TOWNSHIP OF KNOWLTON
COUNTY OF WARREN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING
August 10, 2026

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM with the Salute to the Flag.

Open Public Meetings Act:

The meeting was held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act (as amended by Public Law 2025, chapter 72). Notice of this meeting and the agenda was posted on Knowlton Township's website and on the bulletin board at the municipal building.
Please be advised that this meeting is being recorded.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Deputy Mayor Baley, Committeeman Mazza, Committeewoman Starrs and Mayor Shipps. Also, present were Clerk Shipps and Attorney St. Angelo. Committeeman Lembeck was absent.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Pam Rusweiller (Knowlton) raised concerns regarding the Committee's reduced quorum due to a member's continued absence and questioned if the Township is still compensating that member. Mayor Shipps confirmed the Committee remains a five-member body, that the matter would be addressed in executive session, and that the absent member continues to be compensated on a monthly basis. Ms. Ruswiller also followed up on the ongoing water treatment system filter/membrane documentation dispute with the Township's vendor (Portasoft); Attorney St. Angelo advised that correspondence with the vendor is ongoing and that she copies Committee members on such correspondence.
- Hal Bromm (Delaware) provided an update on the Township's long-running effort to secure a new NJDEP lease for the Ramsayburg property, reporting on a July 17 meeting with representatives from NJDEP Parks, Forestry, and Historic Sites, and noting the matter is expected to be on the State House Commission agenda next month, with an anticipated lease term of approximately 20 years. He also responded to a committee question regarding historic resources recently identified along the Brugler Trail, noting the Historic Commission has been reviewing research on the area and expects to bring recommendations forward in the near future.

- Sharon Valentine (Knowlton) raised a question regarding transparency of spending by organizations that receive Township funding, while commending the Fire Department and Rescue Squad's work. Mayor Shipps responded that, beginning in the third quarter, the Township will require a profit-loss statement from any organization before disbursing 2027 funding.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Public Works:
DPW reported completion of road paving, with minor follow-up needed on edge fill and line striping. The county-completed bridge repair project was finished. A second round of roadside mowing is underway due to heavy rain growth, and pothole/road patching continues, including Poppy's Court (scheduled) and Ivan Road (requiring further coordination with the Township Engineer on drainage). DPW assisted with the movie night at Tunnel Field (projector setup) and reported that the popcorn machine worked well. The Tunnel Field NJDOT grant work is expected to be completed within a few weeks, after which fencing quotes will be obtained. DPW is also awaiting a meeting with the Township's IT/network vendor (Planet Networks) to finalize Wi-Fi/internet quotes for Tunnel Field and is pursuing a six-month state approval process for engine-brake ("Jake brake") warning signage, which the Township would supply if the State agreed to install it.

Fire & Rescue:
The Fire Department reported 101 fire incidents year-to-date and 18 incidents in July 2026: 3 motor vehicle accidents, 3 EMS assist/CO-related calls, 3 calls canceled in route, 1 structure fire, 1 other investigation, 2 trail calls, 2 power lines down, 1 water rescue, and 1 brush fire; EMS additionally stood by for 3 Atlantic EMS calls. Two sets of turnout gear were sent out for repair and cleaning, and the Department participated in a hose and nozzle demonstration in preparation for replacing hose that failed testing.

Nicholas Jacobson, a returning member, was approved to rejoin as a member (transferring his relief status)
Motion made by Deputy Mayor Baley, second by Committeeman Mazza and carried to approve Nicholas Jacobson as a returning member.

I-80/611/Amtrak (Lackawanna Cutoff) Area Update:
Tara Mezzanotte reported that Congressman Kean's office sent a formal letter to the U.S. Department of the Interior in support of the region's Delaware Water Gap Gateway Community effort under the Explore Act, requesting updates on the Section 132 Real-Time Data Pilot Program and consideration of the area for the Section 133 Recreation Monitoring Initiative. She also reported on a concerning proposed federal rule change to Section 106 historic preservation review that could remove "landscapes" (such as the Delaware Water Gap) from historic-resource protection, potentially eliminating NJDOT's obligation to consult with the Township as a formal consulting party on Route 80/611 projects. She requested, and the Committee authorized, her drafting a resolution of comment for Committee review once the related federal public comment period opens (expected within approximately 30 days), in coordination with other affected municipalities.

