

**TOWNSHIP OF KNOWLTON**  
**COUNTY OF WARREN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**October 7, 2024**

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 Shipps. Mayor Shipps led the public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Shipps 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, Van Horn-yes, Shipps—yes**

**PUBLIC COMMENT- Limited To 20 Minutes With 3 Minutes Per Member Of The Public**

An officer of the New Jersey State Police joined the meeting at the request of Mayor Shipps. Mayor Shipps asked the officer to update the public on any updates going on in Knowlton. Officer stated there is continued construction on 94 that should be completed soon. Mayor Shipps addressed the ongoing graffiti on Station Road. As of recent, a resident painted a crosswalk across Station Road which has not been approved by the Township.

Ms. Megan Davis states she has concerns for crosswalk graffiti on Station Rd. Mayor Shipps the individual responsible now parks at Tunnel Field. NJSP Officer states they will monitor that area more frequently.

**PRESENTATION**

Ms. Paityn Bates delivered a presentation to recognize Dysautonomia Awareness Month. Ms. Bates has personal experience with Dysautonomia and wanted to bring awareness to her community. Mayor Shipps officially declares October Dysautonomia Awareness Month.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**2024-91 Resolution Authorizing Executive Session**

**A. Personnel**

**Executive Session was cancelled**

**DEPARTMENT REPORT**

Knowlton Fire and Rescue

Mayor Shipps states there was a meeting held with St. Luke’s earlier in the evening to discuss contracts. St. Luke’s advised Mayor Shipps that they intend to terminate their contract come January 2025. Mayor Shipps advises the public that the committee will discuss options regarding EMS for Knowlton Township.

Recreation

Recreation director Dennis Lembeck joins the meeting. Mayor Shipps address two pending items, cleans communities and the concession stand. Committeewoman Cuntala states there are two positions for clean communities and the committee agreed to hold only one position moving forward. Mr. Lembeck agreed to hold the one clean communities’ position.

Mayor Shipps discusses the concession stand and the concern of insurance. Two options are the Township taking over the concession stand and putting it under Township insurance. Mayor Shipps also suggested having KAA take over. Mr. Lembeck states if the concession stand does close, it will be an expense to reopen if

desired. Attorney Tara. St. Angelo suggested adding the concession stand to the Township insurance and having others sign a facility use agreement.

Mayor Shipps addresses the propane delivery for Tunnel Field. Mayor Shipps advises Mr. Lembeck that propane is not being taken from the recreation budget, but he does need to sign the voucher to confirm the propane was delivered. Mr. Lembeck states this has not been common practice in the past. The committee advised him that moving forward this will be the procedure.

Transportation: I80-611-Amtrak

Ms. Tara Mezzanotte states 611 is to open on or around November 5th.

Ms. Mezzanotte addressed the informational meeting held by the NJDOT on September 26<sup>th</sup> at Knowlton Elementary. Ms. Mezzanotte states there was no new information provided and no questions were answered.

Committeeman Bates suggests the community needs to reach out to NJDOT and ask their questions.

Paulins Kill Wild and Scenic River Project

Ms. Tara Mezzanotte discusses the potential for the Paulins kill to become full wild and scenic. Ms. Mezzanotte suggests the committee pass a resolution in support of the Paulins Kill being studied for potential wild and scenic river designation.

OEM

Committeeman and OEM Mike Bates suggests renting extra lighting for the municipal parking lot for election day. Committeeman Bates also suggests hiring traffic control for the anticipated number of voters.

## **ORDINANCES**

### **INTRODUCTION**

2024-08 Ordinance For Adoption Of The Floodplain Management Regulations Of The Township Of Knowlton

### **PUBLIC HEARING/ADOPTION**

2024-07 An Ordinance Amending Various Provisions Of Chapter 11 Of The Township Code, Entitled “Land Development”

**WHEREAS**, the Township Land Use Board and Township Zoning Officer have recommended various amendments to the Township Code.

**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 11-282(B) of the Knowlton Township Code, entitled “Regulation of nonconforming uses,” is hereby amended as follows (additions noted in bold italic *thus* and deletions noted in strikethrough ~~thus~~):

B. Regulation of nonconforming uses.

(1) No existing building or structure devoted to a nonconforming use shall be enlarged, extended, reconstructed, substituted or structurally altered except when changed to a conforming use or when required to do so by law and as follows:

(a) Restoration. Any nonconforming use or structure partially damaged by fire, casualty or act of God may be repaired, restored, reconstructed or used as before, provided that the area of such use, building or structure shall not exceed the area which existed prior to such damage. All repairs shall be commenced within one year after damage occurs and shall be completed within two years of such date, or such use shall not be rebuilt except as a conforming use.

