

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
TOWNSHIP BOARD VIRTUAL REGULAR MEETING **-APPROVED-**
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos MI 48864-1198
517.349.1232, Virtual Meeting via Zoom
TUESDAY, MARCH 16, 2021 **6:00 pm.**

PRESENT: Supervisor Styka, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Jackson, Opsommer, Sundland (arrived at 6:22 pm) Wisinski

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Township Manager Walsh, Director of Public Works Perry, Fire Chief Hamel, Community Planning and Development Director Kieselbach, Information Technology Director Gebes, Parks and Recreation Director Maisner, Finance Director Mattison, Human Resources Director Tithof, Economic Development and Neighborhoods Director Clark, Communications Manager Yates, Principal Planner Menser

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Supervisor Styka called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS

Supervisor Styka led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Clerk Guthrie called the roll of the Board.

4. PRESENTATIONS

A. Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission (MICRC)

MC Rothborn, Commissioner, offered a history of MICRC, process and purpose of public hearings on any redistricting plan, summarized the eight (8) criteria of a redistricting plan and necessity for public comment at redistricting@michigan.gov. To learn about the process, visit www.michigan.gov/MICRC.

Discussion:

- MICRC is seeking relief from the November deadline in order to include the census data and to coordinate with the Secretary of State. They plan is to be fair and make well informed choices

5. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Supervisor Styka opened public remarks at 6:19 pm

None

Supervisor Styka closed public remarks at 6:20 pm.

6. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

Manager Walsh reported

- Chief Plaga reported they are working cooperatively with Eaton, Ingham and Clinton Counties Community Mental clinicians to offer a program on their tablets to provide assist to a citizen who is experiencing a mental or emotional health crisis. This program has already been used today.
- Proposed Jolly Road Rezoning – The rezoning was heard by the Planning Commission on March 8, a recommendation will be made on March 22 and before the Board for consideration in early April
- Prime Meridian Magazine – thank Communication Department for publishing the magazine that was recently mailed out
- Okemos was ranked the 6th Best Place to Live in the Nation by the Niche
- Large Dog Park – is temporarily closed
- Acknowledge Deputy Township Manager Perry 6th year anniversary with the Township
- Acknowledge the retirement of Director Kieselbach who has served the Township 41 years
- Deer Management Program – The Cull Deer Phase has been completed and program reached its goal

7. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Treasurer Deschaine:

- Attended EDC Meeting on March 4
- Will be attending the Capital Area Transit Authority board meeting on March 17
- Will be attending the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority Meeting (BRA) on March 18; disbursed the first official payout of an eligible reimbursement request to the BRA

Trustee Wisinski:

- Environmental Commission has received five (5) green grant applications; will be reviewing applications by March 21 and then announce the awards
- Attended Ground Water Management Board Training on March 16; overview on protecting ground water along with past and future projects

Trustee Jackson:

- Attending Michigan Municipal League Conference on March 16 & 17; discussing the Michigan Recovery Act, receipt and use of funds; how Townships' should manage COVID issues including remote meetings, vaccinations and meeting with the public; and Representative Brixie spoke on how Township Officials can related to the legislature and how Townships can move their issues forward

Supervisor Styka announced HOMTV is having issues with X-finity and attendees will need to stream through Facebook or YouTube.

Trustee Opsommer:

- Transportation Commission will be meeting on Thursday and hold a public hearing on Phase III MSU to Lake Lansing Pathway and will also review the Pathway Master Plan to consider updates

Clerk Guthrie:

- Election Inspectors Inquiries – received over 100 responses from volunteers to assist with the upcoming Special Election from preparing and mailing out ballots on March 17, working

the precincts and to correct the absent voter ballot application that were printed incorrectly by the company (see item under Communications).

Supervisor Styka:

- Heard a presentation from Congresswoman Sloktin's representative on the American Rescue Plan Act and the Treasury is working on the funding.

8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Trustee Jackson moved to approve the revised agenda as presented. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Opsommer, Sundland, Wisinski, Supervisor Styka, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Jackson

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

9. CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor Styka reviewed the consent agenda.

Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Opsommer, Sundland, Jackson, Treasurer Deschaine, Clerk Guthrie, Supervisor Styka, Trustee Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

A. Communications

Treasurer Deschaine the communications not already assigned for disposition be referred to the Township Manager or Supervisor for follow-up. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Opsommer, Sundland, Jackson, Treasurer Deschaine, Clerk Guthrie, Supervisor Styka, Trustee Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

B. Approval of Minutes – February 23, 2021 Virtual Special Meeting and March 2, 2021 Virtual Regular Meeting

Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve and ratify the minutes of the February 23, 2021 Virtual Special Meeting and March 2, 2021 Virtual Regular Meeting, as submitted. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Opsommer, Sundland, Jackson, Treasurer Deschaine, Clerk Guthrie, Supervisor Styka, Trustee Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

C. Bills

Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve that the Township Board approve the Manager's Bills as follows: Seconded by Trustee Jackson.

