

**TOWNSHIP OF KNOWLTON  
COUNTY OF WARREN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING  
February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

The meeting of the Knowlton Township Committee was held on this date at the Knowlton Municipal Building, 628 Route 94, Columbia, New Jersey and was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Starrs.

Mayor Starrs led the public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Starrs read the following statements "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 *New Jersey Herald* and/or Express Times as well as providing said schedule in the Municipal Clerk's office."

**Roll Call- Bates- yes, Cuntala- yes, Mazza- yes, Shipps- yes, Van Horn- yes**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Mathez advised the committee there were a line of vehicles driving across the viaduct from both directions. The committee was unaware of any reports. The state police will be invited to the next meeting to address any concerns within the Township including the issue of rocks being thrown onto Rt. 80.

Recreation director Dennis Lembeck advised that people may be accessing Rt. 80 through tunnel field. He suggested locking the gate at night and opening back up early mornings. The committee agreed to have Mr. Lembeck lock the gate at night and reopen in the morning.

Adele Starrs asked the committee for an update regarding the Counties resolution requesting trucks be banned on 519. Ms. Starrs concerns were if there are truck restrictions on 519, trucks would come down Rt. 46 which would affect Knowlton. The counties resolution did not include Decatur Street which is considered a major byway with a significant amount of truck traffic. Attorney St. Angelo suggested drafting a letter to the county to include Decatur Street onto the resolution.

**Motion by Cuntala, Second by Mazza and approved by roll call vote: Bates- yes Cuntala—yes, Mazza—yes, Shipps—yes, Van Horn—yes approved to send a formal letter to the County to include Decatur Street in their resolution.**

Laura Richter from the Warren County Department of Human Services discussed the Municipal Alliance Program. The program is geared towards the students of Knowlton Elementary and their mental health. This program consists of after school clubs such as a physical activity club, just say no club and a math club.

Ms. Tara Mezzanotte updated the committee regarding the retaining wall replacement project. The NJDOT sent a formal notice regarding a list of stakeholders related to historical and cultural properties. The NJDOT requested any comments or concerns regarding the area where the project is taking place.

Warren County will be taking the lead and giving a formal response to this request. The committee agreed to have Township attorney Ms. St. Angelo draft a formal letter of support of Warren County's response to the NJDOT.

**Motion by Van Horn, second by Cuntala and approved by roll call vote: Bates- yes, Cuntala- yes, Mazza- yes, Shipps-yes, Van Horn- yes approved to send a letter of support of the County to the NJDOT.**

### **DEPARTMENT REPORT**

Fire chief Alex Weber gave an update on the water tanker project. Any work within the scope of the project will be warrantied for 2 years. A scheduled maintenance check has already been scheduled for next year.

### **RESOLUTIONS**

#### **2023-25 Resolution Authorizing Return of Deposit and Sale of Surplus Property**

**WHEREAS**, the Township of Knowlton ("Township") is the owner of three parcels of land known as Block 40, Lots 9.13, 9.14, and 9.21 on the Tax Map of the Township of Knowlton in Warren County ("Parcels");

**WHEREAS**, the Township authorized the sale of these parcels and held a public auction in or about 2006 and accepted bids from Joseph Trinca; and

**WHEREAS**, in connection with such sale, Mr. Trinca deposited the amount of \$1,800 (i.e. \$600 per lot) with the Township; and

**WHEREAS**, due to title issues, a closing did not timely occur; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township sent a letter to Mr. Trinca confirming that he wished to cancel his bids for the above-referenced lots and Mr. Trinca returned the letter signed and dated February 28, 2022; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Resolution No. 2022-31 adopted on March 14, 2022 , the Township authorized cancellation of such sale; and

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Trinca has requested the return of his deposit monies; and

**WHEREAS**, after a search by the Township Attorney, it was determined that the deposits were held by the Township; and

**WHEREAS**, the Chief Financial Officer advised that there was no record of an escrow account under the name "Joseph Trinca;" and

