

**Town of Knox
Regular Meeting
February 10, 2015**

PRESENT: Supervisor Hammond
Councilwoman Pokorny
Councilman Barber
Councilman Viscio
Councilman Decker

ALSO: Town Attorney Dorfman
Town Clerk Murphy
Highway Superintendent Salisbury

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Supervisor Hammond opened the floor for a presentation from the Berne Public Library about the possibility of installing a “StoryWalk” in the Knox Town Park. Kathy Stempel and Donna Gwin gave a presentation describing the project which includes placing a childrens story along the walking trail of the Knox Town Park encouraging young readers to get outside and exercise. Approximately 32 stakes would be put in the ground with laminated pages from a selected book. The story title would be changes 4 times a year to be seasonally appropriate and winter StoryWalk can even be brought inside. Funding and maintenance would be come from the Friends of Berne Public Library and small grants. Possibly team up with the Youth Council in the future for maintenance and promotion as well as activities around the stories.

Councilman Viscio replied that this is a fantastic idea and will add to the youth activities in the town.

Supervisor Hammond said that this is a great use of the park and recommended to the Board to authorize this project.

RESOLUTION #25-2015 - AUTHORIZE THE BERNE PUBLIC LIBRARY TO USE THE KNOX TOWN PARK FOR THE INSTALLATION OF THE STORYWALK

On motion of Councilman Viscio, seconded by Councilman Decker, the following resolution was ADOPTED AYES 5 NAYS 0

RESOLVED to authorize the Berne Public Library to use the Knox Town Park for the

installation of the StoryWalk.

Supervisor Hammond reported that all Real Property Taxes for the General Fund, Highway Fund, Lighting District, Knox Fire District and Berne Fire District have been collected and deposited and distributed to the Fire Districts.

Supervisor Hammond opened the floor to Frank Commisso, Jr. of the Albany County Comptroller's Office to present the Albany County Local Government Collaboration for Efficiency Presentation. This project is an intergovernmental collaboration study to reduce local government costs while maintaining service levels and will include the creation of an employee database that will be used in the future for potential employee sharing among municipalities. This entire project is being funded by Albany County.

Phase 1 of this project is to meet with leaders of each municipality to discuss the project and then determine the target costs savings needed to be achieved by each municipality that is participating in this plan. The Town of Knox would have to save \$5,500 for the next 3 years if participating in this plan. Data would then be collected in order to build the local government workforce database. A designated advisory committee would then identify job functions most suitable for inter-jurisdictional collaboration and efficiencies to prioritize for development of the Phase 1 employee database.

Town Attorney John Dorfman discussed the potential for obstacles in this kind of collaboration such as union vs. non-union departments in towns.

Mr. Commisso replied that they understand there will be some challenges with this, therefore police/fire departments will not be changed. However, "back office operations" which are not unionized and more clerical in nature would be an area to look into as well as equipment sharing and possible sharing of insurance plan purchasing.

Supervisor Hammond explained that the town is already sharing equipment and man-power with other local municipalities and have shared agreements with the Albany County Highway Department building just down from our own Highway Garage. The heaviest expenses in the town are our Highway Department so that would be where we would look for additional savings.

Councilman Viscio stated that we currently have extensive shared services which allows us to meet our current tax levy. As more demands are made for services we are challenged by how to meet these. The town needs to decide whether to sign up for this project or to continue to do our own shared services and cost savings plans.

Attorney Dorfman asked if any specific language or contract has been put into writing for review before the town decides to participate.

Mr. Commisso responded that he has resolutions that have been passed by other municipalities and would share those with the town board for review, but there is no formal contract, it is more of a collaboration than a contract.

Hwy Superintendent Salisbury asked how New York State was going to participate in this project, would they be sharing any of their equipment or services. Currently the Town of Knox is working efficiently and saving and sharing whenever and wherever they can. Not sure we could find any other ways to save with only six employees currently doing all of the work and repairs needed for the town highway department.

Attorney Dorfman suggested that he would put together a proposed resolution with language to protect the town, if they do chose to participate in this project, which would not obligation the town to agree with any final determinations by the committee without the opportunity to step back.

Supervisor Hammond stated that the concept of this project sounds workable but not at the expense of town residents and requested that sample resolutions be forwarded to him for review by the board and town attorney.

John Elberfeld addressed the board on behalf of the Helderberg Community Energy, LLC to encourage the Town of Knox to become a Climate Smart Community. NYS established the Climate Smart Communities Program in 2009 to provide local governments with guidance on how to reduce green-house gas emissions, save taxpayer dollars, and advance community goals for health and safety. The program is free and open to all local governments in New York State. The program is completely voluntary and has no upfront costs with potential for benefits to the town. Because the addendum to the Comprehensive Plan is a work in progress, the timing is ideal for Knox to incorporate the above.

Councilman Viscio asked what tangible help is being offered by NYS for this project.

Mr. Elberfeld stated that it could help open doors for more grants and funding, perhaps help move the solar project forward, as well as show residents that Knox leaders are progressive and forward-thinking.

Supervisor Hammond stated that something like this must be done on a “global” level in order to make a difference and locally, goals would have to be reasonable for residents.

Councilman Viscio expressed his concern over something like this opening the town up for environmental review to require savings or changes.

Councilwoman Pokorny stated that this is a self-governing committee that would be set up by the

town with voluntary compliance so it wouldn't put the town in jeopardy.

Supervisor Hammond proposed that the board table this matter to give time for further review.

Supervisor Hammond announced that the town received a \$2,000 grant from the William G. Pomeroy Foundation for two historical/educational markers on Route 146 in our town. Daniel Driscoll successfully researched and invested a considerable amount of time in securing this grant for the town.