(b) Repairs. Normal maintenance and repair of a structure containing a nonconforming use is permitted, provided that it does not extend the area or volume of space occupied by the nonconforming use and does not increase the number of dwelling units.

(c) Reconstruction. When a nonconforming structure or use is totally destroyed or damaged by fire or other casualty or an act of God, the nonconforming structure or use shall thereafter be terminated.

*(d) A residential dwelling which is non-conforming by reason of its intrusion into any required front, side or rear yard setback areas may be enlarged, provided, however that the existing nonconforming setbacks are not further encroached upon.*

(2) Nothing in this chapter shall prevent the strengthening or restoring to a safe or lawful condition any part of any building or structure declared unsafe or unlawful by the Construction Official or other authorized state or township official.

**SECTION 2.** Section 11-146.1, entitled “Resolution Compliance Review Fees,” is hereby added as follows:

**Resolution compliance review fee.**

A. As a condition of any approval granted by the Board, the applicant shall post an additional escrow fee deposit in an amount as follows:

- 1) For applications requiring site plan approval, a sum not to exceed the greater of \$500 or 175% of the estimate of the Engineer as authorized by N.J.S.A. 40:55D-53.
- 2) For applications not requiring site plan approval, a sum not to exceed the greater of \$500 or 50% of the estimate of the Engineer as authorized by N.J.S.A. 40:55D-53.

B. For those developments for which the reasonably anticipated fees are less than \$10,000, fees may, at the option of the applicant, be paid in two installments, and the initial payment deposited by the applicant shall be 50% of the reasonably anticipated fees. When the balance of deposit drops to 10% of the reasonably anticipated fees because the amount deposited by the applicant has been reduced by the amount paid to the Municipal Engineer for inspection, the applicant shall deposit the remaining 50% of the anticipated inspection fees.

C. For those developments for which the reasonably anticipated fees are \$10,000 or greater, fees may, at the option of the applicant, be paid in four installments. The initial amount deposited by the applicant shall be 25% of the reasonably anticipated fees. When the balance of deposit drops to 10% of the reasonably anticipated fees because the amount deposited by the applicant has been reduced by the amount paid to the Municipal Engineer for inspection, the applicant shall make additional deposits of 25% of the reasonably anticipated fees. The Municipal Engineer shall not perform any inspections if sufficient funds to pay for those inspections are not on deposit.

D. The resolution compliance fee shall be posted at the time that the plans, which have been revised in accordance with the resolution of approval, are submitted for compliance review. A certificate of occupancy shall not be issued until such fee is posted.

**SECTION 3.** Section 11-44 of the Code, entitled “Zoning Permits,” is hereby amended by adding the following subsections (D) and (E) as follows:

(D) Requirements for Permit. Any person requesting a zoning permit shall complete a written application on a form prescribed by the municipality. For purposes of N.J.S.A. 40:55D-18, a person shall be deemed to have requested a zoning permit only when each of the following have occurred: (a) the applicant for a zoning permit has completed a written application for a zoning permit on a form prescribed by the municipality, and the said application has been deemed complete by the Zoning Officer or his or her designee; (b) the fee for the zoning

permit has been paid to the municipality, (c) the applicant has submitted a Certification from Tax Collector that all taxes and assessments are paid to date, (d) if required, submission of all information set forth in subsection (B) hereunder, and (e) the applicant has supplied the Zoning Officer with all supporting data reasonably requested by the Zoning Officer.

(E) Application Deemed Complete. Upon the applicant's satisfaction of the requirements of Subsection (D) hereof, the application for a zoning permit shall be deemed complete, and the Zoning Officer shall affix a stamp or other marking on the application indicating: (a) that the application is complete; and (b) the date on which the application was deemed complete. The applicant's failure to submit a complete application or to cooperate with the zoning officers' efforts to evaluate and issue a decision thereon shall constitute grounds for denial of an application.

