



MINUTES
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
PARK COMMISSION REGULAR
MEETING
Tuesday, February 17, 2026, 4:30pm
Service Center

REGULAR MEETING – 4:30PM

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
 - A. Chair Nardo-Farris called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM.

2. ROLL CALL
 - A. Present: Chair Nardo-Farris, Commissioners Lick, Phelps and Stephens
 - B. Commissioner McDonald arrived at 4:42 PM.
 - C. Staff present: Director Wisinski and Administrative Assistant Pachucki

3. PUBLIC COMMENT
 - A. Beth Betchel, Haslett resident, requested that the Park Commission pursue eliminating chemical use in land management practices at parks.

4. PRESENTATION
 - A. Meridian Township Parks & Recreation 5-Year Master Plan Process Kick-off
 1. Mike Hoffmeister of Mannik-Smith introduced himself to the Park Commission and presented on the Parks and Recreation 5-Year Master Plan. Mannik-Smith was brought on board to assist with the process, including the public engagement section. Hoffmeister shared a tentative timeline, with a deadline of February 1st, 2027, to submit to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Commissioners asked questions about the public hearings, online and social media engagement, and outreach to under-represented groups. The commissioners also discussed moving up the timeline by a month in case there are any bottlenecks in the process.
 - B. Marshall Park Bioswale Project
 1. Deputy Township Manager/Director of Public Works Opsommer introduced the project, and representatives Dan Troia and Bob Ford from Spaulding DeDecker to present two concept plans for the bioswale at Marshall Park. The first concept plan focused on perennial wetlands, while the second concept plan focused on naturalized wetlands. Commissioners asked about ecological value of the two plans, public safety for children without visible sightlines, educational signage, and accessibility. The commissioners discussed a combination of the two concept plans – incorporating the mature trees at the southeast corner of the parcel from the second concept, and the wetland plants around the bioswale from the first concept plan.

Commissioner Lick motioned to accept the presentations as presented. Commissioner Phelps seconded.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
 - A. Commissioner Lick moved to approve the agenda, as submitted. Commissioner Phelps seconded.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
 - A. January 13, 2026 Park Commission Regular Meeting Minutes
 1. Commissioner Phelps moved to approve the January 13, 2026 regular meeting

minutes as presented. Commissioner Lick seconded.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

7. COMMUNICATIONS

A. February Stewardship Calendar

1. Director Wisinski noted that this calendar was previously included in the January 2026 Park Commission packet, and there had been no changes since that meeting. Land Stewardship Coordinator Emma Campbell had to cancel a few Weekday Warriors in the last few weeks due to below-zero temperatures, but there are a core group of volunteers that come out to the events even in suboptimal conditions.
2. Commissioner McDonald moved to place the communication received on file. Commissioner Lick seconded.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

8. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. Meridian Township Parks & Recreation 5-Year Master Plan Process
- B. Marshall Park Bioswale Project
- C. Commissioner Lick moved to remove Item 8.A. and 8.B. from the Discussion Items, as they were already presented on earlier in the meeting. Commissioner Phelps seconded.

VOICE VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Stephens left the meeting at 5:52 PM.

9. ACTION ITEMS

- A. There were no action items on the agenda.

10. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. Red Cedar Regatta

- a. The inaugural Red Cedar Regatta will be held on Saturday, May 16th. Details are underway, and registration will open after the Quiet Waters Symposium. Director Wisinski will share information on the Regatta at the March meeting, but wanted to make the Park Commission aware to save the date.

B. Budget Updates

- a. Director Wisinski noted that nothing had been expended in 2026.

C. Cricket Updates

- a. Director Wisinski shared that the cricket community has not answered her last communication, and that she will follow up before the next meeting. Commissioner Phelps mentioned that there may be an opportunity to host pop-up clinics for cricket like the rugby clinic last summer.

D. Small Dog Park Shelter Updates

- a. Director Wisinski shared progress on researching options for a transit shelter that was prepared by Kati Adams, Parks and Land Preservation Superintendent. The three options presented vary in cost and size. The commissioners discussed how the new shelter will take away from existing space, and the cost of the three options presented. Director Wisinski will meet with representatives from the Small Dog Park, share the progress made, and report back on the meeting.

E. Senior Center – Water Pipe Break

- a. There was an interior water pipe break that occurred at the Meridian Senior Center on February 1st. Meridian Township is working with Okemos Public Schools to repair and replace the reception desk area. Meridian Township will repair or replace any other physical equipment damaged during the leak. Chair Nardo-Farris inquired how many members travel during the winter months. Director Wisinski said she would check with Coordinator Wisdom.

Commissioner McDonald left the meeting at 6:33 PM.

11. PUBLIC COMMENT
 - A. There was no public comment.

12. OTHER MATTERS AND COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS AND LIAISON REPORTS
 - A. Chair Nardo-Farris reminded the Park Commission that the next meeting will be on Tuesday, March 10th at the Service Center at 4:30 PM.

13. ADJOURNMENT
 - A. Chair Nardo-Farris adjourned the meeting at 6:51 PM.

All comments limited to 3 minutes, unless prior approval for additional time for good cause is obtained.

Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact Parks & Recreation Director, Courtney Wisinski: 2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court, Haslett, MI 48864 or 517.853.4600 - Ten Day Notice is Required.

