

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
TOWNSHIP BOARD REGULAR MEETING - **APPROVED** -
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198
853-4000, Town Hall Room
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2015 **6:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Supervisor LeGoff, Clerk Dreyfus, Treasurer Brixie, Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Wilson
ABSENT: None
STAFF: Township Manager Frank Walsh, Assistant Township Manager/Director of Public Works Derek Perry, Director of Community Planning & Development Mark Kieselbach, Police Chief David Hall, Fire Chief Fred Cowper, Director of Information and Technology Stephen Gebes, Finance Director Gretchen Gomolka, Director of Parks and Recreation LuAnn Maisner, Human Resources Director Joyce Marx

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. PRESENTATION (None)
5. PUBLIC REMARKS
Supervisor LeGoff opened Public Remarks.

Ann Alchin, 5972 Cypress, Haslett, spoke to the circumstances surrounding the cell tower located between the Municipal Building and the Public Safety Building and how much it ultimately cost the Township. She addressed proper application of Robert's Rules of Order relative to the administration of Township Board meetings. Ms. Alchin believes the Board is not following their own adopted rules, for example, by telling Board members they can't talk anymore because they've talked too much, or not properly making motions and adding agenda items without proper procedure. She addressed the findings of the Elected Officials Compensation Commission in 2012. Ms. Alchin noted women worked hard to get the right to vote and yet she is disappointed with the conduct of the Township's three (3) female Board members. She mentioned the Supervisor not knowing when to call for a vote, and not knowing when "things" should be done during the meeting, the Treasurer being rude to fellow Board members and the need for Trustee Wilson to calm down and be more professional. Ms. Alchin spoke to the need for more decorum among Board members.

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, expressed concern with the removal of Board member comments near the beginning of the agenda, as it is important to allow for possible Board comments in advance of the meeting. He spoke to the lack of data in the Capital Area Transportation Authority's (CATA) 2014 Annual Report relative to administration of the Redi-Ride contract, despite Treasurer Brixie's comment at the last meeting it was readily available. Mr. Bowlby voiced his displeasure that the entire CATA budget was placed on its consent agenda at the last meeting and was concerned our CATA representative, Treasurer Brixie, allowed such action to transpire. He offered his preliminary cost calculations on solar panel installation for the Meridian Service Center if the Township had implemented their use during its reroofing. Mr. Bowlby offered several of his calculations on investment return for solar panels, indicating the Township would get a better rate of return than currently received for investment strategy.

Kathleen Donahue-Brown, 2221 Burcham Drive, Haslett, expressed appreciation for Township discussion and action on SUP#15061, a cell tower located at 4980 Park Lake Road. She encouraged the Board to review appropriate locations for all future cell tower locations in the event of future cell tower applications.

Debbie Nolan, 4329 Heartwood Road, Okemos and Ingham County Commissioner for District #12, reiterated the desire of Ponderosa Estates residents to abandon Forsberg Drive as a connector road between Ember Oaks and Ponderosa Estates. She offered history on the Ponderosa Estates subdivision and the use of Forsberg Drive as a walkable and bikeable road for older adults and young children. Commissioner Nolan indicated emergency vehicles can use the two connections with either Bonanza or Ember Oaks. She requested the Board abandon Forsberg Drive between Ember Oaks and Stagecoach Drive.

Mike McCurdy, 5458 Okemos Road, spoke to the ongoing issue of a violation regarding maintenance of goats on his property and his desire to see the property rezoned for compliance. He addressed his court appearance scheduled for tomorrow. Mr. McCurdy noted a discussion with Trustee Veenstra, wherein the trustee suggested the possibility of adding this rezoning to tonight's agenda for Board deliberation on initiating a rezoning request.

Ginger Yang, 4994 Park Lake Road, Haslett, expressed appreciation for Board support of the appeal of the cell tower proposed at 4980 Park Lake Road. She stated the Board's action regarding this issue was the right thing. Ms. Yang encouraged the Board to take the lead and learn how to work with corporate cell tower companies without sacrificing its commitment to the overall vision of the community.

Tom Repasky, 3663 Stagecoach Drive, Okemos, spoke to the petition for abandonment of Forsberg Drive filed by residents of Ponderosa Estates, adding the public hearing will be held in just over a month.

Will Tyler White, 13783 Main Street, Bath, suggested there are a few things the Board can do regarding the "goat issue"; i.e., Board can initiate the rezoning or create an ordinance which allows goats for properties larger than one (1) acre.

Supervisor LeGoff closed Public Remarks.

6. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Treasurer Brixie moved to approve the agenda as submitted. Seconded by Trustee Wilson.

Trustee Veenstra moved to amend the agenda as follows:

- **Add Township Manager Report immediately after Public Remarks**

The motion died for lack of a second.

Trustee Veenstra moved to amend the agenda as follows:

- **Add Board member comment after Public Remarks**

Seconded by Clerk Dreyfus.

