

TOWNSHIP OF KNOWLTON
COUNTY OF WARREN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING
September 11, 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 Van Horn. Mayor Van Horn led the public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Van Horn 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

Present: Committeeman Bates(arrived at 7:10), Committeewoman Cuntala, Committeeman Mazza, Deputy Mayor Shipp(arrived at 7:45) and Mayor Van Horn.

Also Present: Township Attorney Tara St. Angelo

Mayor Van Horn holds a moment of silence in remembrance of those who’s lives were lost during the 9/11 attacks.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. John Anderson on Mt. Pleasant Road address the committee regarding the scheduled paving being done on his road. He has been working with the Township to see if vacating the end of Mt. Pleasant Rd was a possibility. Township Attorney Tara St. Angelo states after doing further research, it would not be possible as it would landlock a small piece of property owned by the Brugler family. Committeewoman Cuntala states after speaking with DPW supervisor Brian Peck, the paving will not be going all the way to the end of the road as the culvert would need to be replaced which was not in the scope of the original project.

Mr. Frank Arena updated the committee on the warehouse proposal in Blairstown that borders Mr. Arenas property that resides in Knowlton. The next Blairstown land use board meeting is scheduled for September 25th where new site plans will be submitted by the applicant.

Ms. Tara Mezzanotte updated the committee on the NJDOT. There has been no response back from NJDOT on why Knowlton was not notified of the NJDEP flood hazard permit. Ms. Mezzanotte submitted a complaint to the NJDEP with concerns on the flood hazard permit. The National Park Service sent in their concerns as well.

Ms. Mezzanotte asked for the committee to allow the Paulins Kill the lower Delaware Wild and Scenic River Council to request for any work being done on the bridge over the Paulins Kill to remain clean and uphold the standards of the National Parks Service.

Motion made by Cuntala, Second by Mazza and approved by roll call vote: Bates- yes, Cuntala-yes, Mazza-yes, Van horn-yes. Approved for the Paulins Kill the lower Delaware Wild and Scenic River Council to request such standards to be upheld.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Fire and Rescue

Committeemen Mike Bates addressed repairs that needed to be done on one of their tankers. No Major damage and it is in the process of being repaired.

ORDINANCES

Introduction

2023-14- An Ordinance Amending the Fpz (Single-Family Agricultural Residential, Farmland Preservation) Zone to Include the Entirety of Block 34, Lot 21

WHEREAS, property designated as Block 34, Lot 21 on the Tax Maps of the Township of Knowlton, is partially in the FPZ (Single-Family Agricultural Residential, Farmland Preservation) Zoning District and partially in the C-1 (Neighborhood Commercial) Zoning District; and

WHEREAS, it appears as those the portion of Block 34, Lot 21 was zoned for commercial use in 2002 pursuant to Ordinance No. 02-03; and

WHEREAS, the owner of Block 34, Lot 21, Frank Arena, granted an Easement to the New Jersey Agriculture Retention and Development Program on February 7, 2005, which was recorded in the Warren County Clerk's Office on February 15, 2005 in Deed Book 1983, Page 130; and

WHEREAS, such easement restricts use of Block 34, Lot 21 to agricultural uses in perpetuity; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Arena appeared before the Township Committee and requested that his property be rezoned consistent with its limited permitted use of agricultural uses; and

WHEREAS, the Township Attorney reviewed the Township Zoning Map and data available from the State Agricultural Development Committee regarding preserved farms in Knowlton Township to confirm that no other preserved farm is located in the C-1 or C-2 Zones; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-62b, the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Knowlton (the "Township Committee") is authorized and empowered to adopt and amend the zoning ordinances of the Township of Knowlton; and

WHEREAS, the Township Committee finds that zoning the entirety of Block 34, Lot 21 to include it in the FPZ Zoning District is consistent with sound zoning and planning practices; and

WHEREAS, upon notice duly provided pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-62.1, the Township Committee held a public hearing on this ordinance on September 2023; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, by the Township Committee of the Township of Knowlton, in the County of Warren and State of New Jersey, as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 11-269 of the Code of the Township of Knowlton is amended as follows (deletions noted in strikethrough ~~thus~~ and additions noted in bold italic *thus*):

The location and boundaries of said zones or districts are hereby established on the Zoning Map of the Township of Knowlton in Warren County, as amended, dated ~~May 2002~~ **October 2023**, which is attached hereto and hereby made a part of this chapter. Said map and all notations, references and designations shown thereon shall be, as such, a part of this chapter as if the same were all fully described and set forth herein. The Zoning Map is included in a pocket at the end of this chapter.

