

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
TOWNSHIP BOARD REGULAR MEETING - **APPROVED** -
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198
853-4000, Town Hall Room
TUESDAY, JUNE 17, 2014 **6:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Supervisor LeGoff, Clerk Dreyfus, Treasurer Brixie, Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra
ABSENT: Trustee Wilson
STAFF: Township Manager Frank Walsh, Director of Community Planning & Development
Mark Kieselbach, Director of Public Works and Engineering Ray Severy, Police Chief
David Hall

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Supervisor LeGoff called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS

Supervisor LeGoff led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

The secretary called the roll of the Board.

4. SPECIAL PRESENTATION

A. Introduction of Police Officers Taylor Comiskey and David Gubry

Police Chief David Hall introduced Meridian Township's newest police officers, Taylor Comiskey and David Gubry.

5. PUBLIC REMARKS

Supervisor LeGoff opened Public Remarks.

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, announced Liaison for InterNeighborhood Cooperation (LINC) will meet this Thursday, June 19th at 6:45 P.M. in the Haslett Library Community Room. He presented a graph in support of the necessity for a routine five (5) year cleaning cycle of the Township's sewer system in order for it to function properly. Mr. Bowlby requested an accurate number of the miles of sewer within the Township be provided to him. He believed the ultimate goal of routine sewer cleaning is to prevent excess capacity at the wastewater treatment plant and limiting the opportunity of sewer expansion into the eastern rural third will greatly aid in achieving that goal.

Rex Harrington, 820 Piper Road, Haslett, expressed his continued concerns with the Township procedure for forfeited proceeds as contained in the police forfeiture agreement with Bodwin & Associates.

Susan Simkin, 2032 Central Park Drive, Okemos, spoke to the need for the Township Board to "quit living in the 20th century as this is the 21st". She offered an example of a Board member's 20th century approach to affordable housing needs for young families associated with potential employment at the Facility for Rare Isotope Beams (FRIB), noting her belief that income leveling for these new employees (e.g., associate professor) would preclude purchase of an average-priced home in Meridian Township.

Supervisor LeGoff closed Public Remarks.

6. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

Manager Walsh reported on the following:

- Exterior painting of the Okemos Library
- Proposed project for a new hotel directly behind Staybridge Suites off Jolly Oak Road
- Lot has been cleared for the new central fire station; bids are due July 9th

- Fire station bids will come before the Board on July 15th with a projected breaking ground date of July 22nd
- Second meeting with the City of East Lansing next week to continue discussion on the Lake Lansing Pathway extension
- Vegetation committee formed at the last Board meeting held its first meeting
- Ingham County Road Department (ICRD) will conduct a neighborhood meeting with residents of Lake Lansing Road on June 19th from 4:00-7:00 PM in the Town Hall Room. Part of the discussion will center on the possibility of a road diet when Lake Lansing Road is repaved next summer.

7. BOARD COMMENTS & REPORTS

Treasurer Brixie announced the Board of Water and Light (BWL) is recommending a change in its Board composition to add three (3) non-voting members to promote regionalism: one representative from Delta Township, the City of East Lansing and a rotating seat for the remaining municipalities served by BWL, with Meridian Township being the first. She also reported her attendance at a regional meeting hosted by Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce where community marketing was discussed as one item on the list of regional priorities.

Clerk Dreyfus participated in Tri-County Regional Planning Commission's (TCRPC) Urban and Rural Service Management subcommittee where the Health Impact Assessment (HIA) was discussed. He stated TCRPC was one of the recipients of the Urban Sustainability Accelerator Research Grant provided through Portland State University which will provide expertise in economic analysis capabilities. Clerk Dreyfus announced another bus tour of the region on September 10, 2014 where working farms, urban service management areas, etc. will be viewed. He reported his attendance at the Meridian Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) meeting as the Board representative where discussion took place on the scheduled Pop Up (time based mini-activity with vendors) event to be held at the Meridian Mall in conjunction with the Farmer's Market on Saturday June 28th. Clerk Dreyfus also noted William Anderson attended the EDC meeting to provide an update on the Carriage Hills Shopping Center Revitalization Project Study. He commented on the great attendance at the Celebrate Okemos Event that he observed as he volunteered and then frequented many of the booths.

Trustee Scales expressed appreciation to staff and volunteers on the success of the Celebrate Downtown Okemos event held June 14th, and looked forward to a similar function for the Haslett area. He reported his attendance at the vegetation subcommittee meeting, and indicated members are not yet at a point where there is agreement among the participants, requesting utility companies and their attorneys provide suggestions.

Trustee Styka also expressed appreciation to the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), staff and volunteers for the success of the Celebrate Downtown Okemos event. He noted each utility company sent at least three (3) representatives to the vegetation subcommittee meeting, and worked hard with Board members to understand the issues, focusing on what happens after the trees are trimmed to protect the power lines.