Board discussion:

- Board comment has been after the first public remarks on the agenda since before 2004
- Topics voiced during public remarks can be reinforced by Board members
- Other governmental bodies have comments at the beginning of its meetings
- Board member's willingness to have Board member comments only at the end of the meeting for a few times
- Possible agreement if a policy is adopted to limit Board comments at the beginning of the meeting
- Moving all Board comments to the end of the agenda is an attempt to shorten the too lengthy Board meetings as it is a disservice to the public audience
- Reminder that Board meetings are held to conduct the business of the Township

- Inappropriateness of apologizing to the public for conducting Board business
- Current Board members are using Board comments as a community calendar to announce events
- Final Board member comments provides an opportunity for members to comment on what has transpired during the meeting

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustee Veenstra, Clerk Dreyfus
NAYS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Wilson, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer Brixie
Motion failed 2-5.

Trustee Veenstra moved to amend the agenda as follows:

- **Add the McCurdy rezoning to the agenda as Discussion Item #11B**

Seconded by Clerk Dreyfus.

Board discussion:

- Initiation of this rezoning can avoid a court case which commences tomorrow and potentially cause the Township to expend much more money
- Board discussion is timely due to the large amount of public input received
- Board member concern with only discussion of this issue when the court case is being heard tomorrow
- Discussion has no bearing on tomorrow's court case

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Styka, Veenstra, Wilson, Clerk Dreyfus
NAYS: Trustee Scales, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer Brixie
Motion carried 4-3.

ROLL CALL VOTE ON THE MAIN YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Wilson, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
MOTION: NAYS: Supervisor LeGoff
Motion carried 6-1.

Clerk Dreyfus moved the revised statement be struck from the minutes of August 18th and the original language from the August 4th draft minutes be reinserted. Seconded by Trustee Veenstra.

Board discussion:

- Preference for a Board member who has concern with language contained in the minutes to either look at the meeting video on HOMTV or contact the Clerk's Office in order to save Board time on these matters

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

7. CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor LeGoff reviewed the consent agenda.

Trustee Veenstra moved to adopt the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Clerk Dreyfus.

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

A. Communications

(1) Board Deliberations (BD)

BD 10E Board of Directors, Liaison for Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation (LINC), PO Box 40, Okemos; RE: Comments about the 2015 Citizen Survey

(2) Board Information (BI)

- BI-1 Brant Johnson, Brant Johnson & Associates, 2875 Northwind Drive, East Lansing; RE: Correspondence from El Oasis, LLC, regarding food truck vending in Meridian Township
- BI-2 Susie Brewster, 4379 Wausau Road, Okemos; RE: Dog Park in Meridian Township
- BI-3 Robert H. Digby, 4125 Naubinway Road, Okemos; RE: Support for the extension of municipal water along the Grand River Avenue corridor east of Van Atta Road
- BI-4 Doug and Ruth Rutherford, 5909 W. Sleepy Hollow Lane, East Lansing; RE: Request for the Ingham County Drain Commissioner to make improvement to the Raby Drain drainage in Sleep Hollow subdivision
- BI-5 Frank Hatfield, 1578 Sylvan Glen, Okemos; RE: Appreciation for the new Okemos Road pedestrian bicycle pathway over the Red Cedar River
- BI-6 Mike McCurdy, 5458 Okemos Road, East Lansing; RE: McCurdy Goats
- BI-7 Janet J. Allen, 1115 N. Melita Road, Sterling; RE: Support for the McCurdy family to retain their goats
- BI-8 Linda Carrington, 5808 Bayonne Avenue, Haslett; RE: Support for the McCurdy family to retain their goats
- BI-9 Jean Bronson, 2123 W. 3rd Avenue, Sault Saint Marie; RE: Support for the McCurdy family to retain their goats
- BI-10 Stephen Rudner, 9707 Portage Lake Avenue, Pinckney; RE: Support for the McCurdy family to retain their goats
- BI-11 Mary Lou Simi-Rudner, 9707 Portage Lake Avenue, Pinckney; RE: Support for the McCurdy family to retain their goats
- BI-12 Kayleigh Brauer, 4205 Southport Circle, Apt. 1D, Okemos; RE: Support for the McCurdy family to retain their goats

(3) On File in the Clerk's Office(OF)

Material submitted at the August 18, 2015 Board Meeting

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett; RE: Self-created graph titled "Normalized Percent of 90-foot Coverage", four (4) self-created comparative depictions of cell tower coverage at various heights and Section 86-438 (e) (2) a. and b. of Meridian Township's Wireless Communications Ordinance relative to the wireless communication facilities overlay district

Chuck Barbieri, Foster Swift, 313 S. Washington Avenue, Lansing; RE: Copy of the petition process for drains organized under Chapter 20 of the Michigan Drain Code, template of the proposed Daniels Drain Notice of Intent to File Petition by Meridian Township and a proposed Meridian Township resolution to petition for improvements of the Daniels Drain

Trustee Veenstra 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 Clerk Dreyfus.

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

B. Minutes

Trustee Veenstra moved to approve and ratify the minutes of the August 18, 2015 Regular Meeting. Seconded by Clerk Dreyfus.