SECTION 2. Attachment 21 to Chapter 11 of the Code of the Township of Knowlton, entitled, Table of Zoning Map Amendments, is hereby amended to add the following:

Ordinance No.	Adoption Date	Description of Change
<i>[insert ordinance No.]</i>	928-2023	<i>A portion of Block 34, Lot 21 is rezoned from C-1 to FPZ, making the entire lot zoned FPZ</i>

SECTION 3. All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict or inconsistent with any part of this Ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent that they are in conflict or inconsistent.

SECTION 4. If any section, provision, or part of provision of this Ordinance shall be held to be unenforceable or invalid by any court, such holding shall not affect the validity of this Ordinance, or any part thereof, other than the part so held unenforceable or invalid.

SECTION 5. This Ordinance shall take effect after passage and publication in the manner provided by law.

Motion by Shipp, Second by Mazza and introduced by roll call vote: Bates-yes, Cuntala-yes, Mazza-yes, Shipp-yes, Van Horn-yes

RESOLUTIONS

2023-74- Resolution Supporting the Addition of The Stony Brook, Paulins Kill, Yards Creek, Delawanna Creek, The Unnamed Tributary Along the Historic Ramsaysburg Homestead, Any Other Eligible Tributaries, And Knowlton Township's Delaware River Segment to The Lower Delaware National Wild and Scenic River

WHEREAS, the following objectives listed in Knowlton Township's 2020 Master Plan demonstrate an understanding of the inextricable connection between healthy water, healthy people, food, pets, agriculture, wildlife, the quality of Knowlton's rural character and ultimately the quality of all life, as well as Knowlton's commitment to maintaining and enhancing its water resources:

- Preserve open space and farmland and to protect flood plains
- Retain Knowlton's rural features
- Retain the Township's woodland features
- Retain water quality and quantity
- Minimize development impact upon wildlife
- Encourage the preservation and enhancement of wildlife habitat
- Preserve open space consistent with the Township's rural character
- Provide and maintain contiguous open space
- Retain water quality and quantity through conservation measures and responsible planning
- Protect areas within floodplains, especially along the Delaware River, from new development that will adversely affect water quality and preserve the capacity of these areas to absorb additional run-off during periods of flood hazard
- Preserve, protect and enhance the quality of all rivers in the Township, and especially the Delaware River, and its tributaries, as well as lakes, ponds and streams and their borders, and to preserve wildlife, rare species and natural communities
- Minimize the negative impact of environmentally harmful activities on all water bodies, especially the Delaware River, including activities which detract from passive recreational uses
- Encourage and promote appropriate development within the Township's hamlets and villages that minimizes impacts on river and bodies of water, especially the Delaware River and its tributaries
- Protect the lands along the Township rivers, and especially the Delaware River and its tributaries, by preserving stream buffers, steep slopes, wetlands, flood plains, areas of natural vegetation and woodlands that form part of the river corridors

WHEREAS, Knowlton Township's entire western boundary is the Delaware River, with tributaries that flow through the township which include the Stonybrook, Paulins Kill, the Delawanna Creek; and an unnamed creek along Knowlton Road which enters the Delaware River at the Historic Ramsaysburg Homestead, and

WHEREAS, in addition to Knowing Township lands being part of the Delaware River Watershed, NJDEP has identified three additional unique watersheds within the township: the Paulins Kill Watershed, Stony Brook Watershed and Delawanna Creek Watersheds, and

WHEREAS, the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System was created by Congress in 1968 to preserve certain rivers with outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values in a free-flowing condition for the enjoyment of present and future generations, and rivers may be designated by Congress or, if certain requirements are met, the Secretary of the Interior, and each river is administered by either a federal or state agency, and each river is administered by either a federal or state agency, and

WHEREAS, congress has specified that some designations are not just a Wild and Scenic River, but a Partnership Wild and Scenic River (PWSR), meaning that the river is managed collaboratively by the National Park System and a local entity, whereby PWSRs communities protect and enhance their river and its resources through developing and implementing a management plan tailored to the communities and the rivers' needs and specifics:

- *No federal ownership or management of lands (and federal ownership is not authorized in legislation or recommended in the management plan)*
- *Administration of the designation and implementation of the management plan is accomplished through a broadly participatory “council” or “committee” organized and convened for each river specifically for this purpose.*
- *Land use continues to be governed by local communities and states through existing laws, regulations, and authorities. The plan is written and implemented through a broadly participatory process involving guidance from locally based representatives. The plan is locally developed with NPS assistance and is locally approved prior to federal designation (as a part of the feasibility study). The plan, locally approved and endorsed by relevant state and federal authorities, forms the basis of the designation, and guides subsequent management.*
- *The costs and responsibilities associated with managing and protecting river resources are shared among all of the partners—local, state, federal, and nongovernmental. Landowner participation and volunteerism is an essential element of the partnership and viewed as the backbone of success.*¹

WHEREAS, on November 1, 2000, the 106th Congress Passed Public Law 106–418 – The Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic Rivers Act designating 25 scenic miles and 42 recreational miles of the Delaware River under the Wilds and Scenic Rivers Act, as a “Partnership” Wild and Scenic River which included the local community created Lower Delaware River Management Plan, and

WHEREAS, prior to 2022 the Township of Knowlton was hesitant to become a Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic River Municipality, due to private landowner concerns, that such may result in infringement on private property rights, whereby public access to the Delaware River might be required or it might enable the federal government to supersede other local land use laws, or other unforeseen infringements, and

WHEREAS, partially because the Township of Knowlton had not supported designation in 2000, the township's segment of the Delaware River and Paulins Kill up to Brugler Bridge that was included in the original

¹ [Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers by Jamie Fosburgh, Joe DiBello, and Fred Akers](#) pg.3

Lower Delaware Wilds and Scenic Study was disqualified from full designation, however it remained eligible for full designation should local municipalities through which they flow support at a later date, and such a congressional representative request is made through a later tributary or segment qualifying study, and

WHEREAS, having been provided new information, as stated above, related to how the “Partnership” Wild and Scenic Designation model was created specifically to mitigate such private landowner concerns, and with no know infringement materializing since the Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic River designation over 20 years ago, Resolution 2022-32 Supporting Knowlton as a Lower Delaware Wild & Scenic Municipality was passed in March 2022 agreeing to support the principles of the Memorandum of Understanding, necessary to designate the Lower Delaware River and selected tributaries as a component of the national wild and scenic rivers system:

1. Agrees to cooperatively implement the Lower Delaware River Management Plan to conserve the special natural resources of the area and enhance the cultural, recreational, and economic opportunities of the watershed.
2. Agrees to appoint one representative to participate on the Lower Delaware River Management Council.
3. May at our discretion contribute staff, in-kind, or financial assistance to the Management Council.
4. Agrees to take into consideration the objectives and recommendations of the Plan in land use or water use decision-making which could impact the health and conservation of the resources of the Lower Delaware River and its tributaries.
5. Agrees to work together through the Management Council to address funding and regulatory issues related to implementation of the national wild and scenic river designation and the Plan.
6. Agrees to enforce all applicable land use, water use, or zoning regulations in such a manner to ensure that the Lower Delaware River and its tributaries are protected and that actions are consistent with the goals, objectives, and recommendations of the Plan.
7. Agrees to work with Management Council as appropriate to identify and address issues related to the management of the Lower Delaware River and its tributaries as a national wild and scenic river, as detailed in the Plan.
8. Agrees to control land and waters under their jurisdiction within the Lower Delaware River in a manner consistent with the goals, objectives, and recommendations within the Plan.
9. Agrees that the Management Council can write letters of support and take other actions to help members receive grants for projects that will further the goals and objectives of the Plan, and

WHEREAS, to further enhance and protect the Outstanding Remarkable Values of the Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic River, in partnership with the National Park Service, and the Delaware River Greenway Partnership, the Management Council has created, a Study Committee evaluating all non-designated river segments and the tributaries to the Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic River to identify those eligible and suitable to be included in its existing designation which include those listed above, and

WHEREAS, the following partial list of potential Outstanding Remarkable Values have been identified associated with these tributaries, for the National Park Service to vet; some with existing protections and located in protected areas for which Wild and Scenic Designation would help be further protected and enhanced:

- Stonybrook: Unique geologic features, wild segments that are only accessible by road, some located in and protected by New Jersey Fish and Wildlife Worthington State Forest
- Paulins Kill: Supported by the Foodshed Alliance Paulins Kill Watershed Community Program, National Register-listed Historic Brugler Bridge, culturally, historically, and recreationally significant Paulins Kill Valley Trail (PVT) for walking, hiking, jogging, cross country skiing, mountain biking and horseback riding. Owned, by the State of New Jersey with the Paulins Kill Valley Trail Management Plan managed and maintained by Kittatinny Valley State Park. The 27-mile trail starts at Brugler Road and travels north along the west side of the entire portion of the Paulins Kill River. National Register Eligible Delaware, Western and Lackawanna Paulins Kill Viaduct, also the location of a the former depot from

when the PVT was once part of the NY, Susquehanna, and Western Railroad. The Paulinskill Valley Trail Committee is the official Friend's Group supporting the trail and organizing activities. The river is recreationally significant for trout fishing and kayaking. Known habitat for Endangered Bobcat and other threatened and endangered plants and animals

- Yards Creek: Known habitat for endangered Bobcat and other threatened and endangered plants and animals
- Delawanna: TBD
- Unnamed Knowlton Road Tributary: Flows through along National Register-listed Historic Village of Delaware and the Ramsaysburg Historic Homestead, and

WHEREAS, during the study process or upon its completion, local communities along the eligible segments and tributaries shall be invited to participate in updating the existing Management Plan and become members of the Management Council.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Township of Knowlton supports adding the Stony Brook, Paulins Kill, Yards Creek, Delawanna Creek, and the unnamed tributary running along Knowlton Road and along the Historic Ramsaysburg Homestead, other eligible tributaries, and Knowlton Township's Delaware River segment to the Lower Delaware National Wild and Scenic River, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Township of Knowlton reaffirms its commitment to, and support of, the principles of the Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic Management Plan and Memorandum of Understanding.

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

2023-75-Resolution Authorizing the Sale of Certain Properties No Longer Needed for Public Use by The Township of Knowlton And Hiring

WHEREAS, the Township of Knowlton is the owner of the following parcels within the Township located (hereinafter the "Properties"):

- a. 17 Route 46 (Block 28, Lot 13)
- b. 5 Bridge Road (Block 40, Lot 9.14)
- c. 7 Bridge Road (Block 40, Lot 9.13)
- d. 10 Poppy's Court (Block 40, Lot 9.21)
- e. 10 Clinton Street (Block 55, Lot 12)
- f. 46 Delaware Road (Block 47, Lot 18)

WHEREAS, the Township acquired 17 Route 46 and 10 Clinton Street on or about August 16, 2019 through an action in foreclosure under docket No F-4822-19; and

WHEREAS, the Township acquired 10 Poppy's Court, 5 Bridge Road, 7 Bridge Road, and 46 Delaware Road on or about October 29, 1997 through an action in foreclosure under docket No F-10122-96; and

WHEREAS, since acquiring the Properties, the Township Committee of Knowlton has come to determine that the Properties are no longer needed for public use; and

WHEREAS, the Committee desires to make available for public sale said lands in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:12-13(a); and

WHEREAS, the Township desires to retain a Professional Auctioneer to market and auction for public sale said lands in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:12-13(a).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Committee of Knowlton, in the County of Warren, State of New Jersey, as follows:

SECTION 1. The Township Committee hereby declares that the following lands and premises are no longer needed for public use and should be sold in accordance with the appropriate statutes of the State of New Jersey and ordinances of the Township of Knowlton:

- a. 17 Route 46 (Block 28, Lot 13)
- b. 5 Bridge Road (Block 40, Lot 9.14)
- c. 7 Bridge Road (Block 40, Lot 9.13)
- d. 10 Poppy's Court (Block 40, Lot 9.21)
- e. 10 Clinton Street (Block 55, Lot 12)
- f. 46 Delaware Road (Block 47, Lot 18)

SECTION 2. The Township Committee hereby authorizes a sale to the highest bidder, the above-referenced properties.

SECTION 3. The Township Committee hereby declares Max Spann Real Estate & Auction Co. (hereinafter "Auctioneer"), to be retained as Auctioneer for sale to the highest bidder by open public sale at auction, of the above-referenced properties and authorizes the Mayor and Clerk to execute the appropriate agreement, subject to review by the Township Attorney.