MINUTES:
July 13, 2026, Executive Session Meeting Minutes
July 13, 2026, Public Session Meeting Minutes

Motion made Mayor Shipps and seconded by Committeeman Mazza and carried to approve the above minutes.

ORDINANCES:

Public Hearing/Adoption:
Ordinance 2026-12 – An Ordinance to Provide for Road Improvements and Overlay within the Township of Knowlton and to Provide for the Funding Thereof.
AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR ROAD IMPROVEMENTS AND OVERLAYS WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP OF KNOWLTON AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE FUNDING THEREOF

BE IT ORDAINED the Township Committee of the Township of Knowlton, County of Warren and State of New Jersey, that the following be properly authorized:

Road Improvements and Overlays	$230,000.00

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that the financing for the above is as follows:

Capital Improvement Fund	$ 66,000.00
Reserve for Road Improvements	$164,000.00

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that the period of usefulness of the improvements is in excess of the five (5) year statutory requirement, and that no debt shall be incurred by the Township for this improvement authorization.

The capital budget conforms with the provisions of this ordinance to the extent of any inconsistency therewith and the resolution promulgated by the Local Finance Board showing full details of the Capital Budget and Capital Program as approved by the Director, Division of Local Government Services as on file with the Municipal Clerk is available for public inspection.

This ordinance shall take effect immediately upon passage and publication in accordance with the law.

Motion made by Mayor Shipps, second by Deputy Mayor Baley and carried to open the public hearing.
No public comment was received.
Motion made by Mayor Shipps, second by Deputy Mayor Baley and carried to close the public hearing.
Motion made by Mayor Shipps, second by Committeewoman Starrs and approved by roll call vote.
Roll Call: Baley – Yes; Mazza – Yes; Starrs – Yes; Shipps – Yes (Lembeck absent). Motion carried 4-0. Ordinance 2026-12 was adopted.

Introduction:
Ordinance 2026-13 – An Ordinance Amending Permit Requirements for Use of Township Parks.

WHEREAS, the Township of Knowlton desires to alter the requirements for the issuance of a permit to use Township park facilities.

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 134-28 of the Knowlton Township Code regarding permits for use of Township park facilities, hereby amended as follows (additions noted in bold italic *thus*, and deletions noted in strikethrough ~~thus~~):

A. No park grounds or facility shall be reserved for use or rented by any group, organization or individual for any activity, function or meeting unless a permit for its use or rental has first been obtained from the Knowlton Township Recreation Director. *A person or entity seeking such a permit must complete the application form on file with the Township Clerk's office and provide all information required there, including the required insurance certificate.* The granting of a permit shall entitle the holder thereof to precedence in the use of the facility.

B. Permits for the use of facilities shall be required for any and all activities or functions of any size or type and shall be governed by the rules and regulations of the Township Committee and shall be subject to such schedule of fees as may be imposed or fixed by the Township Committee.

C. The fees for reservation of park facilities are as follows:

(1) Daily pavilion rental: fee of *$200* ~~$100~~.

(2) Field usage: $20 per hour per field.

(3) Use of bathrooms at Tunnel Field *(for team sports only)*: $200 security deposit. The security deposit is to guarantee that the bathrooms are not damaged and will not require extraordinary cleaning after their usage. The deposit shall be returned to the applicant after it has been determined that bathrooms were left in an acceptable condition by the applicant and/or attendees.

D. Events and activities sponsored by the Knowlton Athletic Association, the Knowlton Township Recreation Committee or the Knowlton Recreation Foundation are exempt from the permit requirement provided that these events and activities are scheduled and approved by the Knowlton Township Recreation Director and the security deposit is paid.

E. Fees and deposits may be waived for other community organizations with the approval of the Knowlton Township Committee.

F. A refund of fees will be made for cancellations received 48 hours prior to the start of the event or activity. Refunds for cancellations made within 48 hours of the start of the event or activity may be granted with the approval of the Knowlton Township Committee.

SECTION 2. 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 3. 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 4. This Ordinance shall take effect after passage and publication in the manner provided by law.

Motion made by Mayor Shipps, seconded by Deputy Mayor Baley seconded, carried (all in favor) to introduce Ordinance 2026-13.

