

**Town of Knox  
Regular Meeting  
March 21, 2017**

**PRESENT:** Supervisor Lefkaditis  
Councilwoman Pokorny  
Councilman Hanley  
Councilman Barber  
Councilman Barcomb

**ALSO:** Town Attorney Dorfman  
Town Clerk Murphy  
Highway Superintendent Salisbury

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Councilman Barcomb read a statement into the record: *I have spent a lot of time reflecting on recent town board meetings and my role as a town Councilman. While I am proud of what we have accomplished since I have been on the board, there are things that I regret. First of all, I'd like to take the time to apologize to Councilwoman, Amy Pokorny. Amy spends countless hours on behalf of the town of Knox. She is always willing to pitch in and help. She is selfless, generous, kind and professional. Amy always tries to do what she thinks is right and is without ulterior motives.*

*Amy took the lead and has worked tirelessly to try and secure a \$100,000 grant for the Town of Knox. We are down to the wire, trying to complete the last action item necessary to hopefully secure the grant. Amy wrote a successful grant to install an electric car charging station in the Town since other action items were out of our control as far as timeliness. In order for this action item to be completed and successfully implemented in a timely and fiscally conservative way, I felt that we needed the complete buy in and support of the town board, supervisor and highway superintendent. It was very clear to me that we didn't have that support to implement this grant. I want to be perfectly clear, however, that I believe it could have been an effective way to reach our goal of obtaining the larger grant, and that Amy Pokorny deserves credit for her selfless pursuit of it.*

*Later in that meeting, our town supervisor took it upon himself to read aloud a vindictive letter personally attacking Amy for her tireless work on this grant. While I agree that everyone is entitled to their opinions, it can and needs to be done in a respectful manner. I am sorry Amy that I didn't speak up and defend you last month.*

*I also regret not speaking up to defend the late Dan Driscoll, a planning board member, when our town supervisor attacked his selfless hard work on a proposed noise ordinance by calling it "one man's vendetta". We are fortunate to live in a town where so many talented and energetic citizens are willing to give their time. Dan's contributions to the Town of Knox have been priceless, and given without a political agenda or for self-gain. I will try to be quicker on my feet and speak up right away when these things are happening.*

*Our meetings have gotten out of hand and are an embarrassment to the town. Town board meetings need to be held in an environment where citizens can express their opinions without fear of being attacked, threatened or insulted. When our town meetings are allowed to run in this way, town citizens are discouraged from getting involved and expressing their opinions because they are uncomfortable in this toxic environment. It is our responsibility to provide a constructive decorum and not to augment the destruction of decency in our proceedings. We see enough of that in other forums, it doesn't belong here. I would ask every town official here to affirm their commitment to change in this direction.*

**RESOLUTION # 56-2017 – APPROVE TO CONSENT AGENDA AND MINUTES FROM 2.14.17 MEETING.**

On motion of Councilwoman Pokorny, seconded by Councilman Barber, the following resolution was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED to approve to consent agenda and minutes from 2.14.17 meeting.

#### 4. Presentations:

- c. Berne Public Library presentation: Judy Petrosillo reported to the board on the 2016 Annual Report. Starting in 2017 the library is now open 32 hours, 4 additional hours were added with additional funding given for 2017. Currently, there are 1,220 total library card holders, 343 are Knox residents (28%). There were 14,950 library visitors in 2016. The library has 15,804 total items in collection. Digital e-downloads were accessed by 87 patrons for a total of 1,875 downloads. The operating budget for 2016 was \$53,848; the operating disbursements were \$50,920. Of the operating fund \$28,790 covers the five part-time staff salaries. There were 176 total programs offered by the library in 2016 with 2,334 program attendees. 28 Children programs were offered, 13 Teen programs, 51 adult programs and 18 family programs. Story time, adult book clubs, family movie night and the summer reading program are still offered among others.
- a. Liaison Reports:
  - CAC – presented CAC 2016 Annual Report which will be put up on the town website for review. A lot of work was done by this group over the last year.
  - ZBA – an application for a variance was received and is in process.
  - PB – Continuing to work on large scale solar applications and SEQR report for the park plan.
  - KYC – Youth Council is working on the park improvement project and the grant application with another upcoming meeting on 3/28/17 at 6:30pm.
- d. Bob Price created a drawing of the Highway Garage and reached out to engineer, Mark Jacobson for input on the septic system there. The water seems unsafe there and should be tested. Would like to request authorization to take a water sample for testing at Bender Lab to see what we are working with there. The septic system may need to be moved. The employees deserve a better working environment with water and better insulation.

Councilman Hanley mentioned that the State and County are encouraging shared facilities with the County Highway Garage down the road. Supervisor Lefkaditis added that the County Executive has made the Town of Knox a priority shared facility because of our location to the county building. Councilman Barcomb stated that we need to start this conversation and make this a priority. Supervisor Lefkaditis is waiting to hear from the County. Councilman Barcomb stated that we should work on our own plan while we are waiting to hear from the County. Start by looking at the plan that was presented by Bob Price, a copy of which was requested by Supervisor Lefkaditis to be forwarded to the board.