SECTION 4. The minimum bids shall be as follows:

- a. 17 Route 46
- b. 5 Bridge Road
- c. 7 Bridge Road
- d. 10 Poppy's Court
- e. 10 Clinton Street
- f. 46 Delaware Road

SECTION 5. All bidders at the time of sale must present a certified check or money order in the amount of \$3,000 payable to themselves (to be endorsed to the Township of Knowlton if successful). In addition, the successful bidder shall submit a personal check or money order for the balance of the deposit of 10% of the minimum bid and shall execute an Agreement of Sale. Said Agreement of Sale shall be binding upon the high

bidder until such time that the municipal council either 1) does not accept the bid in which case bidders deposit will be returned, or, 2) accepts the bid whereupon the municipality shall execute the Agreement of Sale and both parties shall be held bound by the terms and conditions contained therein. The balance of the purchase price shall be paid at closing which shall occur not later than 60 days following the acceptance of the bid by the Township. The purchaser shall be entitled to possession immediately following closing of title.

SECTION 6. In the event the Township of Knowlton is unable to convey clear and marketable title, insurable at regular rates by a title insurance company licensed to do business in the State of New Jersey, the Township will forthwith return to the purchaser any and all deposit moneys previously submitted by the purchaser, and neither party shall have any further rights against the other. The acceptance of a deed by the purchaser from the Township shall extinguish any claims that said purchaser may have against the Township in connection with the quality of title conveyed.

SECTION 7. The properties herein sold is subject to existing encumbrances, liens, easements, zoning ordinances, other restrictions of record, such facts as an accurate survey would reveal and any present or future assessments for the construction of improvements benefiting said property. The Township of Knowlton makes no representations as to the presence or absence of wetlands or any other environmental conditions on the property and the purchaser assumes the risk of any such condition, all property being sold “as is.”

SECTION 8. All conveyances by the Township shall be made by Bargain and Sale Deed with Covenants Against Grantor’s Acts.

SECTION 9. The Township reserves the right to waive any and all defects and informalities in any bid and to accept or reject any and all bids at the public sale and to not award to the highest bidder. No bid shall be considered finally accepted until passage of a resolution by the Township Committee as set forth herein.

SECTION 10. The Buyer shall pay the attorney fees and closing costs associated with the transaction up to \$2,000.00

SECTION 11. Acceptable bids shall be confirmed by resolution of the Township Committee no later than the first regular meeting of the Township Committee following the date of such sale.

SECTION 12. A public notice of sale shall be published in the Township's official newspaper at least once a week for two consecutive weeks, the last publication being no earlier than seven (7) days prior to the date set forth for the public sale, which notice shall contain the condition of this sale in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:12-13(a).

SECTION 13. In the event the successful bidder fails to close on the property, he shall forfeit the ten percent (10%) deposit.

SECTION 14. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

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

WHEREAS, on or about July 16, 2023 heavy rainfall in Knowlton Township and surrounding areas causing widespread flooding and mudslides; and

WHEREAS, the flooding and mudslides prompted Governor Phil Murphy to declare a State of Emergency; and

WHEREAS, the floodwater and mudslides have caused potential property damage to a large number of residences, businesses, garages, and accessory structures within the Township; and

WHEREAS, repairs to damaged structures may require construction, alteration, rehabilitation, or demolition permits; and

WHEREAS, permit fees may be an additional burden to property owners who are already facing financial impacts of the flooding and mudslides; and

WHEREAS, permit fees may discourage some property owners for seeking permits which could result in improper and unsafe repairs to homes and businesses; and

WHEREAS, the Township Committee has determined it is in the best interests of the Township to waive all zoning permit fees pursuant to Section 11-152 of the Township Code and, to the extent permitted by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, all building and construction permit fees pursuant to the Uniform Construction Code for those affected by the July 16, 2023 flooding and mudslide event through the end of 2023.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Knowlton, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. The collection of all zoning permit fees is hereby waived for all residents and businesses affected by the flooding and mudslides of July 16, 2023 for the remainder of the year 2023.
2. The collection of all construction, demolition, alteration, and rehabilitation permit fees for all residents and businesses affected by the flooding and mudslides of July 16, 2023 for the remainder of the year 2023. However, the waiver of such fees is subject to approval by the Department of Community Affairs.
3. Those seeking a waiver of said permit fees shall provide proof of the flooding when submitting a permit application. Such proof may be in the form of an insurance claim, FEMA claim, or other evidence deemed acceptable by the relevant Code Official.
4. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