CONSENT AGENDA:
Item 1 (Resolution Approving the Bylaws of the Knowlton Township Environmental Commission) was pulled from the Consent Agenda at the Mayor's request so that the full Committee could review the bylaws before acting on them.
2026-96 A Resolution Approving the Bylaws of the Knowlton Township Environmental Commission/ Naturally Knowlton Green Team.
2026-103 Resolution Amending and Updating the Knowlton Township Personnel/ Policy Manual.
WHEREAS, the Township of Knowlton seeks to update its Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual.

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 Township of Knowlton Personnel / Policy Manual is updated in accordance with the attached exhibit (deletions noted in strikethrough ~~thus~~ and additions noted in underline thus) as follows:

    a. Section 3, "New Jersey Family Leave Act and Family and Medical Leave Act Policy" is amended to be compliant with P.L.2025, c.279.

    b. Section 3, "Family Leave Insurance" is added to be compliant with applicable law, including P.L.2025, c.279.

2. A copy of the updated Township of Knowlton Personnel / Policy Manual shall be on file with the Clerk's office.

3. A copy of this Resolution and updated policies shall be distributed to all Township employees.

4. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

2026-104 Extension of 3rd Quarter Property Tax Due Date.
WHEREAS, the Certification of the Tax Rate by the County Tax Board from the NJDCA was delayed; and
WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 54:4-64(4) states: Notwithstanding the provisions of any law to the contrary, the third installment of current year taxes shall not be subject to interest until the later of August 1, the additional interest-free period authorized pursuant to R.S.54:4-67, or the twenty-fifth calendar day after the date that the tax bill for the third installment was mailed or otherwise delivered. Any payment received after the later of August 1, the additional interest-free period authorized pursuant to R.S.54:4-67, or the twenty-fifth calendar day after the date that the tax bill for the third installment was mailed or otherwise delivered may be charged interest back to August 1. The tax bill shall contain a notice specifying the date on which interest may begin to accrue.
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Committee of the Township of Knowlton, in the County of Warren and in State of New Jersey hereby authorizes that the third quarter property tax grace period shall be extended to August 31, 2026.

2026-105 Fixing the Salaries and Wages of Officials, Appointees and Employees of the Township of Knowlton in the County of Warren, State of New Jersey for 2026.

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 2026:

	AMOUNT	**PER**
Mayor	4,409.00	Year
Committee Member	3,766.00	Year
Clerk	66.95	Hour
Deputy Clerk and Registrar	68,968.00	Year
Deputy Clerk (Hourly Rate)	30.31	Hour
Deputy Registrar	3,123.00	Year
Administrative Assistant	20.60	Hour
Recreation Director	8,240.00	Year
Tax Assessor	21,746.00	Year
Tax Collector	26,265.00	Year
Deputy Tax Collector	24.70	Hour
Code Enforcement Official	14,667.00	Year
Code Enforcement Official – Extra Hours	65.00	Hour
Code Enforcement Official Court Appearance	43.38	hour
Public Works Assist. Supervisor	36.05	hour
Public Works Assist. Supervisor	32.96	hour
Public Works Laborer II	29.87	hour
Public Works Laborer II	25.75	hour
Public Works Driver/Laborer Part Time	15.00-30.00	hour
Animal Control Officer	8,405.00	Year
Emergency Management Coordinator	4,598.00	Year
Emergency Management Assistant	40.72	Hour
Emergency Management Deputy	2,025.00	Year
9-1-1 Coordinator	2,197.00	Year
Maintenance Custodian	5,511.00	Year
Chief Financial Officer (Interlocal)	32,128.00	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, 2026, except as otherwise noted.

2026-106 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 *2025* has been filed by a Registered Municipal Accountant with the *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, N.J.S.A. 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 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 containing the auditor's findings, 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 containing the auditor's findings, 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 N.J.S.A. 52:27BB-52, to wit:

> N.J.S.A. 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 *KNOWLTON TOWNSHIP*, 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.

2026-107 Voiding of the Refunding Tax Sale Certificate 2021-001 which was Redeemed as a Subsequent Lien Payment to 2008-003 of the December 8, 2025, Resolution, and Rescinding Resolution 2026-61.