Trustee Veenstra expressed agreement with remarks made by Mr. Harrington relative to police forfeiture and believed some of the processes are improper and contrary to the Township's contract with Bodwin & Associates. He voiced his agreement with Ms. Simkin regarding the need for more affordable housing in Meridian Township. Trustee Veenstra offered his opinion on filling in the Lake Lansing Road pathway gap as well as the road work on Lake Lansing Road. He spoke in favor of the Perry Road Special Assessment District on the consent agenda this evening. Trustee Veenstra reported his attendance at the Celebrate Downtown Okemos event; pointing out this event has been in existence for more than six (6) years. He spoke in favor of the utility cleanup ordinance, believing it only fair to clean up after trimming or tree removal. Trustee Veenstra noted the Township should seek assistance from the Michigan Townships Association and the Michigan Municipal League's legal fund in the event the Township is sued by a utility company over this statewide issue.

8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Treasurer Brixie moved to approve the agenda as submitted. Seconded by Trustee Styka.
VOICE VOTE: Motion 6-0.

9. CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor LeGoff reviewed the consent agenda.
Treasurer Brixie moved to adopt the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Trustee Veenstra.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer
Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
NAYS: None
Motion carried 6-0.

A. Communications

Treasurer Brixie moved that the communications be received and placed on file, and any communications not already assigned for disposition be referred to the Township Manager or Supervisor for follow-up. Seconded by Trustee Veenstra.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer
Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
NAYS: None
Motion carried 6-0.

B. Minutes

Treasurer Brixie moved to approve and ratify the minutes of the June 3, 2014 Regular Meeting. Seconded by Trustee Veenstra.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer
Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
NAYS: None
Motion carried 6-0.

C. Bills

Treasurer Brixie moved that the Township Board approve the Manager's Bills as follows:

Common Cash	\$ 252,099.36
Public Works	\$ 425,538.77
Retainage	\$ 4,055.26
Check #1071-Able Concrete/Final Payment	
2013 Concrete Repair Contract	
Total Checks	\$ 681,693.39
Credit Card Transactions	\$ 11,815.59
Total Purchases	\$ 693,508.98
ACH Payments	\$ <u>365,293.56</u>

Seconded by Trustee Veenstra.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer
Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
NAYS: None
Motion carried 6-0.

(Bill list in Official Minute Book)

D. Fireworks Permit – Meridian Township 4th of July Display

Treasurer Brixie moved to approve the fireworks permit for the Meridian Township 4th of July Celebration on July 4, 2014, by Pyrotechnic Operator Night Magic Display. Rain Date will be July 5, 2014. Seconded by Trustee Veenstra.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
NAYS: None
Motion carried 6-0.

- E. Perry Road Paving, Special Assessment District No. 42 - **Resolution #1 & #2** (Set Public Hearing Date for July 15, 2014)
Treasurer Brixie moved to approve Perry Road Public Road Improvements District No. 42 Resolution No. 1, accepting the petition and ordering plans and an estimate of costs to be prepared; and move to tentatively approve Perry Road Public Road Improvements District No. 42, Resolution No. 2, tentatively declaring the Township Board's intention to make the public road improvements: grade, gravel and pave Perry Road from Lake Drive north to the county line; and sets the Public Hearing for July 15, 2014 for the purpose of hearing objections to the petition, the improvement and the special assessment district of Perry Road Public Road Improvements District N. 42. Seconded by Trustee Veenstra.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
NAYS: None
Motion carried 6-0.

10. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY (None)

11. HEARINGS (None)

12. ACTION ITEMS

Supervisor LeGoff opened Public Remarks.

Leonard Provencher, 5824 Buena Parkway, Haslett, stated the current forms of communication contained in the Snow Emergency Parking Ordinance are insufficient and believed police cadets should flag the cars for non-compliance.

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, stated the State Revolving Fund (SRF) Sewer Project Plan was a well-researched, well documented report and believed the project to be a necessary improvement. He expressed concern with the mechanism for funding the project through a proposed increase in sewer rates, stating his research indicated an approximate 50% increase in sewer rates over the last 7-8 years. Mr. Bowlby believed the sewer rates have far surpassed the rate of inflation. He stated the General Fund can absorb the costs over the life of the project, making it unnecessary to increase sewer rates.

Supervisor LeGoff closed Public Remarks.

A. Snow Emergency Parking Ordinance, **Final Adoption**

Trustee Veenstra moved [and read into the record] NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN hereby FINALLY ADOPTS Ordinance No. 2014-02 entitled "Ordinance Amending the Code of the Charter Township of Meridian, Michigan Amending Chapter 58 by Adding Article IV Entitled Snow Emergency."

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the Charter Township of Meridian is directed to publish the Ordinance at least once prior to the next regular meeting of the Township Board.

Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.

Board discussion:

- Necessary measure to remove vehicles which would impede snow plowing of roads during unusually heavy snowfall

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus

NAYS: None

Motion carried 6-0.

B. State Revolving Fund Sanitary Sewer Project Plan

Treasurer Brixie moved to adopt the resolution approving the State Revolving Fund Sanitary Sewer Project Plan and designating the Director of Public Works & Engineering as the authorized representative for the project. Seconded by Trustee Styka.

