

**MINUTES OF KNOWLTON TOWNSHIP
WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
January 9, 2017**

The monthly meeting of the Knowlton Township Committee was held on this date at the Municipal Building, 628 Route 94, Columbia, New Jersey. This meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Mayor Starrs.

Mayor Starrs led the public in the pledge of allegiance.

The Mayor read the following statement in compliance with the "Open Public Meetings Act":
"In accordance with Chapter 231 of the Public Laws of 1975, notice of this meeting was given by way of publication with the Star Gazette and/or the Express-Times, filed in the Municipal Clerk's Office and posted in the Knowlton Municipal Building."

Roll Call

Present: Deputy Mayor Cuntala, Committeeman Farber, Committeewoman Shipp, Committeeman Van Horn and Mayor Starrs

Also present was Township Engineer Ted Rodman and Township Attorney Dick Cushing.

Moment of Silence for Eugene F. Neiderlander- Former Township Committeeman who passed away on December 29, 2016.

EXECUTIVE SESSION Motion to go into Closed Session: Mayor Starrs. Seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and carried at 7:04.

Resolution

WHEREAS, Section 8 of the Open Public Meeting Act, Chapter 231, P.L.1975 permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting under certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist.

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

1. The public shall be excluded from that portion of this meeting
2. The general nature of the subject matter to be discussed is as follows:
 - A. Personnel Interviews for Professional Services
 - B. Litigation

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, Seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and carried to come out of Closed Session at 8:46p.m. and return to Regular Session.

PRESENTATION

Beth Styler Barry, Nature Conservancy

Ms. Barry would like to have open communication with the Township and residents regarding the Columbia Dam. Kerri Pflugh from NJDEP was also present to answer questions. Committeeman Van Horn listed his objections to the dam removal and stated that a fish ladder is the better solution. Committeeman Van Horn felt that the first presentation from the Nature Conservancy had information that was not true. Ms. Barry responded that fish ladders are specie specific and not effective as an alternative. Ms. Barry stated that liability is the number one reason for the dam removal. There have been many deaths reported on dams similar to the Columbia Dam. Ms. Barry

stated that it is an accident waiting to happen. While visiting the dam she has noticed empty beer cans it has become a hangout for teenagers. Ms. Barry also said that the dam did not generate electricity consistently. Committeeman Farber stated that this is the first time that he is hearing about liability issues and questioned why the state is not worried about the most dangerous spot in Knowlton Township which is the Paulins Kill viaduct. Mayor Starrs explained that the decision to tear down the dam is up to the owner, the NJDEP. If the dam is taken down, she stated that Knowlton should have a say in what goes there. Committeeman Farber volunteered to lead a subcommittee of residents to plan the park should the DEP choose to remove the dam. The Committee agreed to have Ms. Barry return after the DEP hearing. Resident Bob McNinch asked if the Nature Conservancy would change their minds on removing the dam. Ms. Barry expressed that the State makes that decision. Ms. Barry and Ms. Pflugh continued to take questions from residents in the hallway of the Municipal Building.

Dominick Santini, Municipal Judge

Judge Santini discussed changes that were made in the New Jersey criminal justice system. There is a new system to discourage the use of bail.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Ken Metcalf, Historic Commission-

Mr. Metcalf gave an update on Ramseysburg They are looking into putting a walkway from the back of the house leading to the trail. Mr. Metcalf also stated that Millbrook Village has donated an enclosed walking bridge, which they hope to put over the existing pond area. Committeeman Van Horn and resident Bill Clifford offered their assistance in getting the bridge from Millbrook Village to Ramseysburg.

Dean Hill, Fire Dept. Chief-

Mr. Hill is still waiting on some numbers from St. Luke's but told the committee that in 2016 there were 245 calls, 182 were fire related, 55 EMS related, and 8 cancellations. Volunteer EMS has 113 call volunteers, which is up from 37 last year.