Supervisor Lefkaditis added that materials have been dropped off for drainage work to be done in the spring on Route 146 by the Town Highway Garage.

Bob Price also announced that the annual Red Cross Blood Drive will be on April 8<sup>th</sup> from 8am to 1pm at the Knox Town Hall.

- e. Kenneth's Army came to announce the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Kenneth's Ride set for Saturday, June 3,

2017. Registration is at 9am at Thacher Park and ride starts at 11am. Immediately after the ride there will be a Chicken BBQ back at Thacher Park. Support is appreciated and proceeds from this event will go toward the scholarship fund for a BKW student to further their education in the field of Social Services. The group has also successfully become a 501c3 organization so all donations are tax deductible.

#### **5. Highway:**

- a. Highway Superintendent Gary Salisbury the Grader engine is complete and was picked up; hope to have it put back together shortly. A shared services agreement with the State was given to the town attorney for review. Salisbury stated this is required to move the 146 flood project forward. Attorney Dorfman will review and will call DOT to discuss further and get back to the board for the April meeting. Knox will be providing all of the work for the 146 flood project, DOT is providing all of the materials, site engineer, and traffic control.

Supervisor Lefkaditis stated that the 3.14.17 snowstorm hit the town hard and the highway crew did a great job keeping the roads clear. One truck was damaged in the storm, shattered glass. He suggested purchasing a film that can be put on the passenger windows of all plow trucks to prevent shattering in the future.

- b. FEMA – last money will be here end of April which is complete everything and everything will be paid off.

#### **6. New Business:**

- a. Emergency Preparedness meeting held on 2/13 to discuss emergency preparedness for the town. After the meeting the group discovered that the town hall has no working kitchen would could be a problem if a large event occurred in an emergency. The Reform Church across from the Town Hall has a large commercial kitchen that they would be willing to let the town use in an emergency, however there is no generator in the case of a power outage. Town looking into funding from Senator Amedore for the purchase of two generators, one for the church and one for the highway garage to be used in the case of an emergency. May need a legal agreement with the Reform Church for lease to provide for the funding of the generator. Additionally, on 3.21.17 a small local incident came up and the system was tested. Everyone worked well together and the town hall was opened up to residents who were without heat and electricity until the Red Cross stepped in.

- 4b. After School Program:** Caroline Mundell, Taryn Hanley and Vasiliki Lefkaditis, students from BKW, presented the board with an idea for an after school program to be held in the town hall once a week (Thursdays from 6:30-9pm) as a time for socializing and homework help. Adult volunteers would be needed and snacks provided. The students would plan 45 minutes for homework help followed by planned activities. Councilman Barcomb suggested that the students reach out to the Youth Council to see if they would be interested in sponsoring this activity and help to organize. Supervisor Lefkaditis suggested relooking at this in May after a discussion of rules around building use and suggested that the students go to the upcoming Youth Council meeting on 3/28/17 to discuss the idea.

Supervisor Lefkaditis stated that he reviewed the process for notifying neighbors of pending public hearings tied to various permitting (special use, variance, etc.) and currently the

responsibility is on the applicant. He suggested that the board consider shifting the responsibility to the Town accordingly to ensure proper notice is given. Lefkaditis would like to send this language back to the Planning Board for review and edits to put the onus on the town with a fee and present back to the board.

**6c. Proposed Business District Surveys** – Councilwoman Pokorny proposed a survey be sent to residents in the proposed business districts to gather solid input to be considered for this change. Supervisor Lefkaditis suggested a public notice be sent not a survey which could scare people away with loaded questions. Councilman Barcomb agreed that input was needed from potentially effected residents a survey would be a good way to hear from them in case they are not comfortable coming to a public hearing. Travis O'Donnell of the Planning Board stated that expert testimony should lay out the pros and cons at the public hearing. Supervisor Lefkaditis suggested that residents could contact board members if they didn't want to attend the public hearing. O'Donnell asked how residents would be notified that written testimony would be accepted and what would the deadline be. Lefkaditis suggested that it be included in the public notice.

**6d. Fire Control Panel** – Relay came in but when the second panel had to be found it was located in a difficult location up in the ceiling which did not allow the panel's door to open properly, leaving the door to be unhinged. Supervisor Lefkaditis stated that in the new construction it should never have been located there and he will be contacting the company to have it moved. He requested that Attorney Dorfman prepare a letter if needed.

**7a. Pucker Street Fair** – The Knox Fire Company will have a chicken BBQ for the fair on Saturday July 8<sup>th</sup>. Checking with the Township Tavern to see if Paul would be available to sell beer, if he is not available the Maple Inn will be contacted. Funds will be needed for advertising. Supervisor Lefkaditis suggested a banner to go across Route 156 and posters to be hung up around town. Councilman Barber will contact a local vendor to get a quote on a banner and posters and bring back to the board.