Common Cash	\$	185,767.84
Public Works	\$	4,133.20
Trust & Agency	\$	<u>4,806.09</u>
Total Checks	\$	194,707.13
Credit Card Transactions	\$	6,516.02
02/18/2021-02/24/2021		
Total Purchases	\$	<u>201,223.15</u>
ACH Payments	\$	<u>6,404.79</u>

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Opsommer, Sundland, Jackson, Treasurer Deschaine, Clerk Guthrie, Supervisor Styka, Trustee Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

D. Grant Submission – Towner Road Park Playground

Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve the attached resolution supporting submission of a grant application to the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund for a Multi-Generational Exercise/Play Space in Towner Road Park in the amount of \$350,000 with fifty percent (50%) of the project cost (\$175,000) funded by the Park Millage. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Opsommer, Sundland, Jackson, Treasurer Deschaine, Clerk Guthrie, Supervisor Styka, Trustee Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

E. Regular Board Meeting Date Change Due to Special Election

Treasurer Deschaine move to amend the Township Board Meeting Schedule by rescheduling the May 4, 2021 Township Board regular meeting to Thursday, May 6, 2021 at 6 pm. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Opsommer, Sundland, Jackson, Treasurer Deschaine, Clerk Guthrie, Supervisor Styka, Trustee Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

10. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY – NONE

11. HEARINGS - NONE

12. ACTION ITEMS

A. 6503 Park Lake Road Open Space Easement

Director Kieselbach outlined the Open Space Easement request, the approval process and the termination process.

Trustee Opsommer move to adopt the resolution approving the local open space easement between David and Joan Jackson (NJ Halmich Sod Nurseries, Inc.) and the Charter Township of Meridian for the property located at 6503 Park Lake Road and the Township prepare an easement consistent with the terms, conditions and restrictions authorized by Park 361 of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act 451 of the Public Acts of 1994 (Section 324.36101 to 324.36116 of Michigan Compiled Laws annotated). Seconded by Trustee Wisinski.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Sundland, Opsommer, Jackson, Treasurer Deschaine, Clerk Guthrie, Supervisor Styka, Trustee Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

B. Resolution Recognizing Autism Awareness Month

Trustee Opsommer moved to approve the resolution recognizing April 2021 as Autism Awareness Month in Meridian Township as follows:

WHEREAS, Autism refers to a range of conditions characterized by challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech, and nonverbal communication, as well as by unique strengths and differences. In 2013, the American Psychiatric Association merged four previously distinct diagnoses into one umbrella diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder (ASD). These included autistic disorder, childhood disintegrative disorder, pervasive developmental disorder-not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS) and Asperger syndrome. It is the result of a neurological disorder that affects the normal functioning of the brain that is believed to be caused by genetic and environmental factors; and

WHEREAS, Families living with autism face unique challenges and frequently experience significant financial costs for specialized education and support services. The uniqueness of each

individual with autism makes the experience of living with autism different for each family; and

WHEREAS, Autism is a lifelong condition and the necessary support and treatment changes as people on the spectrum move through major life phases. Their quality of life depends not only upon the foundation that is provided in childhood, but on ongoing supports that are specific to the educational, medical, social, recreational, family, and employment needs of the individual; and

WHEREAS, Autism knows no racial, ethnic, social boundaries, family income, lifestyle, or educational levels, and can affect any family and any child; and

WHEREAS, Autism is the fastest-growing developmental disability in the United States; and

WHEREAS, In 2020, the CDC reported that approximately 1 in 54 children in the United States is diagnosed with ASD, according to 2016 data. Research also shows that boys are four times more likely to be diagnosed with autism than girls; and

WHEREAS, April 2021 is National Autism Awareness Month;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, INGHAM COUNTY, MICHIGAN, that the members of the Meridian Township Board declare April 2021 as Autism Awareness Month in Meridian Township.

Seconded by Clerk Guthrie

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Jackson, Opsommer, Sundland, Wisinski, Clerk Guthrie, Supervisor Styka

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

C. Capital Area District Library Appointment

Trustee Jackson moved to approve the reappointment of Sandra Drake to the Capital Area District Library for a term ending April 15, 2023. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine.

Discussion:

- Asked for future update from Ms. Drake along with Librarians Betsy Hull, Okemos Branch and Tom Moore, Haslett Branch

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Clerk Guthrie, Supervisor Styka, Trustees Wisinski, Sunland, Opsommer, Jackson, Treasurer Deschaine,

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

D. Environmental Commission Appointments

Trustee Wisinski move to approve the appointment of Anna Colby to the Environmental Commission for a term ending 12/31/2022 and move to approve the appointment of Kenda Grasseschi to the Environmental Commission for a term ending 12/31/2021. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Treasurer Deschaine, Clerk Guthrie, Supervisor Styka, Trustees Jackson, Opsommer, Sundland, Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

E. Resolution on COVID-19 Relief Funding for School Districts

Trustee Opsommer move to approve the resolution in support of our School Communities and call on the Michigan Legislature to appropriate all Federal COVID-19 Relief Funding without undue burden on school districts. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.

Trustee Opsommer summarized the resolution.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Jackson, Opsommer, Sundland, Wisinski, Treasurer Deschaine, Supervisor Styka, Clerk Guthrie

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

F. Resolution Honoring the Honorable Frank J. Kelley

Supervisor Styka summarized the resolution.