WHEREAS, the property owned by George, Christopher, known as block 3 lot 36, located at 10 Summer Lane had unpaid 2021-001 tax sale lien and was sold at a Tax Sale held on 10 December 2021 by the Knowlton Township Tax Collector to Pro Cap; and

WHEREAS, Uttam "Fred" Dadlani of 20 Birch Street, Jersey City, NJ 07305 was the successful bidder of the above stated property for tax sale certificate 2008-003. The amount of the Tax Sale certificate 2021-001 totaled $39,475.41 and is represented as a subsequent payment to the 2008-003 certificate; and

WHEREAS, Resolution 2026-61 was adopted by the Township Committee of the Township of Knowlton on April 27, 2026 for this same purpose, but inadvertently identified the incorrect party and address; and

WHEREAS, the subsequent payment was not the proper amount to redeem the lien and therefore voiding the redemption by subsequent payment leaving the 2008-003 lien with ProCap.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Township Committee of the Township of Knowlton on this 10th day of August 2026 that the Chief Financial Officer be authorized to draw a check payable to Uttam "Fred" Dadlani in the amount of $39,475.41 to refund the amount of the subsequent voided; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Resolution 2026-61, adopted April 27, 2026, is hereby rescinded and superseded in its entirety by this Resolution 2026-107.

2026-108 Approving 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 Mayor Shipps, seconded by Deputy Mayor Baley, and approved by roll call vote, Consent Agenda Items 2–7 (Item 1 pulled).
Roll Call: Baley – Yes; Mazza – Yes; Starrs – Yes; Shipps – Yes (Lembeck absent). Motion carried 4-0.

Unfinished Business:
Tunnel Field Security Camera Quotes – DPW is awaiting a meeting with Planet Networks to finalize camera and coverage needs before quotes can be obtained.
Streetlights – Mayor Shipps is following up with the Township Engineer regarding non-functioning streetlights. Deputy Mayor Baley separately noted several additional out along Route 94 in Hainesburg.

Server & Software Update – The Committee approved moving forward with the IT infrastructure, backup, and email conversion quote from Jean Paul Reece (ARAE Network Solutions), at an approximate cost of $20,000 (excluding new computer hardware). In connection with this item, the Committee also reviewed and reduced the Township's email mailbox count from 22 to 16 by eliminating unused or duplicate accounts, reducing the ongoing cost of the upgrade.
Motion made Committeeman Mazza, seconded Deputy Mayor Baley and approved by roll call vote.
Roll Call: Baley – Yes; Mazza – Yes; Starrs – Yes; Shipps – Yes (Lembeck absent). Motion carried 4-0.

New Business:
Title Search Vendor for Tax Foreclosure Properties – The Township Attorney obtained quotes from title search companies for the 11 properties being considered for in rem tax foreclosure: two companies quoted $350 per property (inclusive of upper-court searches, needed if the Township proceeds to foreclosure), and one quoted a flat $2,500 for all properties (but excluding upper-court searches, which would then need to be ordered separately). The Committee selected Majestic Title Agency at $350 per property.
Motion made Mayor Shipps, seconded Deputy Mayor Baley, and approved by roll call vote.
Roll Call: Baley – Yes; Mazza – Yes; Starrs – Yes; Shipps – Yes (Lembeck absent). Motion carried 4-0.

LDD (Gypsy Moth) Egg Mass Survey – The Committee authorized the Township to reapply for the county/state egg mass survey program, as done in prior years.

Brugler Trail Preservation and Public Safety Plan – The Committee discussed how to proceed with the Brugler Trail project in light of both public-safety concerns (a stand of hazardous dead ash trees along the trail alignment) and newly identified historic resources in the surrounding area (including a wagon road, a cattle road, a railroad spur, a stone wing wall, and remaining cattle fencing). The Committee agreed that public safety takes priority and that the hazard trees should be removed, with a local volunteer arborist offering to donate tree-removal services (subject to providing proof of insurance, naming the Township as an additional insured, and formal Committee acceptance of the donated services pursuant to applicable statute). The Committee agreed that no fencing will be installed around the area of historic interest and that the project should remain open and transparent to the public rather than confidential. The Committee asked the Historic Commission to review and weigh in on protection of the identified resources before tree removal and trail work proceed.

Correspondence:
July 17, 2026, Tara Mezzanotte
Brugler Lime Kiln Preservation, Public Safety & Access,
July 27, 2026, Tara Mezzanotte
Kean DWG Explore Act 7.22.2026.

Township Committee Reports:
Deputy Mayor Baley:
Reported on Finance that the Committee had approved the server/software purchase discussed under New Business. Reported that Recreation's movie night was a great success and thanked DPW and Kathy for their work.