**7b. Town Engineer** - Attorney Dorfman had a conversation with Engineer Mark Jacobson on 3/2/17 and notified him that the town would need a fee schedule and town agreement. He has not returned the call or sent in any requested paperwork. Supervisor Lefkaditis will reach out to him to ask him to bring it in by the next board meeting. Moved to future agenda.

**7c. Building Use** - Councilman Hanley presented his research of other towns and stated that no other towns allow personal use of the town hall except for civic groups for the community. Attorney Dorfman suggested contact the Association of Towns for advice in this matter. The board agreed that security and liability concerns need to be addressed before moving forward. The Knox Fire House requires a \$100 deposit along with an insurance rider, a similar scenario was suggested for the town hall use. Supervisor Lefkaditis will check with the town insurance to check coverage.

**7d. Public Hearing Notice** – 10 day notice is required. Councilwoman Pokorny presented a rough sketch of the tax parcels on the tax map for review. She suggested this be reviewed by the board to consider the areas defined in the proposed business districts. Councilman Barcomb stated that the Planning Board did a lot of work on variations of borders but was never fully decided, adding that the board needs to spend time on this to do it right. Supervisor Lefkaditis

suggested a workshop open to the public to review the 3 proposed areas. All board members want to continue exploring this option and get public input before making decisions. Public workshop to be scheduled for Monday, April 10<sup>th</sup> at 6pm for the purposes of identifying tax parcels in the proposed business districts. Notice to be put in the paper.

**7e. Town Wide Clean Up Day** – Councilman Barber proposed a clean-up day to start at 9am on a Saturday morning. The town would provide the supplies, vests and bags. The board suggested reaching out to students groups for volunteers. Councilman Barber will check into that and bring back to the board.

**7f. Dog Control Program** – Councilwoman Pokorny stated that the board needs to designate a veterinarian for the town. The Village Animal Clinic in Voorheesville has offered to provide service for the town with no required contract and a 10% discount on services. The town also needs to have a contract agreement with the Mohawk Hudson Animal Shelter signed and on file for current year. Lastly the Latham Animal hospital needs to be designated for emergency night services.

**RESOLUTION # 57-2017 – AUTHORIZE SUPERVISOR TO EXECUTE THE MHAS CONTRACT.**

On motion of Councilwoman Pokorny, seconded by Councilman Barber, the following resolution was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED to authorize Supervisor to execute the MHAS contract.

Attorney Dorfman will draft letters to designate veterinarian clinics as vendors of services on behalf of the Town of Knox and bring for review to the next meeting.

**7g. Comp Plan** – Councilwoman Pokorny was sent a draft version of the comprehensive plan and was able to address simple comments and suggestions from Nan Stolzenberg. More attention and discussion is required as well as maps and section on caves needs to be added. The board agreed that this was not an easy process and needed more serious conversation and ultimately decided that workshop looking for feedback would be the next step. Councilwoman Pokorny will send an email with potential dates to be decided on later and published as public meeting.

7h. Business Directory – future agenda item.

7i. Ag. Committee – Moved to next meeting.

7j. PILOT program for Solar Arrays – O2 Solar contacted the Guilderland School District. The board was concerned that the town lost its ability to negotiate a PILOT. Attorney Dorfman stated that because they did not contact the town directly we have not lost the opportunity to negotiate a PILOT. Attorney Dorfman, Supervisor Lefkaditis and Assessor Pokorny to meet to discuss the Borrego Solar project and bring back to the board.

Supervisor Lefkaditis stated that a town resident John Todd McGivern was being awarded Eagle Scout status and the board would like to present him with a proclamation. Lefkaditis will write up and get board members to sign.

**RESOLUTION # 58-2017 - APPROVAL OF MONTHLY REPORTS**

On motion of Councilwoman Pokorny, seconded by Supervisor Lefkaditis, the following resolution was ADOPTED unanimously.

RESOLVED that the Reports of the Town Clerk and Town Supervisor for the Month of February 2017 be approved.

**RESOLUTION 59-2017 - PAYMENT OF BILLS**

On motion of Supervisor Lefkaditis, seconded by Councilman Hanley, the following resolution was ADOPTED unanimously.

RESOLVED that the Bills be paid on General Abstract #3-2017 of the General Fund, covering claims #35-51 in the amount of: \$9,775.10 and of the Highway Fund, covering claims #52-64 in the amount of: \$20,743.80 for the year 2017.

**RESOLUTION #60-2017 - TOWN BOARD TO ACCEPT THE TRAILER COURT APPLICATION FOR KOUNTRY KNOLLS TRAILER PARK FOR 2017**

On motion of Councilman Barcomb, seconded by Supervisor Lefkaditis, the following resolution was ADOPTED unanimously.

RESOLVED to accept the trailer court application for Kountry Knolls Trailer Park for 2017.

The board requested to hold the application for Green Acres and asked that the owner come to the next board meeting for executive session at 6:30. Attorney Dorfman to send letter.

With no further business, on a motion of Councilman Barcomb, seconded by Councilman Hanley, the meeting was adjourned before going into Executive Session, not to reconvene, at 10:38 p.m. Carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,  
March 28, 2017  
Tara L. Murphy