

MINUTES**February 1, 1995**

The Board of Chosen Freeholders met in regular session at the Knowlton Township Municipal Building, Route 94, Columbia, NJ at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Freeholder Director Susan Dickey and upon roll call the following members were present: Freeholder Director Susan Dickey, Freeholder Ann Stone and Freeholder Kenneth Miller. Also attending were the mayor and councilmen from Knowlton Township and a number of residents and several county staff members.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was led by Director Dickey.

Director Dickey read the following statement: "ADEQUATE NOTICE OF THIS MEETING WAS GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT BY FORWARDING A SCHEDULE OF REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS TO THE WARREN COUNTY CLERK, THE STAR/GAZETTE, BLAIRSTOWN PRESS, THE NEWS, STAR-LEDGER AND THE EXPRESS-TIMES AND BY POSTING A COPY THEREOF ON THE BULLETIN BOARD IN THE OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS. FORMAL ACTION MAY BE TAKEN BY THE BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS AT THIS MEETING. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IS ENCOURAGED. IN ORDER TO ASSURE FULL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION, THOSE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO WISH TO ATTEND THE MEETING SHOULD SUBMIT ANY REQUESTS FOR SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION ONE WEEK IN ADVANCE".

Mrs. Dickey thanked the Mayor and Committee of Knowlton Township for hosting the first traveling meeting of the board.

The first item under open discussion was 9-1-1 and dispatch service.

The mayor indicated that they appropriate about \$15,000 for dispatch services through Blue Mountain Control for ambulance service. Unless the county picks up the costs, or takes over dispatch, they believe this will represent double taxation. They feel the money could be better used to equip their new first aid squad.

Committeeman Van Horn said he hoped the freeholders could get the radio towers installed quickly. Mrs. Dickey stated that Mrs. Stone met with the Communications Committee and they are looking for some sort of reimbursement methods. Mrs. Stone said that Ed Bruder has gotten some figures together and sent them to the treasurer. The freeholders may pay only for dispatch, not for other costs, such as buildings, utilities, etc.

The next discussion was planning board issues. The mayor stated that they are not sure what the plans are. Mrs. Dickey said that she hopes to have a county master plan and mapping as per state rules in the very near future.

Muriel Mathez, Knowlton Township Planning Board member said that she believes that the county needs a new master plan. Freeholder Miller said that years ago the county put together all the municipal plans in one document and he considers that the master plan. Mrs. Dickey said that it is not really a county master plan because the county never adopted it. There is no official county map.

The mayor asked what authority the county planning board has to override a township decision. Mrs. Dickey said that the county would not override, unless it affects county drainage, roads, etc.

Mrs. Dickey said that the county plan puts all the municipality's plans in one place and Mr. Miller said that he thought we already had the plan based on municipal input several years ago. If it needs revising, we could ask the municipalities to update it and send it to the county planning board.

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Under county roads, Thomas Riley, a local citizen complained about traffic and parking on Simpson Road. Mr. Hicks said that enforcement is the problem there. Do they want to keep the trucks away or keep the business. Mr. VanHorn suggested the installation of Jersey barriers. The consensus was to eliminate parking along the road.

Regarding Farmland Preservation, the mayor asked how the new \$.02 dedicated tax was to be used. Mrs. Dickey said that the plan is to have the committee make recommendations to the freeholders. A basic starting point is 25% to municipal acquisitions, 25% to farmland preservation, 25% to parkland, 20% to open space and 5% to administration. The committee is not yet established.

Orrie Terpstra asked if the county is going to provide more funds for preservation other than the 25% of the dedicated tax and Mrs. Dickey responded that she thinks that the county will continue to put other funds into the budget for this purpose. Mr. Miller said that the freeholders can override the committee and change the percentage each year.

On economic development, the mayor said that they are still trying to go forward with economic development and they are trying to build a sewerage treatment plant under the privatization law. He asked what the county intends to do.

Mrs. Dickey said that the freeholders are trying to bring economic development back in-house and she prefers it to be under planning.

Mrs. Stone is in favor of re-creating economic development as a county department, the same as it was before. It was a good department with many accomplishments at a minimal cost.

Mr. Miller indicated that he still supports an outside system rather than in-house, however, when you are out-voted, you need to look at the alternatives and he believes it should go under another department and now agrees with Mrs. Dickey.

The next topic is Knowlton's interest in merging with Pahaquarry if Hardwick is not interested. Mr. VanHorn said they are looking at this merger as an interested in tourism. Mrs. Dickey said she doesn't know what the county involvement would be.

Under budget topics (inequities of the municipal taxes), the mayor talked about shortages in the budget. They anticipate about \$150,000 less in revenues this year and would like the county to be conservative in the county budget.

Mrs. Dickey said that her intent is not to borrow anymore money outside of the rollover of short term notes and for the college infrastructure so that we receive Chapter 12 funds.

Mr. Miller commented that this county had a very active League of Municipalities years ago but it has fallen off to just four meetings a year. The municipal people need to get involved. The next meeting is February 9th at Harmony Manor.

Closing comments included the freeholders expressing their thanks to Knowlton Township for hosting the first meeting and stating that they felt the meeting was very interesting and worthwhile.

On motion by Mrs. Stone, seconded by Mr. Miller, and there being no further business to come before the board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Miller: yes Mrs. Stone: yes Mrs. Dickey: yes

ATTESTED TO:

Naomi J. Stout, Deputy Clerk