Ted Rodman, Engineer

Mr. Rodman explained that he is looking at other townships to get ideas for the salt shed. Mr. Rodman address the consent letter sent from Verizon Wireless regarding putting small node boxes on existing or possible new utility poles to improve service for Verizon Wireless customers. Mayor Starrs and Committeeman Farber voiced concerns about these new boxes. Attorney Dick Cushing recommended and the Committee agreed to invite Verizon to come to a committee meeting and explain.-

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Resident Clint Jones came to the meeting regarding his incident with ACO Alan DeCarolis regarding not picking up a cat. Attorney Dick Cushing recommended that the committee not comment if the ACO did his job but can talk about the Township's general policy. Committeewoman Shipp agreed to look into the Township's policy regarding picking up sick cats.

Resident Ken Metcalf stated Knowlton Methodist Church is looking to expand. Mr. Metcalf would like to know who to talk to. Attorney Cushing suggested that they speak to the zoning officer first.

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION 2017-21 -Resolution Requesting Revision of the Statutorily Assigned Base Year for the Alcohol Education, Rehabilitation, and Enforcement Fund By the New Jersey Legislature

WHEREAS, the Alcohol Education, Rehabilitation and Enforcement Fund (N.J.S.A. 26:2B-35(b)(3), Chapter 531, Laws of 1983) was established for the purpose of assisting municipal courts in their efforts to process Driving While Intoxicated (DWI) matters; and

WHEREAS, this fund is allocated to municipalities to pay for costs related to DWI cases including compensation to municipal court judges, municipal prosecutors, and other municipal court personnel, as well as to pay for any other items needed to manage or process DWI cases; and

WHEREAS, a significant number of NJ municipalities, including Knowlton Township, do not receive compensation from the Municipal Court Alcohol Education Rehabilitation and Enforcement Fund because they are eligible *only if* the number of DWI arrests made in the municipality during the previous year was greater than the number of DWI arrests made in the municipality during the statutorily assigned base year; and

WHEREAS, the statutorily assigned base year is 1983; and

WHEREAS, in 1983 the purchase of alcohol by persons under the age of 21 was legal and may have contributed to DWI statistics that are higher than they are now*; and

WHEREAS, in 1983 DWIs in Knowlton Township numbered 77; and

WHEREAS, in 2015 DWIs in Knowlton Township numbered 33, and thus last year Knowlton did not receive any DWI funds; and

WHEREAS, Knowlton Township has not met the threshold of 77 or received compensation from the fund for many years; and

WHEREAS, Knowlton Township is still required to hold the trials for DWI cases, which are time-consuming and require scheduling extra court sessions to meet the time limits for trials imposed by the Administrative Office of Courts; and

WHEREAS, a single extra court session for Knowlton Township currently costs approximately \$2,000; and

WHEREAS, the disparity in DWI reimbursement disproportionately affects Warren County, with 70 % of the towns in Warren County, NJ, not receiving any funds in 2015, though they were still obligated to pay for processing DWI cases in their municipalities; and

WHEREAS, of the 565 municipalities in the State of New Jersey, 52% did not receive any DWI funds in

2015 but were still obligated to pay for processing DWI cases in their municipalities; and

WHEREAS, the NJ Legislature has not revised the statutory base year in 33 years; and

WHEREAS, the average of several years, rather than a single year of DWI tickets, should be used to achieve a more equitable base figure for each municipality.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Committee of Knowlton hereby requests that the New Jersey Legislature revise the Municipal Court Alcohol Education Rehabilitation and Enforcement Fund's formula to include DWI arrest data that is both more recent and an average of several years' statistics for each municipality.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Township Committee of Knowlton requests the assistance of the Warren County Freeholders, the NJ League of Municipalities, and the representatives of the 24th Legislative District, Senator Steven Oroho, Assemblywoman Gail Phoebus, and Assemblyman Parker Space, to support this issue.

*The National Minimum Drinking Age Act of 1984 (23 U.S.C. § 158) was passed on July 17, 1984, and outlawed the purchase of alcoholic beverages by those under the age of 21.

Motion was made by Committeeman Farber , seconded by Committeewoman Shipps and carried to approve Resolution 2017-21

2017-22- Contracting for Professional Services Without Competitive Bidding in Accordance with the Local Public Contracts Law (N.J.S.A.40A-11.1, Et Seq.)