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

C. Bills

Trustee Veenstra moved that the Township Board approve the Manager's Bills as follows:

Common Cash	\$ 373,263.46
Public Works	\$ 105,055.16
Total Checks	\$ 478,318.62
Credit Card Transactions	\$ 6,120.57
Total Purchases	<u>\$ 484,439.19</u>
ACH Payments	<u>\$ 417,961.70</u>

Seconded by Clerk Dreyfus.

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

(Bill list in Official Minute Book)

D. MS4 Post Construction Control Administrative Policy

Trustee Veenstra moved to adopt the resolution approving the 'Meridian Township Policy Manual for MS4 Post-Construction' as required by the MDEQ for the renewal of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. Seconded by Clerk Dreyfus.

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

8. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY (None)

9. HEARINGS

A. 2016 Recommended Budget

Supervisor LeGoff opened the public hearing at 6:38 P.M.

Manager Walsh introduced the 2016 Recommended Budget through a Powerpoint presentation on the overhead projector.

- Public
Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, expressed appreciation to the Township Manager for an excellent budget. He suggested the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Funding Summary on page 22 of the 2016 Recommended Budget be amended to remove the Beechwood Drive Sanitary and Water Main and Green Road Sanitary and Water Main from the list as the Township does not intend to move forward with these projects. Mr. Bowlby questioned whether any homeowner wanted to hookup to the Newton Road Sanitary Sewer Main or will it be the sewer to nowhere at a cost of \$223,000 when the sanitary sewer construction funding on page 101 of the budget shows \$ 0.

Will Tyler White, 13783 Main Street, Bath, noted the Township Manager did a great job of presenting the budget.

- Board

Treasurer Brixie voiced her appreciation to staff for its presentation of a good budget which continues to be conservative in spending through making hard decisions which cost money (i.e., unfunded pension liability) and avoids unnecessary debt. She stated her appreciation for facing the pension obligations “head on” in order to keep promises to previous and current employees.

Treasurer Brixie asked the Manager what promises were made to employees relative to compensation when negotiations were conducted in 2013,

Township Manager Walsh responded he committed to 1% across the board each year of the three (3) year contract for all eight (8) unions, plus minor issues with health care. He specified that he also told the unions if the growth of the Township grew at the projected rate based on assumptions by our Assessor, appreciation payments would be provided to employees if at least a 2% increase in the tax base was realized. Manager Walsh noted this year the growth in the tax base is 3.64%. With Board approval, employees received a 1% lump sum payment across the board in 2014 and \$500 per capita in 2015.

Treasurer Brixie suggested a similar consideration be discussed for staff in 2016. She also expressed appreciation that money is in the budget to update the antiquated phone system.

Clerk Dreyfus also voiced his appreciation for the budget presented, as well as the approach to not go into debt in addition to the payment of existing debt. He clarified the budgeted amount of \$50,000 for branding and the website is in addition to the \$30,000 budgeted for 2015.

Trustee Veenstra inquired as to the status of the Beechwood Drive water and sewer mains and if the Township does not intend for the project to move forward, he requested it be deleted from the list.

Assistant Township Manager/Director of Public Works Perry responded many of those projects were a carryover from 2014 which did not get deleted. He noted the projects which will be completed are indicated in the detailed Sewer Budget.

Manager Walsh added the format needs to change so projects are not automatically carried over from year to year. He believed only those projects anticipated to be accomplished over the next three (3) to five (5) years should be included in the CIP Project Summary.

Trustee Veenstra questioned if there was sufficient prospective use for the Newton Road sewer main it is worth expending \$223,000 in funds now.

Mr. Perry responded the project has been scaled back since the Ingham County Road Department (ICRD) has already provided the additional paving on Newton Road. He indicated the whole point for including Newton Road in the budget was to have the sewer in place prior to paving so new pavement did not have to be torn up for sewer installation. Mr. Perry noted the plan is to place sewer main from the manhole to get it outside of the roadway so the lead can be accessed in the event someone desires to hookup. He stated this budget item is being revised and no funds will be included in the 2016 Budget.

Manager Walsh clarified the only water and sewer projects being considered for 2016 are on page 20 of the budget presentation handout.

Trustee Veenstra suggested revisions of CIP projects within the 2016 Recommended Budget. He believed projects which are not going to be funded in 2016 should not be listed on the CIP Summary Page.

Director Kieselbach noted the CIP is a requirement of the Municipal Planning Act for the Township to look at a six (6) year program for budgeting public improvements. The Planning Department speaks to department heads to look at proposed improvements and the compiled list is provided to the Township Manager for his budget preparation and recommendation.

Manager Walsh asked Trustee Veenstra to consider this as an unfunded wish list to provide the Board with projects the directors would like to see accomplished.

Treasurer Brixie reminded her fellow Board member the Township is required by law to include the CIP list in the process.

Trustee Scales added page 22 of the 2016 Recommended Budget allows the Board to “look beyond our nose” at long term planning. He expressed his desire to see a street light at Marsh and Tihart Roads added to the wish list, as several residents have voiced a need for the light.

