

R2024-39

**RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF PHILLIPSBURG, COUNTY OF WARREN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY DISAVOWING THE COMMENTS OF FORMER MAYOR FRANK KNEEDLER AND EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE RENAMING OF THE PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY KNOWN AS “KNEEDLER AVENUE”**

**WHEREAS**, from the time of it’s founding as well as prior, the Town of Phillipsburg has been enriched by and benefited from a diverse population including the many contributions of African-Americans to its economy, culture, and community; and

**WHEREAS**, African-Americans have contributed to the fabric of the Town of Phillipsburg in innumerable ways throughout its history; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1916 in the midst of the First World War at a time of restricted immigration, labor shortages, and a need to support the war effort the Warren Pipe Foundry began to employ African-Americans, affording them opportunities denied to them elsewhere in a progressive and forward thinking manner; and

**WHEREAS**, other like-minded employers located in the Town of Phillipsburg began to follow suit in support of the war effort; and

**WHEREAS**, regrettably, then Phillipsburg Mayor Frank Kneedler reacted to this groundbreaking act with deplorable and racist comments which were subsequently published by the Easton Daily Express on May 17, 1916; and

**WHEREAS**, the historical record reflects that Mayor Kneedler’s comments had a chilling effect, causing an out-migration of African-Americans in subsequent years;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Mayor and Council of the Town of Phillipsburg wish to disavow these comments as repugnant and entirely opposed to the diverse and inclusive spirit of the Town of Phillipsburg.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Mayor and Council of the Town of Phillipsburg, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, hereby expresses support for the renaming of “Kneedler Avenue,” in a manner that is consistent with the values of the Town of Phillipsburg.

**CERTIFICATION**

I, Matthew C. Hall, Acting Municipal Clerk for the Town of Phillipsburg, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a resolution duly adopted by the Town Council at their February 28, 2024 meeting.



Matthew C. Hall, MPA  
Acting Municipal Clerk