WHEREAS, there exists a need for contracting for professional service for the calendar year 2017; and,

WHEREAS, the Local Public Contracts Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq.) requires that the Resolution authorizing the awarding of contracts and appointments for Professional Services without competitive bidding must be publicly advertised with copies of thee contracts available for public inspection in the office of the Municipal Clerk; and,

WHEREAS, the need for these services exists for planning and zoning improvements and for development of the overall program and guidance of the Township Committee for the betterment of the Township of Knowlton:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Knowlton, Warren County, New Jersey, that pending Township Committee approval of 2017 contracts, the following persons be retained for the year:

Township Attorney	Richard Cushing, Esq. (Gebhardt & Kiefer)
Township Engineer	Rodman Associates
Township Auditor	Nisovoccia
Township Prosecutor	James Pfeiffer, Esq.
Special Council	David F. Corrigan, Esq. (The Corrigan Law Firm)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be published in the official Township newspapers as required by law.

Motion was made by Deputy Mayor Cuntala, Seconded by Committeeman Farber and approved by Roll Call vote Cuntala--yes, Farber -- yes, Shipps--yes, Van Horn--yes, Starrs--yes resolution 2017-22

2017-23- Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Fiscal Grant Cycle July 2014- June 2019

WHEREAS, the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse established the Municipal Alliances for the Prevention of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse in 1989 to educate and engage residents, local government and law enforcement officials, schools, nonprofit organizations, the faith community, parents, youth and other allies in efforts to prevent alcoholism and drug abuse in communities throughout New Jersey.

WHEREAS, The Township Committee of the Township of Knowlton, County of Warren, State of New Jersey recognizes that the abuse of alcohol and drugs is a serious problem in our society amongst persons of all ages; and therefore has an established Municipal Alliance Committee; and,

WHEREAS, the Township Committee further recognizes that it is incumbent upon not only public officials but upon the entire community to take action to prevent such abuses in our community; and,

WHEREAS, the Township Committee has applied for funding to the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse through the County of Warren;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township of Knowlton, County of Warren, State of New Jersey hereby recognizes the following:

1. The Township Committee does hereby authorize submission of a strategic plan for the Knowlton Township Municipal Alliance grant for fiscal year 2018 in the amount of:

DEDR \$ 4,113.00

Cash Match \$ 1,234.00

In-Kind \$ 3,085.00

2. The Township Committee acknowledges the terms and conditions for administering the Municipal Alliance grant, including the administrative compliance and audit requirements.

Motion was made Deputy Mayor Cuntala, Seconded by Committeeman Farber and carried to approve resolution 2017-23

OLD BUSINESS

Newspaper Policy

After committee discussion it was agreed to keep using *The Express Times* and *Star Gazette* as the township official papers, since no one newspaper meets the requirements of the law.

NEW BUSINESS

Volunteer Fireman application review

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Committeeman Farber and carried to approve the Volunteer Fireman application for Tami Chipko.

CORRESPONDENCE

Speeding on Washington St.

Complaints should be addressed by the state. Mayor Starrs will forward the email complaints to Committeeman Van Horn so he can address these issues with Debbie Hirt from DOT.

Mayor Starrs has received communication with Mr. Mulhall and he is ready to sit with the agencies involved with the salt issues. Mr. Mulhall recommends that the agencies split the cost for installing Reverse Osmosis filters in the homes that tested high in salt.

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and carried to approve, that at the upcoming multi agency meeting, the Township will propose splitting the cost of the Reverse Osmosis filters with all the agencies.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

December 12, 2016 Public Meeting Minutes

Motion was made by Deputy Mayor Cuntala, seconded by Committeeman Farber and carried to approve the December 12, 2016 Public Meeting Minutes. Van Horn and Shipps abstained.

December 12, 2016 Executive Session Minutes

Motion was made by Deputy Mayor Cuntala, seconded by Committeeman Farber and carried to approve the December 12, 2016 Executive Session Minutes. Van Horn and Shipps abstained.

January 4, 2017 Reorganization Meeting

Motion was made by Deputy Mayor Cuntala, seconded by Committeeman Farber and carried to approve the January 4, 2017 Reorganization Meeting Minutes.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Resident Bill Clifford asked about a resolution that has been passed in prior years regarding non-profit organizations being exempt from certain township fees. Acting Clerk Shipps will look into that.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Mayor Starrs, seconded by Deputy Mayor Cuntala and carried to adjourn tonight's Township meeting at 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristin Shipps
Acting Municipal Clerk