**SECTION 4.** Section 11-144, entitled "Fee Schedule," is hereby amended to delete the table entitled "Other Fees and Charges" in its entirety and replace with the following:

<b>Other Fees and Charges</b>	<b>Filing Fee</b>
Copies of minutes of resolutions	\$0.75 per page
Driveway Permit	\$150
Driveway Bond (refundable)	\$1,500
Certified list of property owners	\$10
Subdivision approval certificate	\$25 per certificate
On-site inspections	5% of estimated cost of improvements, \$500 minimum
Zoning Permit – Residential renovations, additions, and accessory structures	\$50.00
Zoning Permit – new residential structures	\$100.00
Zoning Permit –change of use or new business	\$50.00
Zoning Permit – Commercial renovations, additions, and accessory structures	\$100.00
Zoning Permit – new commercial structure	\$100.00

**SECTION 5.** 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 6.** 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 7.** This Ordinance shall take effect after passage and publication in the manner provided by law.

**Motion made by Shipps, Second by Cuntala and carried to open public hearing.**

**Motion made by Shipps, Second by Cuntala and carried to close public hearing.**

**Motion made by Shipps, second by Cuntala and approved by roll call vote:**

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

**RESOLUTIONS**

2024-92 Fixing the Salaries and Wages of Officials, Appointees and Employees of the Township of Knowlton in the County of Warren, State of NJ for 2024

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the Mayor and Township Committee of the Township of Knowlton, in the County of Warren and State of New Jersey that the salaries of the elected officials, appointees and employees of the Township of Knowlton, in the County of Warren and State of New Jersey, shall be as follows for the year 2024:

	<b>AMOUNT</b>	<b>PER</b>
Mayor	4,196.00	Year
Committee Member	3,584.00	Year
Acting Clerk	60,008.00	Year
Registered Municipal Clerk Classes	750.00	Per Class
Deputy Clerk and Registrar	65,646.00	Year
Deputy Clerk (Hourly Rate)	28.85	Hour
Deputy Registrar	2,972.00	Year
Administrative Assistant	16.37	Hour
American Rescue Plan Reporting (Year 3 of 4)	4,000.00	Year
Recreation Director	9,740.00	Year
Recreation Laborer (P/T)	15.00-18.74	Hour
Tax Assessor	20,698.00	Year
Property List Certification	10.00	as billed
Tax Collector	25,000.00	Year
Deputy Tax Collector	23.51	Hour
Code Enforcement Official	13,959.00	Year
Code Enforcement Official Court Appearance	43.38	hour
Public Works Manager	35.06	hour
Public Works Assist. Supervisor	31.12	hour
Public Works Assist. Supervisor	28.66	hour
Public Works Laborer II	27.00	hour
Public Works Laborer III	17.42	hour
Public Works Driver/Laborer Part Time	15.00-20.00	hour
Animal Control Officer	8,000.00	Year
Driveway Inspector	30.09	per inspection
Emergency Management Coordinator	4,376.00	Year
Emergency Management Assistant	38.75	Hour
Emergency Management Deputy	1,927.00	Year

9-1-1 Coordinator	2,091.00	Year
Clean Communities Supervisor	3,710.00	Year
Maintenance Custodian	8,685.00	Year
Chief Financial Officer (Interlocal)	30,580.00	Year

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that other employees’ benefits and compensation are set forth in a Personnel Policy, as amended.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this resolution shall be retroactive to January 1, 2024, except as otherwise noted.

2024-93 Redemption Of Tax Sale Certificate 2011-15 & 2020-001

**WHEREAS**, the property owned by Roger & Alyce Smith, known as block 28 lot 18, located at 7 + 9 Route 46 had unpaid 2010 property taxes and was sold at a Tax Sale held on 13 December 2011 by the Knowlton Township Tax Collector; and

**WHEREAS**, Stuart Lasher of PO Box 83, Milltown, NJ 08850 was the successful bidder of the above stated property. The amount of the Tax Sale consisted of unpaid 2010 property taxes, interest, and other costs, and totaled \$983.62 and is represented by Tax Sale Certificate 2011-015; and

**WHEREAS**, the Estate of Alyce Smith, the Executor for the supposed owner of the property, paid \$58,995.49 on 01 October 2024 to the Knowlton Township Tax Collector to satisfy the outstanding Tax Sale Certificate 2015-11 (\$25,547.41), subsequent taxes, Municipal Lien 2020-001 (\$33,448.08) and current taxes:

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Mayor and Township Committee of the Township of Knowlton on this 7<sup>th</sup> day of October 2024 that the Chief Financial Officer be authorized to draw a check payable to Stuart Lasher in the amount of \$25,547.41.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that since the Tax Sale Certificate was destroyed by flooding, a Certificate of Redemption shall be issued to the Estate of Alyce Smith and mailed to Richard Keiling, at 1 Amackassin Road, Blirstown, NJ 07825.