Supervisor LeGoff closed the public hearing at 7:24 P.M.

10. ACTION ITEMS

Supervisor LeGoff opened Public Remarks.

Mark Hooper, 3653 Stagecoach Drive, Okemos, read from Section 86-370 8(h) of the Township Code of Ordinances regarding the PRD overlay ordinance. He asked that when the Board votes on approving the sketch plan, the relevance of the cited zoning section be considered to alleviate any misunderstanding concerning Forsberg Drive.

Deb Nolan, 4329 Heartwood Road, Okemos, reiterated her earlier comments concerning the abandonment of Forsberg Drive. She urged the Board to listen to the residents of Ponderosa Estates. She expressed her appreciation to Trustees Scales and Wilson for their attendance at the meeting with her and the residents of Ponderosa Estates.

Nick Gavrilides, 3627 Stagecoach Drive, Okemos, indicated all residents on Stagecoach Drive do not want the Forsberg Drive connection between Ponderosa Estates and Ember Oaks. He noted safety concerns because many young families have moved onto the cul de sac and requested the Board vacate the road.

Tom Lapka, 6177 Graebear Trail, East Lansing, spoke as a potential purchaser of Marsh Pointe. He stated his intent to continue operating this affordable housing project as it has been for the past 16 year. Mr. Lapka pointed out part of the financing package approved by Michigan State Housing Development Authority is to “lock in” a 50 year period of affordability, noting rents and affordability of the units will remain the same. He indicated there will be over \$2 million invested in rehabilitation of the site.

David Pierson, 1305 S. Washington Avenue, Lansing and attorney for SP Investments, requested the Board approve the amended sketch plan for the Ember Oaks PRD. He indicated the resolution before the Board goes through the same standards as they were approved by the Planning Commission which relate to the number of lots, whether the size of the lots meet the requirements under the zoning ordinance and the arrangement and size of the open space. Mr. Pierson emphasized the amended sketch plan meets those requirements. He stated his understanding that the ICRD is the ultimate decision maker with respect to the road connection requirement, believing it a public policy question for both the county and the Township Board to address. Mr. Pierson did not believe this neighborhood road would be dangerous or that the connection would encourage increased traffic. He requested the Board approve the sketch plan so the applicant can move on to the next step with the preliminary plat in order to address issue over the road connection.

Mr. Pierson spoke to earlier public comment regarding a reading of the ordinance concerning general conformance. He stated how general conformance has been applied by the Township's Planning Director by pointing to the fact the approved sketch plan does not show the Forsberg Drive connection, but the approved preliminary plat does. Mr. Pierson requested the engineers be allowed for "work through" the actual details of the property which will address all the preliminary plat issues.

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, suggested a revised CIP be available when the budget next comes before the Board. He recommended that clean energy production be included in the custom question on energy conservation within the 2015 Citizen Survey as well as include Township investment in clean energy generation as part of the question on property tax increases.

Will Tyler White, 13783 Main Street, Bath, spoke to the number of extensions requested for SUP #13-12051 (Douglas J). He posed several questions regarding the design changes for this project and buried utility wires and his belief the Smiley House is an historic site on the Michigan Historic Register. Mr. White suggested the Township employ an economic development director so economic development policy is followed and the projects are properly managed.

Supervisor LeGoff closed Public Remarks.

A. Extension of Special Use Permit #13-12051 (Douglas J)

Trustee Wilson moved [and read into the record] NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN hereby grants the extension of Special Use Permit #13-12051, for a period of one year, from July 15, 2015 to July 15, 2016, with the following condition:

- 1. All previous conditions placed on the approval Special Use Permit #13-12051 shall remain in effect.**

Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.

Board discussion:

- Community is anxious to see commencement on this project
- Project would transform the four corner area of Hamilton and Okemos Roads
- Project would complement the development of the former central fire station property
- Demolition permit to remove the Smiley House and brush within the next ten days
- Township must make the determination that the Smiley House is an historic building
- Member of the public ascertains the Smiley House is listed on the State Historic Register
- Smiley House met the qualifications to be placed on the State Historic Register due to its age
- Staff statement a building listed on the state historic register does not mean it cannot be demolished or removed
- Meridian Historical Village has indicated there is no room for this home and does not have the funds to move it
- Extension before the board this evening does not provide detail
- Addition to the plan of less than 10% of the original size is considered a minor amendment and is reviewed by the Director of Community Planning and Development
- Objection there is only sidewalk between the curb and the building and no place for the snow to be plowed except on the sidewalk
- Building needs to be moved five (5) feet to the west to accommodate snow during the winter
- Project has been downscaled so it is now "doable"
- Project has been under discussion for three (3) years
- Two Board members support for the extension with the understanding they will not support another extension for this project
- Board member preference for the building to be moved back further

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

Motion carried 5-2.