**WHEREAS**, the Chief Financial Officer advised that the Township has an escrow account labeled as “Courtland Estates” that has been dormant for more than ten years; and

**WHEREAS**, the Parcels were part of a defunct subdivision known as “Courtland Estates;” and

**WHEREAS**, the Township Committee determined that it is reasonable to assume that Mr. Trinca’s deposit monies were placed in that account; and

**NOW THEREFORE**, it is hereby resolved as follows:

1. The Township Committee authorizes the return of deposit monies in the amount of \$1,800 to Joseph Trinca in connection with the cancelled sale of Block 40, Lots 9.13, 9.14, and 9.21 on the Tax Map of the Township of Knowlton in Warren County.

2. The Chief Financial Officer of the Township is authorized to make payment to Mr. Trinca from the “Courtland Estates” escrow account held by the Township.

3. The Township Committee authorizes the readvertisement for sale of Block 40, Lots 9.13, 9.14, and 9.21 on the Tax Map of the Township of Knowlton in Warren County. The Township Committee reserves the right to hire a professional auctioneer to conduct the sale if determined to be in the best interest of the Township.

4. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

**Motion by Van Horn, Second by Cuntala and approved by roll call vote: Bates- yes Cuntala—yes, Mazza—yes, Shipps—yes, Van Horn—yes**

2023-26 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 by Cuntala, Second by Van Horn and approved by roll call vote: Bates- yes Cuntala—yes, Mazza—yes, Shipps—yes, Van Horn—yes**

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Clerk office cell phone:

The committee discussed cell phone quotes from Verizon and AT&T. AT&T gave a quote of \$360 for a cell phone and a \$10 monthly service fee. The phone will be used for after hour emergencies, the municipal building security system and employee time off requests.

**Motion by Van Horn, second by Shipps and approved by roll call vote: Bates- yes Cuntala—yes, Mazza—yes, Shipps—yes, Van Horn—yes approved to purchase cell phone through AT&T.**

AED pricing

AED equipment needs to be updated at tunnel field, the municipal building and the DPW garage. EMS captain Dave Neal provided the committee with quotes. Mr. Neal suggested having the same AED model at each location for uniformity. The battery life for these models are 5 years which costs \$149.00 per battery. Committeewoman Shipps mentions adding mandatory AED training to the employee handbook.

**Motion by Shipps, second by Bates and approved by roll call vote: Bates- yes Cuntala—yes, Mazza—yes, Shipps—yes, Van Horn—yes approved to purchase 3 new AED equipment and adding mandatory AED training to the employee handbook.**

Crown Castle RFP

Attorney St. Angelo advised the committee that the Crown Castle cell tower lease expires at the end of April. Attorney St Angelo will work with Township engineer Denis Keenan to draft the RFP including a price increase on rent.

Paving Municipal parking lot

Mayor Van Horn addressed paving the Municipal parking lot with the committee. Committeewoman Shipps mentions there are a few items within the building that need maintenance. The committee agrees to compile a list of items that need to be addressed and prioritize of most importance.

Combining the Planning Board and Board of Adjustments

The committee discussed combining the Planning Board and Board of Adjustments. Committeewoman Shipps expressed the financial savings it would bring by only paying professionals for one board. Attorney St. Angelo expressed if the boards are combined and the committee feels it is not beneficial, there can be two separate boards made once again. Attorney St. Angelo will draft the ordinance for introduction at the next committee meeting.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ms. Tara Mezzanotte addressed the portable air monitoring that will be taking place in Knowlton. Ms. Mezzanotte has been in contact with a professor from Lehigh University who will be managing the study in Mt. Bethel and she would like to collaborate with Knowlton.

Committeeman Mazza will reach out to the professor conducting the study in Knowlton to get an update on when the monitors are expected to be set up.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

#### **2023-24 Resolution Authorizing Executive Session**

**Motion by Cuntala, Second by Mazza and carried to go into executive session at 9:10 p.m**

**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 insure 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:

- A. Attorney Advice
- B. 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.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion made by Van Horn, second by Cuntala and carried to adjourn tonight's meeting at 10:02 pm.**