Board and staff discussion:

- Appreciation to staff for actively pursuing available public funds for these projects
- Importance of properly maintaining the Township's sewer system
- Changes are being made to save money over time and protect the environment from discharge into our rivers
- Summary of the projects prepared by staff shows three projects over three years for the Towar area
- Staff belief there are 146 miles of sewer within Meridian Township
- 2017-2018 sewer repair will not require replacement of lawns on private homeowner property
- Project Plan recommends the construction of the replacement of the Towar Gardens Lift Station, improvements to the Birchwood area sewers, manhole and sewer rehabilitation in Toward Gardens and extension of the Central Lift Station Force Main
- Financial impact will be spread over five (5) years
- Birchwood area storm and sanitary systems are 5-7 feet apart and there are problems in both systems with leaky joints
- The storm sewer is usually at a higher elevation than the sanitary sewer
- Sanitary sewer is deeper in order to service basements

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus

NAYS: None

Motion carried 6-0.

13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

Supervisor LeGoff opened and closed Public Remarks.

A. Township Branding

Brandie Yates, Communications Department, gave a Powerpoint overview on the concept of branding Meridian Township.

Board and staff discussion:

- Permissibility of a local spinoff of the *Pure Michigan* concept
- Roger Brooks International's ten commandments of branding a community
- Lou Anna Simon was the guest speaker at a Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce Regional Leaders Event last week where she urged communities to understand who they are and what they have to offer as part of the continual move to a more global economy for the region
- Meridian Township is many things to many people and it is a challenge to have a cohesive message
- Confidence that with professional assistance, the Township will be able to develop an effective brand
- Board need to focus on and move forward with its established priority list, which includes branding

- Need for branding of Meridian Township to establish a clear identity across all platforms
- Education, greenspace and Lake Lansing are all part of Meridian's identity
- A proper cohesive identity will attract people looking to relocate to the area
- Concepts of branding and placemaking are closely tied together
- Branding is narrower in type
- Placemaking can be more generally conceptualized
- General concepts to be considered:
 - What is embodied in the Township that is worth a trip
 - Why would someone want to move into the Township
 - Why would someone want to do business in the Township
 - What makes the Township different or "better" than another entity
- Political process does not work well when it comes to placemaking
- Group titled Project for Public Spaces provides a list of what placemaking is and is not
- Source of the information contained in the overview was Destination Development International's (DDI) *Art of Branding a Community*
- Types of people who should be engaged in the committee process: DDA, business community, homeowners
- Need for outreach to attract diversity within the group to establish a brand
- Need for politics to be kept out of the branding process
- Board direction to the Township's Communication Department to move forward with the creation of a committee as recommended in the staff memorandum
- Hiring of an outside consulting firm for development of a branding strategy for the Township
- Process for moving forward in development of a comprehensive plan for creation of a brand
- Action item for this issue would be to approve the steps contained in the comprehensive plan
- Board member request for an explanation as to why there is a need to create a brand for Meridian Township

It was the consensus of the Board to continue discussions regarding the branding process for Meridian Township.

14. PUBLIC REMARKS

Supervisor LeGoff opened Public Remarks.

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, believed limiting growth in the eastern third and enacting an Urban Services Management Area (USMA) will significantly aid in the effort to not overload the wastewater treatment plant. He spoke to the need for compromise and concessions between the Planning Commission and the Township Board relative to establishing a USMA.

Leonard Provencher, 5824 Buena Parkway, Haslett, requested the Township Treasurer be removed from Capital Area Transportation Authority's (CATA) Board of Directors as he alleged there is a direct financial conflict and because her views are not representative of the majority of Meridian Township residents who do not use the CATA system. Mr. Provencher spoke in opposition to the upcoming park millage and CATA millage on the August 5th primary ballot.

Bruce Little, 5015 Meridian Road, Williamston, urged residents to vote no on the August 5th park millage. He believed the Township is already branded, one of being the highest millage rate in Ingham County. Mr. Little stated township government is designed to provide basic services, and Meridian Township is "way beyond that", suggesting that Meridian Township government needed to be toned down in order to get spending under control.

Supervisor LeGoff closed Public Remarks.

15. FINAL BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Treasurer Brixie responded to earlier public comment requesting her removal from the CATA Board by clarifying that the author of the comment believed someone who uses the CATA system should not have a seat on the CATA Board. She believed it an asset as a CATA Board member to utilize its

system and outlined some of her accomplishments as the Meridian Township representative to the CATA Board. Treasurer Brixie corrected an earlier public comment by indicating Meridian Township does not have the highest millage rate in Ingham County and she will provide a rating of millage rates in the county at the next Board meeting.

Trustee Veenstra expressed support for an adopted urban services boundary, desiring the Board compromise its position in order to reach an agreement with the Planning Commission.

Several Board members expressed support for the Treasurer in her role as Meridian Township's representative on the CATA Board and concurred that Meridian Township does not have the highest millage rate in Ingham County.

Trustee Scales spoke to decorum of the public when they bring personal issues before the Board and expect action to take place on those issues.

15. ADJOURNMENT

Supervisor LeGoff adjourned the meeting at 7:38 P.M.

ELIZABETH LEGOFF
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

BRETT DREYFUS
TOWNSHIP CLERK

Sandra K. Otto, Secretary