- B. Planned Residential Development #15-97015 (SP Investments Limited Partnership) Amendment to the Planned Residential Development Sketch Plan – Ember Oaks

Treasurer Brixie moved [and read into the record] NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN hereby approves the amendment to Planned Residential Development #97015 with the following condition:

- 1. Approval is granted in accordance with the revised Ember Oaks Planned Residential Development sketch plan prepared by KEBS, Inc., dated April 17, 2015 showing 111 lots on 161.88 acres.**

Seconded by Trustee Scales.

Board discussion:

- Move forward to address the issue of abandonment during the next step in the process
- Board member desire for the developer to be removed from the middle of the dispute about abandonment of Forsberg Drive
- Board member support for the elimination of the Forsberg Drive connection during the preliminary plat phase
- Board member belief when there is a requested change to a project, the Board must first look at the existing plan and plat and then hear arguments why the change(s) should be made
- Board member concern the sketch plan guides the preliminary plat and includes a Forsberg Drive connection to Ponderosa Estates
- Board member belief the sketch plan is only a guide
- As a matter of planning policy, subdivisions should generally be connected
- Planners did not contemplate connecting a subdivision with sidewalks and curbs to a neighborhood built in a more rural style
- Board member preference to abandon Forsberg Drive only if a pedestrian/bicycle pathway connection was built between the two subdivisions
- Some of the homes in Ember Oaks will be part of the Williamston School District and a bus will need to traverse on those streets
- Inquiry if approval of the sketch plan ties the Board's hands when the final preliminary plat comes before it to eliminate the road connection
- Sketch plan had to be amended in order to amend the preliminary plat because land had to be added and to address ICDC requirements regarding stormwater drainage and the Township requirement for increased setbacks for lots adjacent to the pipeline
- Original preliminary plat has been approved by the Township Board and the ICRD which showed the connection, and must get beyond the sketch plan in order to amend the preliminary plat
- Original preliminary plat contained the road connection and was already approved by both the Township and the ICRD
- Point at which the process is amended to eliminate Forsberg Drive
- Next phase would be for the developer to submit an application to amend the preliminary plat which would subsequently include Board discussion on removal of the road connection
- Board would then offer a resolution to amend the preliminary plat to eliminate Forsberg Drive which would be forwarded to the ICRD
- Residents have commenced the process at the ICRD to abandon Forsberg Drive
- Staff to obtain an update from the ICRD on the status of the abandonment
- Staff understanding some of the residents have requested the ICRD place this issue on hold
- ICRD must first validate if the abandonment petition is valid
- If the road is abandoned, the ICRD would give control to the Township
- Four person consensus of the Board during discussion in favor of abandonment of Forsberg Drive
- Board member belief this issue is being driven by the increased number of lots from 107 to 111

- 2.37 acres was added to the plat west of the new Jolly Road connection
- Board member opposition to the proposed road connection as shown on the sketch plan
- Resolution before the Board is to approve the sketch plan conditioned upon the April 17, 2015 sketch plan

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

NAYS: Trustee Veenstra
Motion carried 6-1.

C. Marsh Pointe PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes)

Treasurer Brixie moved [and read into the record] NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN hereby adopts this Resolution which provides:

- 1. that the Township Board finds that, upon transfer to T J Marsh Pointe Limited Dividend Housing Association Limited Partnership, the housing development identified as Marsh Pointe is of the class of housing developments exempt from general ad valorem real and personal property taxes under Ordinance 1995-1 of the Code of Ordinances of the Charter Township of Meridian, Michigan, because it is a housing development sponsored by a non-profit charitable organization; a housing development not otherwise exempt from general ad valorem real and personal property taxes; a housing development that shall be subject to covenants running with the land that require that it be maintained as housing for low and moderate income persons over 62 years of age for the remainder of its economic life; and the Township determines that, without the exemption from taxes, the operation of the proposed housing development would not be feasible; and**
- 2. that the Township Board hereby grants tax exempt status pursuant to Ordinance 1995-1 of the Code of Ordinances of the Charter Township of Meridian, Michigan, to the T J Marsh Pointe Limited Dividend Housing Association Limited Partnership for the housing development identified as Marsh Pointe to serve elderly persons of low and moderate income; and**
- 3. that subject to strict compliance with the conditions and requirements of Ordinance 1995-1, a contract between the Township and T J Marsh Pointe Limited Dividend Housing Association Limited Partnership, with the Michigan State Housing Authority as third party beneficiary under the contract, to provide the tax exemption and accept payments of an annual service charge for public services in lieu of all property taxes, said annual service charge to be equal to five percent (5%) of the difference between the annual shelter rents for the housing development actually collected and utilities, is effectuated by enactment of this Resolution.**

Seconded by Trustee Scales.