Dear Meridian Township Park Commission Board Members,

I respectfully ask that you commit to providing a non-toxic township community by reducing and eventually eliminating the use of toxic synthetic chemicals for township land management for invasive species, field turf management, etc. All communities' residents and employees have the right to be healthy. Please add non-toxic GoatScaping Services to the toolbox of strategies combined with mulching, native ground covers, manual removal, controlled burns, natural non-toxic bio-herbicides and natural non-toxic bio-pesticides for management of invasive species, field turf management, etc.

Please note that even small spot-treatments applications of toxic synthetic chemicals such as Glyphosate, Triclopyr, etc. disrupt soil microbiomes and create long-term toxic synthetic chemicals' dependency. Additionally, please note in in a USA Today article dated October 14, 2025, it states that Bayer (Monsanto) has been ordered to pay \$600 million judgment in a lawsuit claiming its Glyphosate product Roundup herbicide causes cancer. Thus far, Bayer (Monsanto) has paid out approximately \$11 billion to settle nearly 100,000 lawsuits related to its Glyphosate product Roundup with thousands of court cases still pending. Significant health concerns also exist regarding toxic synthetic chemical Triclopyr. Moreover, GoatScaping Services are cost-effective and provide predictable contracts, reduced chemical and labor costs, plus provide natural fertilization, etc. that helps restore soil health in the long term.

Additionally, natural bio-herbicides and natural bio-pesticides are proven very effective with reduced costs over the long-term, such as the products EPA Registered bio-herbicide Contact Organics (now Firehawk) (<https://www.contactorganics.com> & <https://livkleen.com/about-livkleen/>), EPA Registered bio-pesticide Orange Guard (<https://orangeguard.com/>), etc.

To protect the health of Meridian Township residents and employees, I respectfully ask this Board take a **first step with a GoatScaping Services pilot program** to help manage invasive species, field turf surfaces, etc. along with starting the process of using natural bio-herbicides and natural bio-pesticides. Additionally, since last month, I shared these public comments at the Land Preservation Advisory Board meeting, I respectfully also ask that this Board collaborate together with the Land Preservation Advisory Board and Staff with these healthy and long-term cost effective endeavors. I am providing you a folder of resources of both health information and a 6-page contact list of Michigan GoatScaping Services and their respective clients for references.

Thank you,
Beth Bechtel
Haslett, MI



Meridian Charter Township

Parks & Recreation Master Plan

Kick Off Meeting: February 17, 2026

The Meridian Charter Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan will follow the format suggested by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources in the *Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plans* (IC1924- Rev. 4/26/2021) as illustrated in the diagram below.

Planning Process

	MDNR Suggested Format
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> Community Description Administrative Structure Park Inventory </div>	Description of Planning Process Community Description Administrative Structure Parks and Recreation Inventory
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> Needs Assessment </div>	Needs Assessment & Public participation
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> Master Plan </div>	Goals and Objectives Action Program Plan Adoption

1. Community Description/Administrative Structure

- Update the demographic, physical, and land use characteristics of the Township using Township or County data.
- Update the description of the current administration of parks and recreation services and the role of parks and recreation in the Township including a description of any partnerships with other organizations such as the schools, volunteers, or community groups.

2. Park Inventory

- Update the description of the Township parks and recreation facilities as well as the nearby regional recreation facilities including federal, state, county, township, schools, and other parks and recreation facilities.
- Update the assessment of the accessibility of each Township park to people with disabilities and information on previous MDNR grant-assisted projects.
- Assess park facility conditions and formulate conclusions regarding opportunities and needs.

3. Needs Assessment

- Provide a comparison to national recreation standards.
- Analyze the results of the online survey and public/stakeholder input process and develop recommendations for the plan's goals and objectives.



4. Master Plan

- Develop a draft plan using MDNR guidelines.
- Provide draft plan to the Township Park Commission for review and revisions as needed.
- Submit copies of draft plan for the required 30-day public review.
- Discuss comments received and desired revisions of draft plan at a Park Commission meeting and seek recommendations for Township Board adoption.
- Present and seek Township Board adoption following a public hearing.
- Assemble required documents, prepare certification checklist, and submit plan to regional agencies.
- Assist the Township with the online MDNR submittal of the plan.

Master Plan Estimated Timeline

Date	Tasks and Milestones	Meetings
February 2026	Kick-off meeting with staff and Park Commission, review and update background information and existing conditions.	PC
April-June 2026	Conduct online resident survey & polls	
June-August 2026	Public Input Session(s), Stakeholder Meetings and Focus Groups Conduct public input session for additional public input including public Park Commission meeting.	PC/PI
August-September 2026	Prepare a complete draft report	
October 2026	Park Commission Meeting Review preliminary draft Parks & Recreation Master Plan Action Requested: Set public hearing for November meeting	PC
Oct-Nov 2025	Required 30-day public review period Make plan available at Township Hall, on the Township website, public notice of availability and November public hearing	
November 2026	Park Commission Meeting Formal public hearing, final review and recommendation to Board of Trustees	PC
December 2026	Township Board of Trustees Action Requested: Approval via resolution	BOT
January 2027	Submission to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources	

PI: Public Input Session

PC: Park Commission Meeting

BOT: Board of Trustees Meeting