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

2024-94- Resolution Supporting “Municipal Planning Incentive Grant Application “ For The 2026 Funding Round

**WHEREAS**, Knowlton Township has an active Farmland Preservation Program, mostly funded by the State Agricultural Development Committee (SADC); and

**WHEREAS**, the SADC requires a yearly submittal of a “Municipal Planning Incentive Grant Application” or a letter indicating there is no change or only minor changes from the last application; and

**WHEREAS**, there were no changes from the last application in the list of target farms, preserved farms or farms that received final approval; and

**WHEREAS**, the SADC requires that the annual application or letter indicating no or minor change be accompanied by a resolution of support from the governing body (NJAC 2:76 – 17A.6(a)3)

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Governing Body of Knowlton Township hereby supports the letter indicating there is no change from the last application for the 2026 funding round in lieu of a “Municipal Planning Incentive Grant Application”

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

#### 2024-95 Enabling Resolution

**WHEREAS**, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Green Acres Program (“State”), provides loans and/or grants to municipal and county governments and grants to nonprofit organizations for assistance in the acquisition and development of lands for outdoor recreation and conservation purposes; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township of Knowlton has previously obtained a Green Acres loan of \$0 and a Green Acres grant of \$290,753.84 from the State to fund the following project(s):

# 2113-03-079 Knowlton Township Open Space Acquisition; and

**WHEREAS**, the State and the Township of Knowlton intend to increase Green Acres funding by \$500,000.00, to increase Green Acres funding to a total of \$790,753.84.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE** Knowlton Township Committee that:

1. The Mayor of the above-named body or board is hereby authorized to execute an agreement and any amendment(s) thereto with the State known as # 2113-03-079 Knowlton Township Open Space Acquisition and;
2. The applicant agrees to provide its matching share to the Green Acres funding, if a match is required, in the amount of \$790,753.84 and;
3. The applicant agrees to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations in its performance of the project, and;
4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

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

## 2024-96 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 Shipps, second by Cuntala and approved by roll call vote:  
Bates-yes, Cuntala-yes, Mazza-yes, Van Horn-yes, Shipps-yes**

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### 6 Magnolia Drive Housing Rehabilitation Approval

Mr. Eric Snyder prepared a packet for the committees review regarding a candidate for the housing rehabilitation program. The applicant is seeking a new roof for their home. Mr. Snyder successfully secured four recommended contractors, prepared solicitation for proposals, received four proposals, the lowest of which was accepted by the applicant. Mr. Snyder is seeking authorization from the committee for work to begin. The committee agreed all necessary steps have been taken and approved for the work for begin.

**Motion made by Shipps, second by Cuntala and approved by roll call vote:  
Bates-yes, Cuntala-yes, Mazza-yes, Van Horn-yes, Shipps-yes Approved 6 Magnolia Dr Housing Rehabilitation**

### Village of Columbia Truck Traffic

Mayor Shipps advises the public that the Township would like to move forward with hiring New Jersey State Police to monitor the Village of Columbia a few hours a week to reduce truck traffic. The cost to hiring an officer would be set at \$114.00/hr.

**Motion made by Shipps, second by Cuntala and approved by roll call vote:  
Bates-yes, Cuntala-yes, Mazza-yes, Van Horn-yes, Shipps-yes Approved to hire New Jersey State Police at \$114.00/hr.**

### Snow Plow Hourly Wage

Mayor Shipps discusses the hourly rate for Snow Plowing. Committeeman Bates suggests \$25/hr and \$30/hr if they hold a CDL.

### Spring Clean Up

Mayor Shipps discusses holding a second clean up in the spring for residents. The committee agreed to keep it to once per year, in the Fall.

### Koeck Rd Traffic Study

Mayor Shipps addresses the speed limit on Koeck Rd. Township engineers agree that 45 mph is high for that specific road. A traffic study would need to be performed by the engineers to move forward with any changes. Mayor Shipps asks NJSP if they can monitor that road more frequently.

### Halloween

Mayor Shipps advised the public that Halloween will be held on October 31st from 4pm-8pm.



2025 Knowlton WWTP Escalation  
Tabled until November 18<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**MEETING MINUTES**

September 9<sup>th</sup> Public Session Meeting Minutes

**Motion made by Shipps, second by Cuntala and approved by roll call vote:**

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT- AGENDA ITEMS**

Mr. Bob McNinch wanted to commend the committee for taking action on the truck traffic on Decatur Street.  
Mayor Shipps thanked Mr. McNinch.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion made by Shipps, second by Cuntala and carried to adjourn tonight's meeting at 9:30 pm.**