research the matter and come back to the next Committee meeting with his findings. A motion was made by Committee Member Mathez to approve the Resolution conditioned upon Committee Member Farber confirming the facts of the issue, motion seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber - yes, Shipps - yes, and Starrs – yes.

Mr. Prater stated that he will follow up with Committee Member Farber. Frank VanHorn was present and he questioned whether there were limits on how much solar power and hydroelectric power can go into a system and what the process might be. Mr. Prater stated that there are no limits; however, it would have to be approved and reviewed.

### **Resolution #16-42**

#### Resolution to Join the Statewide Insurance Fund

Mayor Starrs questioned the purpose of the Resolution, as the Township is already covered for three years. Township Clerk Patton stated that they would like it adopted every year. A motion was made by Committee Member Farber to adopt the Resolution if it is required. After a brief discussion Committee Member Farber withdrew his motion so that the matter can be reviewed.

### **Resolution #16-43**

#### Resolution approving a Risk Management Consultant

A motion was made by Deputy Mayor Cuntala to approve the Resolution. Motion seconded by Mayor Starrs. Discussion on the motion: Committee Member Mathez questioned whether it is Sharon Cooper or if it is the Company who is appointed. Mayor Starrs withdrew her motion so that the issue can be reviewed.

### **Resolution #16-44**

#### Authorization for the transfer of funds

A motion was made by Committee Member Mathez to approve the Resolution. Motion seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber - yes, Shipps - yes, and Starrs – yes.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

Approval Of N.J. State Firemen's Association Membership Application – Brian McShane, Tami Chipko  
After a brief discussion it was agreed to defer this matter to the next meeting.

### Knowlton EMA

Typographical error the topic is the Knowlton EMS

### Knowlton EMS

Committee Member Mathez stated that Hackettstown Regional Medical Center has been taken over by Atlantic Health Systems. He stated that they met with Atlantic Health Systems and they have agreed to cover the contract until it ends this year. They are requesting a signed letter stating that the Township agrees to the transfer of the contract. He stated that they also talked with St. Lukes and they may be able to provide emergency medical services. He stated that they will get proposals from both and then they will be evaluated.

### Medicare policy

Mayor Starrs reviewed the policy; however, she stated that the Township Attorney stated that it would not be allowed when speaking with Pension & Benefits. She stated that she then called Pension & Benefits and was told that it should be allowed; however, when they researched the matter, they could not find any other

municipality that had adopted a similar policy. It was agreed that she would reach out to the League of Municipalities.

#### 23 Decatur-Court Date

Mayor Starrs stated that this matter was in Court yesterday and fines were imposed. She stated that the demolition permit was released this morning and they have 30 days to demolish the house. She went on to review the fines that are imposed and negotiated.

#### Bond Ordinances

Committee Member Farber stated that he would like to discuss the issues in regards to the Bond Ordinances when the Township Attorney is present. He stated that he would like to know if the Township has any recourse in approaching the prior firm in reference to the mistakes that were made.

#### 2016 Budget

Mayor Starrs stated that the proposed Budget was received today and there is no anticipated increase for this year. She stated that the Budget will be introduced on April 11th. The Budget was briefly reviewed and Mayor Starrs stated that CFO Rolef will be present at the meeting to review and address the proposal.

#### Paulinskil Restoration and Columbia Lake Dam Removal Project

Committee Member Farber read his comments into the record in regards to his concerns over the project. Mayor Starrs stated that the information is on the Township Website and she will distribute the information on social media. Frank Van Horn commented on the proposal and he stated that he feels that the matter should be placed on the ballot as a referendum and voted on by the Township Residents. Mayor Starrs asked if a referendum would be legally binding as the property is owned by the DEP. The matter was discussed and Mayor Starrs stated that legitimate questions and concerns have been raised that need to be answered. Bob McNinch thanked Committee Member Farber and Mr. Van Horn for researching the matter. He then provided his comments on the matter. Mayor Starrs stated that she would attend the open houses and listen to the answers to the questions that have been raised. Committeeman Farber stated that he is concerned that not enough people know about the proposal. Mayor Starrs stated again that there is information on the website and it will be shared on social media. Pam Rusweller asked if the write up from Len Rue could be shared. It was noted that it is available in the Municipal Office. The Township Committee discussed ways to get the word out to the public. Committee Member Farber stated his concern over the statement supporting the proposal. Mayor Starrs stated that at the time, it was presented as if the Dam was at the end of its life expectancy. It was suggested that the newspapers be alerted as to what is being proposed. Mayor Starrs did state that the meeting room was packed with people when the issue was addressed. Ms. Rusweller stated that Township Residents also need to take responsibility to know what is going on in the Township. The Committee continued to discuss with the public the fish that are in the waters and the proposed project.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

##### 48 Hour Notice

Addressed already in the adopted Resolution

##### Water Tank Replacement Quotes

Mayor Starrs stated that a slow leak was found in the bottom of the water tank and they are still waiting on another quote. Bill Clifford questioned the procedure for obtaining quotes. Mayor Starrs stated that a quote is not necessary for the price of the job; however, the Committee likes to do their homework. Mr. Clifford stated that the water would have to be shut off for two days and he is willing to do the work over the weekend so that the Building could remain open.

The work on patching the ramp was discussed and Committee Member Shipps stated that she will follow up with the Contractor.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

A member of the public questioned the fence project. Township Clerk Patton stated that she thinks that she received information on that matter; however, she will have to check. Committee Member Mathez asked that he receive a copy of the bill of sale for the Ambulance. Bill Clifford asked about the Budget and taking money out of surplus.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

A motion was made by Mayor Starrs and seconded by Committee Member Mathez to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m. Roll Call: Mathez – yes, Cuntala – yes, Farber - yes, Shipps - yes, and Starrs – yes

Prepared from audio recording,

Alfia Schemm  
Secretary  
6/21/16