

Knowlton Resident Recognized for Heroic Effort

Coverage of the Knowlton Township Municipal Meeting

by Joe Pascale

James Edward VanHorn was awarded a certificate for heroism at the Knowlton Township June meeting because he rescued two people from the Delaware River. "I am proud of him," Mayor Frank VanHorn said, speaking of his brother, who was unable to be in attendance to receive his award. Mayor VanHorn described the efforts his brother took to swim out into the Delaware twice to rescue two people who could not swim. An elderly father and his adult son fell into the river near Columbia Beach after their canoe flipped over. They were both saved due to James VanHorn's efforts.

Dore Krankle from Unison Site Management presented a proposal to purchase the leases of the Township's two cell phone towers. The committee was not interested in the offer at this time. Committeeman Rene Mathez commented that it did not take any expertise for the township to hold the leases. "If you can do something that we can't do, what is the opportunity in this situation?" Mathez asked. Krankle said that when people sell their leases, they usually want to reinvest the money in something more secure, or use it to invest in a large capital project. The committee was in agreement that the offer was not nearly enough money to sell the tower leases. "I'm not going to trade an escalating \$65,000 per year for \$600,000," Mathez said. "If you come back with twice as much money we'll listen to you, but \$600,000 isn't going to do it." Mayor VanHorn expressed that the committee was not entirely opposed to the idea. "I don't feel the consensus of the board that we're going to take that offer, but I certainly don't want to stop the discussion," VanHorn said.

The committee approved the first reading of an ordinance to amend the 2006 salary and wage ordinance. The ordinance made slight increases in the amount of money the electrical sub-code inspector, municipal prosecutor, and public works laborer are to receive. The increase was due to a mistake in the original ordinance.

An ordinance authorizing the transfer of capital improvement funds was adopted upon its second reading. The ordinance authorizes \$900,010 to be used for equipment, including a fire engine, a front-end loader, asphalt, guard railing, a copier, and carpeting. "I'm a little concerned about this. We're talking about an increase in \$200,000 for next year," Mathez said. "Do we need all these things?" The committee looked through the list and made a few changes, such as the amount of asphalt they wanted to use. A major change was the removal of a pick-up truck. The committee did not want to spend time rewriting the ordinance and advertising it again, so they passed it as-is and will make changes as necessary.

Several resolutions were approved by the committee, including appointing John Shoemaker as Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator, renewing liquor licenses and food establishment licenses to local businesses, renewing campground and mobile home park licenses, and requesting to remain under the jurisdiction of the Council on Affordable Housing.

The committee remained adamant against having to pay for the state police. "Absolutely, positively not, will we pay for the state police," Mayor VanHorn said during the discussion. The committee is in the process of writing letters to various people about

this issue. They also considered ideas such as sending a \$250,00 bill to the state for Knowlton's fire and rescue services, or telling the state how much it costs Knowlton to offer emergency assistance for Routes 46, 80, and 94, and comparing this figure with how much it would cost the state to pay someone else. "Probably, most of those people are not Knowlton residents that are getting in accidents," Committeeman Peter Summers said.

Patty Maillet talked with the committee about the Knowlton newsletter. She said that it will be pro-organization, pro-volunteer, and send important information to people in the community. There was discussion of what the newsletter should be named. While some of the committee members were in favor of a beaver-themed name, they ultimately took Committeeman Keith Siroky's suggestion that they accept names from residents after the release of the first issue, and the committee will choose their favorite. The first issue is expected to be out by July 31st.

Eleanor Clarkson spoke with the committee about the Volunteer Appreciation Barbeque, which is scheduled for August 20th. Volunteers from Knowlton Township will be invited as a way of thanking them for their service to the community.

Gene Taylor announced that there will be a free children's eye screening on Thursday June 15th from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. in the Knowlton town hall. It is for children aged 3 to 5, and it will take under a minute to screen each child. The scan is important because it detects certain eye problems that cannot be rectified after age 6.