Clerk Guthrie move to approve the resolution honoring the life, public service, and enduring legacy of the Honorable Frank J. Kelley, Michigan's 50th Attorney General. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Jackson, Opsommer, Treasurer Deschaine, Clerk Guthrie, Supervisor Styka, Trustees Sundland, Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. 2021 Citizen Survey

Director Clark stated the Township performs a citizen survey every three (3) years and the last survey was conducted in 2018 by a national research service from Boulder, Colorado. The previous survey cost was approximately \$15,000 and it was a traditional three-part mailing to 1,600

residents. Part One asked if the resident wanted a paper copy or preferred to take the survey on-line. The second part was a reminder the survey was being sent out. The third part was to mail out the paper copy or coupon to take the survey on-line. During research, Staff received two recommendations for conducting the survey. Since the two companies had very different methods for conducting a survey, staff is recommending a request for proposals (RFP) be advertised to receive additional quotations from expert organizations that can assist with the creation, implementation and analysis of a community survey. If the RFP is sent out immediately, Director Clark stated the deadline could be Friday, March 19 with a recommendation for review at the Board's next meeting. With respect to the survey timeline, it will be requested in the RFP.

Discussion:

- The previous survey began in September and results were received the following January
- Director Clark stated she reached out to the national research center for a quote. The previous company is under new ownership; their starting cost is \$20,000 and are offering a different platform for conducting a survey.

Board consensus to conduct the RFP and place this item on the next Board meeting agenda.

B. Expansion of Redi-Ride Services

Supervisor Styka stated concerns were expressed regarding access to recreational marijuana by the residents. Treasurer Deschaine suggested the Redi-Ride services be expanded to include access to Pleasantrees East Lansing facility at 1950 Merritt Road, East Lansing. Trustee Opsommer has also proposed expanding the services to include five (5) additional locations (see list in packet).

Discussion:

- Treasurer Deschaine asked to also include Burcham Hills Retirement Center, 2700 Burcham Drive, East Lansing

Board consensus to place this item on the next Board meeting agenda.

C. Recreational Marijuana

Discussion:

- Suggestion was made to postpone discussion on recreational marijuana until the citizen survey results have been received.
- Suggestion was made to discuss issues of safety, impact to the schools and neighborhoods, and obtain feedback from medical professionals, educators and law enforcement as it pertains to the Zoning and Non-Zoning Ordinances that would monitor and control recreational marijuana
- Suggestion was made to discuss social equity, the Township Attorney's recommendations in the February 16th and March 2nd meeting packets and possible fee reductions
- Township Attorney Kuschel summarized the possible litigation risks, use of a scoring system, rules of co-location

Board consensus to place this item on the next Board meeting agenda.

14. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Supervisor Styka Opened Public Remarks at 9:03 pm.

Robert Baldori, 2719 Mt Hope Rd, Okemos, MI 48864, spoke in support of the ability of medical and recreational adult-use marihuana in Meridian Township. Both uses are required for a facility to be financially viable.

Joyce VanCoeving, 5882 Okemos Road, Okemos, suggested the Board complete the citizen survey before taking further action on recreational marihuana.

Marc Santucci, 5909 Blythefield drive, East Lansing, stated he is working with a company who is applying for a medical marihuana permit but cannot be viable with medical marihuana alone. They plan to proceed with their site plan and support including recreational marihuana.

Supervisor Styka Closed Public Remarks at 9:11 pm.

15. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS -NONE

16. CLOSED SESSION

Treasurer Deschaine move to go into closed session to discuss a written confidential legal opinion from the township attorney concerning payment of prevailing wages. Seconded by Trustee Jackson

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Jackson, Opsommer, Sundland, Wisinski, Supervisor Styka

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

The Township Board entered closed session at 9:12 pm.

Trustee Opsommer move to go back into Open Session. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Jackson, Opsommer, Sundland, Wisinski, Supervisor Styka

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

The Township Board returned to open session at 9:46 pm

Supervisor Styka proposed the following:

Move to adopt, in accordance with the Michigan Administration Procedures Act and State Law, the Guidelines for Voluntary Agreements with contractors for construction, maintenance and repair services provided directly to the Township as attached to the materials.

Trustee Jackson move the proposed motion and it was seconded by Trustee Wisinski

Discussion:

- This is a minor change of moving from a policy to a guideline. The Township will still provide for a prevailing wage on all Township projects at or in excess of \$50,000 on the RFP and are in solidarity with the labor unions across the region and state. This is the Township's commitment to support jobs that provide a living wage, secure retirement and good benefits

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Sundland, Wisinski, Treasurer Deschaine, Supervisor Styka, Trustees Jackson, Opsommer, Clerk Guthrie

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

17. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Opsommer moved to adjourn. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine

VOICE/HAND VOTE: Motion carried 7-0.

Supervisor Styka adjourned the meeting at 9:51 pm.

RONALD J. STYKA,
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

DEBORAH GUTHRIE,
TOWNSHIP CLERK