Board and applicant discussion:

- Ownership is changing and Township ordinance requires going through this process to grant the new owner the payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT)
- Marsh Pointe has 108 units, 92 one bedroom and 16 two bedroom units
- Amount of utility allowance contained in the PILOT calculation is for gas and electric and independently audited every year
- Request for the amount of annual service fee collected last year
- Comparison of service charge v. taxes calculated
- PILOT payment estimated to be \$34,000 next year given 100% occupancy

- List of proposed improvements will make Marsh Pointe more energy efficient
- Triple pane windows will have the highest R value attainable
- Increase in insulation in the attic area, windows, doors and additional insulation prior to residing
- Importance of affordable housing in Meridian Township
- Applicant's intent to hold a grand reopening after the project is completed
- Greater Lansing Housing Authority statistic that between 2015-2020, there will be 20,000 new retirees in the region living on a fixed income
- Percentage of tenants who fall under Section 8 housing
- Small percentage of contract vouchers with HUD and small percentage of vouchers through MSHDA for low income seniors
- Monthly rent is scaled according to income
- Owners will provide private rental assistance as well as one meal a day out of the grant money invested by the Womens Club
- Womens Club is leaving \$75,000 annually out of the principal
- Determination of rental fees governed by Section 42 of the Internal Revenue Code based on the county median income levels determined by HUD
- Energy efficient improvements will lower the utility bills and the Township's service charge is 5% of the difference between rents and utility bills
- With lower utility bills, 5% of the difference will be larger and provide more income to the Township

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

- D. Resolution in Recognition of the Haslett Beautification Association's Tenth Anniversary
Trustee Wilson moved [and read into the record] NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN recognizes the tenth anniversary of the Haslett Beautification Association and wishes to extend its appreciation to the Haslett Beautification Association, along with volunteers and supporters past and present, for their commitment to enhance and enrich Haslett and Meridian Township. Seconded by Trustee Veenstra.

Board discussion:

- Members of the Haslett Beautification Association will attend the September 15th Board meeting to accept the approved resolution
- Placemaking project is taking place on a site located on Marsh Road
- Removal of a building through tax foreclosure by the Ingham County Treasurer's office has dramatically improved the appearance of the site
- Appreciation for the beautification of Haslett through the Haslett Beautification Association
- Appreciation to Trustee Wilson for drafting and authorizing this resolution

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

- E. 2015 Township Citizen Survey
Assistant Township Manager/Director of Public Works and Engineering Derek Perry addressed the draft 2015 Citizen Survey as outlined in staff memorandum dated September 1, 2015.

Board and staff discussion:

- Concern with language regarding subways and ferries
- Some questions are not customizable as the survey is crafted for the entire United States and some of the items may not be pertinent for Meridian Township

- Staff suggestion that residents simply ignore the question
- Appreciation to staff for the selection of questions
- Survey results will assist the Township Board in prioritizing its goals for tax dollar use
- Survey results will assist Board members in gauging the residents' thoughts on specific issues
- Board member concern with the usefulness of customized questions A and B
- Use of the word "address" in customized question A has different meanings to different individuals and the question should be reworded
- Explanation as to who will be receiving the survey, as not every resident will be a recipient
- Concern with specificity of customized questions E and F
- Board member concern with the language concerning land use as specificity is critical
- Board member concern with the usefulness of the strategic planning question
- Staff reviewed surveys from multiple communities and the language was culled from those surveys
- Suggestion to include a modifier for single family residential development, multi-family residential development, commercial development and energy conservation in customized question A
- Preference for a specific question exclusively regarding energy conservation (e.g., solar panels on Township buildings, LED lights, adding electric vehicles to the Township motor pool, etc.)
- Customized questions E and F were included because modifications to the sign ordinance have been discussed during EDC meetings with members of the business community
- Importance of the sign ordinance questions to gauge public perception
- Board member preference for the question offered by LINC to be included in the survey
- Board member preference to include energy conservation/clean energy in customized question C to gauge public interest in use of tax money for this subject
- Board member support for including a modifier on the three types of development listed in customized question A
- Inquiry if there is a limit to the number of topics which can be listed in the customized questions listed in customized question C
- Staff indication the Township is allowed one page of custom questions, so it can be refined
- Suggestion to remove parks & recreation from customized question C as a new millage was recently passed and include solar initiatives in its place
- Board member suggestion to combine customized questions E and F regarding signs
- Board member preference to delete customized question B as strategic planning means different things to different people
- Board needs to make a determination on the survey questions for the next regular Board meeting so the survey can be sent this year
- Board member suggestion to add specificity to the larger sign question (customized question E) to determine why the public would like to see larger signs
- Board member suggestion to use a modifier for customized question E
- Caution in using verbiage which leads the question
- 1,400 residents will receive the survey
- Suggestion in the LINC letter to offer incentives to increase the low rate of return on the survey
- Incentive based return will require postage cost and increase the cost of the survey
- Procedure to be used is a scientifically statistically proven method of surveying
- Survey is anonymous and incentivizing the return will remove the anonymity
- Incentive based response will need to be vetted with the survey company
- Concern that an incentive based response will skew the response

It was the consensus of the Board to have this item on again for action at the September 15, 2015 Board meeting.

11. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

Supervisor LeGoff opened Public Remarks.