Committeeman Mazza:
Reported no update on the Land Use Board (the last meeting was canceled due to weather), Office of Aging, Tourism & Business, Transportation, Fire/Emergency, or Insurance. Declined to comment publicly on Wastewater, noting the matter would be discussed in executive session. Reported that he filed an email regarding Recycling that would also be discussed in executive session.

Committeewoman Starrs:
Reported that she met with NJDEP officials regarding Ramseyburg on July 17 (further detail reserved for executive session). Reported that she and Committeeman Mazza met regarding the Township's sewer/wastewater matter and have a meeting scheduled with the project engineer on August 20.

Mayor Shipps:
Reported on Finance that the Committee approved spending for the server/software upgrade and for title searches necessary to pursue delinquent tax foreclosure properties. Reported on Recreation that Yoga in the Park will not continue because the host did not renew, that the Township received a request to host a pickleball tournament (which Committeewoman Starrs will help facilitate), and that another movie night is planned for early September (date to be determined). Reported that the Township's Community Day has been moved to Saturday, October 24, from 12:00 to 5:00 PM, and will be a larger event this year in celebration of the Township's 250th anniversary. Reported on Utilities that she will continue to follow up with the Township Engineer on streetlights.

Public Comment – Agenda Items Only:
Sharon Valentine (Knowlton) suggested the Township consider a suggestion box, similar to those used at some parks, for public input regarding county tourism efforts related to the Delaware Water Gap.

Tara Mezzanotte clarified a misunderstanding regarding the Brugler Trail project, stating that no new fencing is being proposed; the suggestion was only to use lightweight cattle fencing to cover certain holes in place of using an excavator, a concept the Committee had already discussed and addressed in May.

A resident asked how to volunteer for trail cleanups. The Clerk will provide a volunteer application.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:
Motion made by Mayor Shipps, seconded by Deputy Mayor Baley and carried (all in favor) to go into executive session at 8:10 p.m.

2026-108a Authorizing Executive Session

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.

Motion made by Mayor Shipps, second by Committeewoman Starrs and carried to return to Open (Public) Session at 9:25 p.m.

Upon returning to Open (Public) Session, the mayor read into the record and adopted Resolution 2026-109 (Resolution Declaring the Committee Seat Held by Ryan Lembeck Vacant Due to Absenteeism, Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:16-3).

Resolution 2026-109 (adopted in Public Session upon return from Executive Session): Resolution Declaring the Office of Committee Member Held by Ryan Lembeck Vacant Due to Absenteeism, Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:16-3

WHEREAS N.J.S.A. 40A:16-3 establishes the basis for the office of a member of the municipal governing body to be deemed vacant; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:16-3(g) establishes that where a member of the governing body fails to attend and participate in meetings of a public body for a period of eight consecutive weeks, or for four consecutive regular meetings, whichever is of longer duration, the governing body may officially remove said member, deem the position vacant, and fill the position for the unexpired term pursuant to applicable law; and

WHEREAS Ryan Lembeck has missed four consecutive regular meetings of the Knowlton Township Committee between May 2026 and August 2026, and has additionally missed the regular meetings of February 9, 2026, and March 23, 2026; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Lembeck has additionally failed to fulfill the duties of his subcommittee assignments; and

WHEREAS, in Mr. Lembeck's absence, only four Committee members remain eligible to vote, which could result in tie votes; and

WHEREAS, Committee members receive an approximate annual stipend of $3,766, and the Township owes its residents fiscal responsibility;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Knowlton, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, as follows:
The governing body hereby finds the position held by Ryan Lembeck to be vacant, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:16-3, as a result of Mr. Lembeck's failure to attend four consecutive meetings over a period of more than eight weeks, effective with the adoption of this resolution, and shall separately, after adoption of this resolution, fill the aforesaid position for the unexpired term in the manner prescribed by law. A copy of this resolution shall be sent to the Knowlton Township Republican Committee with a request to take action pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:16-11. This resolution shall take effect immediately.
Motion made by Mayor Shipps, second by Committeeman Mazza and approved by roll call vote.
Roll Call: Baley – Yes; Mazza – Yes; Starrs – Yes; Shipps – Yes (Lembeck absent – seat declared vacant by this resolution). Motion carried 4-0.

Adjournment:
Motion made by Committeewoman Starrs, seconded, and carried Committeeman Mazza (all in favor) to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristin Shipps,
Municipal Clerk, RMC