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

WHEREAS, the Tax Assessor and Tax Collector of the Township of Knowlton have noted that the Township of Knowlton holds a tax sale certificate (No. 2014-007) on the property located at 150 Vail road and designated on the Tax Maps of the Township of Knowlton as Block 40, Lot 11; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 54: 5-104.35 provides in pertinent that the Governing Body may, by resolution, foreclose any of the tax sale certificates held by it, by the summary proceedings In Rem as provided in the In Rem Foreclosure Act (L.1948, c, 96); and

WHEREAS, municipal foreclosure on this properties will result in benefits the Township that may include: compelling the payment of taxes; removing non-performing properties from tax rolls; increasing the collection rate to lower the reserve for uncollected taxes; controlling abandoned properties; and stabilizing the tax base.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Knowlton, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, that the Borough Attorney, is hereby authorized to foreclose the property noted below:

Block	Lot	Property Address	Property Owner Name
40	11	150 Vail Road	Estate of Florence Gouger c/o D. Strunk

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

2023-78- Resolution Authorizing the Execution of a Settlement and Release with Blairstown Township

WHEREAS, on or about June 9, 2014, Knowlton Township and Blairstown Township entered into a Shared Services Agreement for a Shared Municipal Court (the “Shared Court Agreement”) pursuant to N.J.S.A. 2B:12-1(c); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 14 of the Shared Court Agreement, the Shared Court Agreement terminated on December 31, 2019; and

WHEREAS, Knowlton and Blairstown did not enter into a new agreement for shared court services or otherwise extend the term of the Shared Court Agreement to cover the year 2020;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Resolution No. 2020-39 adopted by the Knowlton Township Committee on February 10, 2020; Knowlton terminated the shared court operations effective December 31, 2020; and

WHEREAS, Blairstown utilized Knowlton’s municipal court services for the calendar year 2020; and

WHEREAS, Knowlton received approximately \$16,826.99 in revenue from municipal court costs and fees derived from Blairstown for the calendar year 2020; and

WHEREAS, Blairstown did not make any other payments to Knowlton with regard to municipal court services for the year 2020; and

WHEREAS, in settlement of all claims associated with the Shared Court Agreement, Blairstown has agreed to pay to Knowlton the amount of \$22,173.01; and

WHEREAS, Knowlton and Blairstown have agreed to enter into the attached Settlement and Release Agreement in substantially the same form.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Knowlton, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. The Mayor is hereby authorized to execute the attached Settlement and Release in substantially the same form.
2. Township personnel are authorized to take all actions to carry out the purposes of the of the Settlement and Release.
3. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

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

2023-79- Resolution Authorizing the Execution of An Acknowledgment Regarding the Installation of a Reverse Osmosis System At 31 Decatur Street

WHEREAS, the property located at 31 Decatur Street (Block 15, Lot 18) is scheduled to have a reverse osmosis system installed at no-cost by a contractor hired by the Township; and

WHEREAS, the owner of such property has entered into a contract of sale and the prospective purchaser has requested assurance in writing that the right to the installation of the reverse osmosis system will extend to the prospective purchaser after the closing; and

WHEREAS, a form of acknowledgment is attached herto.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Knowlton, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. The Mayor and Clerk are authorized to execute the attached Acknowledgement in substantially the same form as attached hereto.
2. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

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

2023-80 Governing Body Certification of The Annual Audit

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:5-4 requires the governing body of every local unit to have made an annual audit of its books, accounts and financial transactions, and

WHEREAS, the Annual Report of Audit for the year 2022 has been filed by a Registered Municipal Accountant with the Acting Municipal Clerk pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:5-6, and a copy has been received by each member of the governing body; and,

WHEREAS, R.S. 52:27BB-34 authorizes the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey to prescribe reports pertaining to the local fiscal affairs; and,

WHEREAS, the Local Finance Board has promulgated N.J.A.C. 5:30-6.5, a regulation requiring that the governing body of each municipality shall by resolution certify to the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey that all members of the governing body have reviewed, as a minimum, the sections of the annual audit entitled "Comments and Recommendations, and,