John Elberfeld stated that the Knox Historical Society will be hosting events around the installation of these two markers in the Spring and Fall of this year.

Supervisor Hammond introduced Glen Hebert, a certified NYS inspector, who is filling in as the code enforcement officer for the Knox Building Department doing field inspections.

Supervisor Hammond proposed moving the April Board meeting to April 7th instead of April 14th to insure that all board members are in attendance.

RESOLUTION #26-2015 - CHANGE APRIL BOARD MEETING TO APRIL 7, 2015 AND ADVERTISE DATE CHANGE IN THE PAPER.

On motion of Councilman Barber, seconded by Councilwoman Pokorny, the following resolution was ADOPTED AYES 5 NAYS 0

RESOLVED to change the April Board Meeting to April 7, 2015 and advertise date change in the paper.

Councilwoman Pokorny presented the board with a list of recommendations of items to be included in the Comprehensive Plan update. The development of a draft report is the next step and then the board will need time to review the draft.

Councilman Viscio asked if this update will be added to the Comprehensive Plan as an addendum.

Councilwoman Pokorny stated that some towns add changes right in original text, others do an addendum with an index. This is something that will need to be addressed.

Councilman Viscio suggested that this might be a good time to check in with Nan Stolzenburg about where we are and how to move forward in getting this written. It's a matter of concentrating all of the data that has been collected to make sure we are on track. Councilman Viscio stated that he was concerned that there was a lack of information on potential economic development and wondered if looking for outside prospective from experts in other municipalities would be a key component to consider before concluding this process.

Supervisor Hammond agreed it was a good idea to seek outside perspectives on this topic and to have Councilwoman Pokorny make contact with Nan Stolzenburg to see if she has any recommendations on economic experts.

Councilman Decker thanked Councilwoman Pokorny for all of her hard work and dedication to this project.

Councilman Viscio announced that there will be an Info Session on the Tennessee Pipeline on Thursday from 6-8pm and open to the public. Information can be found on the Knox facebook page. Councilman Viscio and Supervisor Hammond will be attending.

Supervisor Hammond reminded the board that the Youth Council Winterfest was being held Saturday. To prevent parking issues signs have been placed around the park and at the firehouse asking for snowmobile trailers to be parked down in the Street Road parking lot.

Councilman Decker mentioned that there has been a lot of snowmobile traffic through the town and park recently which has brought new people to the area.

Supervisor Hammond announced that a group of residents are working together to present the board with a proposal for a tree planting in honor of Kenneth White.

Supervisor Hammond stated that the auction check has been received for the highway truck that was sold.

Robert Price reminded Supervisor Hammond to send a memo to the Planning Board with a list of what needs to be updated in the Zoning Ordinance Handbook.

Councilwoman Pokorny showed the board a poster showcasing two local farmers whose products were used in a special dinner event at Albany restaurant Creo.

RESOLUTION #27-2015 – ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

On motion of Councilman Viscio, seconded by Councilman Barber, the following resolution was ADOPTED AYES 5 NAYS 0
RESOLVED to enter into executive session.

Return to general session at 10:05pm.

RESOLUTION #28-2015 – RETURN INTO GENERAL SESSION AT 10:05PM

On motion of Councilwoman Pokorny, seconded by Councilman Viscio, the following resolution was ADOPTED AYES 5 NAYS 0
RESOLVED to return to general session.

Councilman Viscio made a motion to appoint Charlotte Fuss to the position of Senior Coordinator.

RESOLUTION #29-2015 – APPOINT CHARLOTTE FUSS TO POSITION OF SENIOR COORDINATOR

On motion of Councilman Viscio, seconded by Councilman Decker, the following resolution was ADOPTED AYES 5 NAYS 0

RESOLVED to appoint Charlotte Fuss to position of Senior Coordinator.

Upon review of applications with Town Attorney a motion is made to appoint John Graves to position of Data Collector.

RESOLUTION #30-2015 – APPOINT JOHN GRAVES TO POSITION OF DATA COLLECTOR

On motion of Councilman Decker, seconded by Councilwoman Pokorny, the following resolution was ADOPTED AYES 5 NAYS 0

RESOLVED to appoint John Graves to position of Data Collector.

RESOLUTION # 31-2015 - APPROVAL OF MONTHLY REPORTS

On motion of Councilman Barber, seconded by Councilman Viscio, the following resolution was ADOPTED AYES 5 NAYS 0

RESOLVED that the Reports of the Town Clerk and the Town Supervisor for the Month of January 2015 be approved.

RESOLUTION # 32-2015 - APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion of Councilwoman Pokorny, seconded by Councilman Barber, the following resolution was ADOPTED AYES 5 NAYS 0

RESOLVED that the minutes of the January 13, 2015 meeting be approved.

RESOLUTION # 33-2015 - PAYMENT OF BILLS

On motion of Councilman Barber, seconded by Councilwoman Pokorny, the following resolution was ADOPTED AYES 5 NAYS 0

RESOLVED that the Bills be paid on General Abstract #14 of the General Fund, covering claims #487-488 & 491 in the amount of \$860.91 and of the Highway Fund, covering claims #489-490 in the amount of \$155.20 for the year 2014 and on General Abstract #002 of the General Fund, covering claim #6-18 & 30-31 in the amount of \$6,530.84 and of the Highway Fund, covering claims #19-29 in the amount of \$11,432.85 for the year 2015.

With no further business, on a motion of Councilman Barber, seconded by Councilman Viscio, the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 p.m. Carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
February 24, 2015

Tara L. Murphy