Ody Norkin, 3803 Sandlewood, Okemos, requested the Board obtain staff review of Meridian Township's Redi-Ride program as \$300,000-\$400,000 is sent to CATA to administer the program. He believed it an absolute necessity that seniors and residents with disabilities who cannot drive retain their dignity through available use of the Redi-Ride program. He noted these "non choice" riders who could speak to this issue tonight are precluded from Board meetings as the Redi-Ride service in Meridian Township ends at 5:00 P.M. He offered a comparison between the Spec-Tran provider in Ann Arbor and Spec-Tran in Meridian Township.

Mike McCurdy, 5458 Okemos Road, East Lansing, expressed appreciation for rezoning his property being added to tonight's agenda as a discussion item. He believed the entire issue of his goats has been initiated by the Township and he desires to be left alone. He noted there have been no complaints about the goats by other residents and does not object to the Township rezoning his land.

Supervisor LeGoff closed Public Remarks.

A. 2016 Recommended Budget

Board discussion:

- Support for reinvesting some of the proceeds from the sale of the former central fire station property into the Haslett area to promote economic development as suggested by the Manager
- Continued concern with paying \$15,000 in dues to Lansing Area Economic Partnership (LEAP) when its chief executive officer receives a higher salary than the Governor of Michigan
- Reminder about the need for street lights on Marsh Road
- Reminder about the discussion of rental registration fees in the Wardcliff area
- Rental registration fees should be equivalent to the fees charged by East Lansing as the Wardcliff area borders East Lansing
- Rental registration fees would need to be the same irrespective of location within the Township
- Staff to provide East Lansing rental registration fees at the next regular Board meeting
- State legislative concern about municipalities across the state charging disparate rental registration fees
- Board member belief the legislature indicated there was no nexus between the amount of fees charged and how the governmental unit allocated costs for maintaining the program
- Rental registration fees for single family homes v. fees charged for apartment complexes
- Board member support for reinstatement of the previous rental registration fee of \$1,200
- Board member belief the \$800 rental registration fee is already high and would not like to see it increased
- Township Board requires a \$100 annual renewal fee and a \$100 annual inspection fee
- State legislature introduced a bill to curtail disparate rental registration fees to \$100
- Request for rental registration fees from surrounding communities be provided to the Board for the next meeting

It was the consensus of the Board to place this item on for action at the next Board meeting.

B. McCurdy Goats

Board and staff discussion:

- Board member preference for the Board to initiate a rezoning of property at 5458 Okemos Road from RAAA to RR
- Concern with Mr. McCurdy's use of the Right to Farm Act at tomorrow's court hearing
- Staff statement the Township is not "going after" any family
- Mr. McCurdy's housing of goats is a code violation
- Township has a duty to enforce its ordinances and community standards
- Property was rezoned in 1994 to RAAA, well before Mr. McCurdy purchased the property
- Prior to 1994, the property in question was zoned RA (single family) and did not allow for livestock to be housed on the premises
- Comments contained in the *Lansing State Journal* indicated the Township has "bent over backwards" for this homeowner

- If goats are allowed on this property without it being rezoned, then every home in the Township can keep goats
- Another homeowner on Hawthorne maintains goats, they have been a constant problem and the court has sided with the Township on three (3) separate occasions
- Issue before the Board deals with upholding current community standards within the Township
- Township has adjourned one court hearing in an effort to reach a resolution with Mr. McCurdy
- Township staff has met with Mr. McCurdy to discuss the best way to address keeping his goats
- Many residents who have contacted the Township have offered to donate towards the rezoning application fee
- Board member suggested establishing a gofundme account which was refused by Mr. McCurdy
- If the gofundme account was established two weeks ago, there would be more money donated than needed for the rezoning fee
- Three (3) avenues are available to effectuate a rezoning to RR to keep the goats: Township Board initiation, Planning Commission initiation or initiation by the property owner
- History provided by staff showed property was rezoned in 1960 from agricultural to RA
- Property was rezoned to RAAA in 1995 because it was inconsistent with the Future Land Use Map
- Township is willing to assist the homeowner in any way possible if he will work with the Township
- Van Alstine's had a beef farm on this property prior to 1960 which was a legal non-conforming use and the non-conforming use continued when the property was sold to Ms. Allen
- Board member belief the non-conforming use ended when the last of Ms. Allen's animals "died off" (as noted in her letter) prior to sale of the property to Mr. McCurdy
- Public bodies need to be consistent in their application of the laws
- Exceptions are only possible when there is a rational basis in the law, and the fee itself is not such a basis
- One resident who is a proponent for the goats has already donated towards the cause
- Necessity for uniform application of Township ordinances by staff
- Mr. McCurdy stated he has no objection to the Township raising funds for the rezoning fee, but feels uncomfortable soliciting for them himself
- Mr. McCurdy stated he also has no objection to the Township initiating the rezoning

12. PUBLIC REMARKS

Supervisor LeGoff opened Public Remarks.

Leonard Provencher, 5824 Buena Parkway, Haslett, stated there has been no action on reestablishing the pathway in front of the Aldi project. He objected to the new agenda format which placed the Township Manager's Report and Board Member Comments and Reports at the end of the meeting as it does not allow the public to offer a response to those comments. Mr. Provencher reported his attendance at the annual CATA meeting where the \$50 million CATA budget was placed on the consent agenda with no roll call. He expressed concern with a statement contained in the CATA budget that the CEO was the sole individual who determined how the funds would be used with no further oversight. Mr. Provencher added he did not believe CATA to be open and transparent.