WHEREAS, the members of the governing body have personally reviewed as a minimum the Annual Report of Audit, and specifically the sections of the Annual Audit entitled "Comments and Recommendations, as evidenced by the group affidavit form of the governing body attached hereto; and,

WHEREAS, such resolution of certification shall be adopted by the Governing Body no later than forty-five days after the receipt of the annual audit, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:30-6.5; and,

WHEREAS, all members of the governing body have received and have familiarized themselves with, at least, the minimum requirements of the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey, as stated aforesaid and have subscribed to the affidavit, as provided by the Local Finance Board, and

WHEREAS, failure to comply with the regulations of the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey may subject the members of the local governing body to the penalty provisions of R.S. 52:27BB-52, to wit:

R.S. 52:27BB-52: A local officer or member of a local governing body who, after a date fixed for compliance, fails or refuses to obey an order of the director (Director of Local Government Services), under the provisions of this Article, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, may be fined not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both, in addition shall forfeit his office.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That the Committee of the Township of Knowlton, hereby states that it has complied with N.J.A.C. 5:30-6.5 and does hereby submit a certified copy of this resolution and the required affidavit to said Board to show evidence of said compliance.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS IS A TRUE COPY OF THE RESOLUTION PASSED AT THE MEETING HELD ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2023.

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

2023-81- 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 made by Cuntala, Second by Van Horn and approved by roll call vote:
Bates-yes, Cuntala-yes, Mazza-yes, Shipps-absent, Van Horn-yes**

NEW BUSINESS

Alternate Polling Location

The election board requested the Township to designate an alternate polling location other than the Municipal building. The committee agreed to designate the Knowlton Lions club as alternate polling location.

Ash Trees on Locust St and Washington St

Mayor Van Horn reached out to JCP&L and determined dead ash trees are on Knowlton property. Mayor Van Horn asked DPW supervisor Brian Peck to get quotes for tree removal. Deputy Mayor Shipps states there has been a running list of residents who are requesting trees to be removed around their properties. Township attorney suggested moving forward with getting quotes but will look more into if this property is owned by the Township before any removal takes place.

Salary Increases

Deputy Mayor Shipps states this was discussed last year before the end of the year. Acting clerk states she will go back to the recordings and minutes from last year to confirm what the increase was agreed upon.

Animal court fee schedule ordinance

Deputy Mayor Shipps discussed a fee schedule needs to be set in place for the shared court as they are not written into our ordinance. Committeeman Mazza suggested reaching out to another municipality for their fee schedule structure.

Deputy Mayor Shipps discussed the increasing number of strays the Township has taken in over the past few months. The increase in fees for dog licenses will need to be discussed for next year.

Community Day

Deputy Mayor discussed the donations for community day is low. A few options were given to the committee such as not selling food, renting a food truck for residents to pay for their food or the township donates the funds needed to keep community day free for all residents. Mayor Van Horn suggests moving forward with Community day and try to get more donations before the scheduled Community day.

MEETING MINUTES

July 11th Public Session Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Shipps, second by Van Horn and carried to approve July 11th public session meeting minutes.

July 11th Executive Session Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Shipps, second by Van Horn and carried to approve July 11th public session meeting minutes.

August 24th Public Session Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Shipps, second by Van Horn and carried to approve August 24th public session meeting minutes.

August 24th Executive Session Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Shipps, second by Van Horn and carried to approve August 24th public session meeting minutes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Mezzanotte discussed that Simpson Rd has been cleaned up of liter thanks to the help of Officer Duss who is the coordinator for the Corrections Dept Labor Assistance Program.

Mr. Rene Mathez wanted to confirm which Township properties were being auctioned. There was concern that one of the properties was on a floodplain. Attorney St. Angelo states that property would need to obtain flood insurance if they were to own that property.

Mr. Frank Arena asked about the zoning ordinance being introduced to rezone his property as discussed in past meetings. Attorney St. Angelo suggested introducing this ordinance tonight and holding a special meeting on September 28th at 6 p.m. for adoption.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

2023-82 Resolution Authorizing Executive Session

Motion by Shipps, Second by Cuntala and carried to go into executive session at 9:00 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. 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 by Van Horn, Second by Cuntala and carried to come out of executive session at 9:45 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Shipps, second by Cuntala and carried to adjourn tonight's meeting at 9:45 pm.