Supervisor LeGoff closed Public Remarks.

13. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

Manager Walsh reported the following:

- Wonch Park ribbon cutting tomorrow at noon
- Aldi sidewalk expected to be poured at the end of the week
- Food truck discussion to commence at the next regular Board meeting
- Direction to the Planning Commission to move forward with what the Township Board sent to it regarding medical marihuana

14. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS & REPORTS

Trustee Scales inquired of the Manager where the Board “is at” with the Redi-Ride contract.

Manager Walsh believed the contract with CATA expired five (5) year ago.

Treasurer Brixie stated there was no contract regarding Redi-Ride, as it was a voter approved service provided by CATA. She noted that after the first election of the voter approved service, a letter of agreement was created between CATA and the Township as to how the service would be provided. Treasurer Brixie stated the millage was subsequently reaffirmed. She clarified Michigan State University has a contract service with CATA which is different than Meridian Township’s voter approved Redi-Ride service.

Trustee Scales requested Redi-Ride be placed as a discussion item on the agenda of the next regular Board meeting. Clerk Dreyfus voiced his concurrence.

Trustee Scales offered his praise to the Tri-County Metro Narcotics Team for its response with the US Postal Service in discovering and breaking up a drug situation where heroin was being trafficked from California through the Okemos Post Office, taken to Haslett and then sold in Detroit.

A. Treasurer’s Quarterly Report

Treasurer Brixie reminded residents that Monday, September 14, 2015 is the last day to pay summer property taxes without penalty. Due to parking lot resurfacing, she announced a temporary drop box has been set up across from the police department.

Treasurer Brixie gave an update on delinquent personal property tax collection totals for tax years 2010-2014, 2015 total tax year collections as of August 26, 2015, 2015 tax year distribution totals as of August 18, 2015, and current fixed maturity investments and non-fixed investments as of July 31, 2015. She noted the quarterly report now contains an investment report which shows a graph on investment diversity by maturity, a table on current investment portfolio size and a pie chart on diversity by investment type. Treasurer Brixie also included a newspaper clip from three (3) weeks ago which showed average CD yields.

Treasurer Brixie reported her attendance at the August 19th CATA meeting where its 2015-2016 budget was approved. She noted CATA’s property millage levy will be 3.007 mills. Treasurer Brixie noted there will be a 1.4% decrease in CATA’s expenditures.

Clerk Dreyfus confirmed the Board will not hold a budget deliberations meeting on September 8, 2015 as previously approved through resolution, but will hold a special meeting beginning at 4:30 P.M. for a MERS presentation on Township legacy costs.

Clerk Dreyfus reported the Meridian Economic Development Corporation met last month and discussed the EDC’s welcoming cities resolution which encourages diversity in the immigrant and student population as a conduit to economic development. He stated the creation of a Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA) and how a CIA can benefit placemaking and economic development opportunities was also discussed, as well as the continued discussion on the Township’s sign ordinance.

Clerk Dreyfus also reported his attendance at last week’s grand reopening of the Marathon gas station in Haslett as it has come under new ownership.

Trustee Styka announced there was a resignation on the Okemos Board of Education and a new member, Donald Romaine, was appointed. He reminded residents of the October 3rd Recycling Event at Chippewa Middle School from 9:00 AM until 2:00 PM and volunteers are needed.

Trustee Styka announced the Annual Heritage Festival will be held at the Meridian Historical Village on September 19th from 10:00 AM until 3:00 PM. He noted children will have an opportunity to build a one-quarter sized barn within the existing barn under a program titled “Teamwork in Timbers” through partnership with the Michigan Barn Preservation Network.

Trustee Styka announced that out of 541 school districts in Michigan, Williamston Public Schools ranked 57th, Haslett Public Schools ranked 45th, East Lansing Public Schools ranked 26th and Okemos Public Schools ranked #1 according to an organization which analyzes the best school districts in which to teach.

Trustee Veenstra offered history on the Redi-Ride program. He believed what Meridian Township's receives for the \$300,000 generated from the Redi-Ride millage should be spelled out in a contract with CATA. He expressed his desire for competitive bidding for this service. He compared the hours of service in Meridian Township (9:00 AM until 5:00 PM) with those of Delta Township (6:00 A.M. until 9:00 P.M.), and believed hours need to be expanded in the Township to meet riders' requests.

Trustee Scales stated several Board members joined him last year for a fundraiser to raise money for the Parkwood YMCA. He announced that on September 21st there will be a ribbon cutting ceremony for the rededication of the Parkwood YMCA and further information will be available through staff.

15. ADJOURNMENT

Supervisor LeGoff adjourned the meeting at 10:13 P.M.

ELIZABETH LEGOFF
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

BRETT DREYFUS, CMMC
TOWNSHIP CLERK

Sandra K. Otto, Secretary