

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
TOWNSHIP BOARD REGULAR MEETING **-APPROVED-**  
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos MI 48864-1198  
853-4000, Township Hall Room  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2019 **6:00 pm.**

PRESENT: Supervisor Styka, Clerk Dreyfus, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Jackson, Opsommer, Sundland

ABSENT:

STAFF: Township Manager Walsh, Director of Public Works/Assistant Township Manager Perry, Police Chief Plaga, Information Technology Director Gebes, Community Planning Director Kieselbach, Economic Development Director Buck, Human Resource Director Marx, Fire Chief Hamel, Parks and Recreation Director Maisner,

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Supervisor Styka called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS

Supervisor Styka led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

The Recording Secretary called the roll of the Board.

4. PRESENTATIONS

A. Introduction of New Police Officer

Chief of Police Plaga introduced the newest Police Officer at Meridian Township, Kyle Cornell.

5. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Supervisor Styka opened public remarks at 6:08 pm.

Supervisor Styka closed public remarks at 6:09 pm.

6. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

Township Manager Frank Walsh reported: Famer's Market Project update, Meridian Mall tax appeal, upcoming Joint Boards and Commissions Meeting, Copper Creek mediation.

7. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Trustee Jackson reported:

- Asked Director Maisner to give update on fundraiser efforts.

- Director Maisner provided the Board with an update on the Farmer's Market fundraiser.

Clerk Dreyfus reported:

- Attended Ground Water Management Board meeting: Update on PFAS contamination
- Continuation of voter record updates after the election and post-election logistics.
- Precinct Chair one-on-one meetings for feedback and input.
- ~~Strongly supports recognizing employee excellence, concerned with giving three employees \$1,500 for Archie Virtue employee recognition award, subjective selection process is unfair, belief that it is an unlawful expenditure, government cannot provide money to employees without provisions in collective bargaining agreements.~~
- Concerns about expenditures for Dec 21<sup>st</sup> Employee Recognition Event, MTA & MML list funding these events as unlawful expenditures.
- ~~Can recognize employees with framed certificates or plaque.~~
- ~~Belief that awarding monetary gifts to employees could engender loyalty and undue influence employee/employer interactions, could produce feeling of indebtedness to person deciding who receives cash awards.~~

Manager Walsh responded:

- Employee recognition is important; he has different opinion than Clerk on matter of unlawful expenditures.
- Auditor and Legal Counsel support decision to do employee recognition.
- Bring in outside independent opinion to solve concerns with unlawful expenditures.
- Does not believe any personal gain is involved in recognizing employees.
- The importance of seeking finality on this issue, options on moving forward.

Trustee Opsommer reported:

- Draft Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Agreement being sent to Capital Area Transit Authority (CATA) Board Meeting on Jan 16<sup>th</sup> at 3:00pm for review.
- CATA meeting will also focus on goal-setting and budget development.
- Renew Michigan Fund, replaces the defunct CMI Fund, established by the State for environmental cleanup, including PFAS. Potential funding for downtown Okemos.

Treasurer Deschaine reported:

- Will be attending Public Finance Investment Manager Basic Certification course & exam, and attending Michigan Treasurers Association meetings.
- Praised Deputy Treasurer Mary Ann Groop for winning Archie Virtue Employee Recognition Award
- Belief that a Board member just "attacked" the Manager during Board Reports tonight, due to continuing inappropriate use of "Board Member Reports and Announcements" suggests moving Agenda Item 7 to Agenda Item 15 indefinitely.

Supervisor Styka reported:

- "Board Member Reports and Announcements" is for meeting reports and upcoming announcements, and Item 15 "Board Member Comments" is for other communication, stated Board has drifted away from this format and the need to go back to it.
- Remembrance of the late Dick White, Okemos resident and businessman.
- Governor Whitmer's executive order eliminating discrimination in the LGBTQ community.

## 8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**Trustee Opsommer moved to approve the Agenda as presented. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine.**

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 6-0

9. CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor Styka reviewed the consent agenda.

**Clerk Dreyfus moved to adopt the Consent Agenda as presented. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.**

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

NAYS:  
Motion carried 6-0

A. Communications

**Clerk Dreyfus 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 Jackson.**

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

NAYS:  
Motion carried 6-0

B. Minutes

- (1) December 4, 2018 Regular Meeting
- (2) December 10, 2018 Special Meeting
- (3) December 11, 2018 Regular Meeting

**Clerk Dreyfus moved to approve and ratify (1) the minutes of December 4, 2018 Regular Meeting as submitted. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.**

**Clerk Dreyfus moved to approve and ratify (2) the minutes of December 10, 2018 Special Meeting as submitted. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.**

**Clerk Dreyfus moved to approve and ratify (3) the minutes of December 11, 2018 Regular Meeting as submitted. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.**

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

NAYS:

Motion carried 6-0

C. Bills

**Clerk Dreyfus moved to approve that the Township Board approve the Manager’s Bills as follows, seconded by Trustee Jackson:**

<b>Common Cash</b>		\$	<b>1,957,242.07</b>
<b>Public Works</b>		\$	<b>46,237.22</b>
<b>Trust &amp; Agency</b>		\$	<b>2,063,043.36</b>
	<b>Total Checks</b>	\$	<b>4,066,522.65</b>
<b>Credit Card Transactions</b>		\$	<b>35,682.99</b>
Dec. 6 <sup>th</sup> to Jan. 2 <sup>nd</sup>			
	<b>Total Purchases</b>	\$	<b><u>4,102,205.64</u></b>
<b>ACH Payments</b>		\$	<b><u>999,664.94</u></b>

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

NAYS:  
Motion carried 6-0

10. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY – NONE

11. HEARINGS

A. Georgetown #3 Streetlighting SAD #425 (Resolution #4 Hearing)

Director Perry outlined the proposed special assessment for the construction of public improvements at the locations provided in the memo.

Supervisor Styka opened the public hearing at 6:34 pm.

Supervisor Styka closed the public hearing at 6:35 pm.

B. Georgetown #4 Streetlighting SAD #427 (Resolution #2 Hearing)

Director Perry outlined the proposed special assessment for the construction of public improvements at the locations provided in the memo.

Supervisor Styka opened the public hearing at 6:35 pm.

Supervisor Styka closed the public hearing at 6:36 pm.

12. ACTION ITEMS

A. Medical Marihuana Non Zoning Ordinance - **Introduction**

**Trustee Opsommer moved to approve the resolution for the introduction of the amendment to the Code of Ordinances to add Chapter 40 Commercial Medical Marihuana Facilities and amend the Township Fee Schedule to include an Initial Application Fee of \$5,000 and Annual/Renewal Application Fee of \$5,000, amending Section 4030, Subsection 5(b)(3), striking the first sentence: “No more than the available number of Permits under this Chapter may submit a special use application,” and replacing it with: “The number of special use applications submitted may not exceed the number of available permits under this chapter.” Seconded by Trustee Sundland.**

Board discussion: Status of Planning Commission decision on Zoning Ordinance, development of lottery system and procedures, wording of ordinance, details behind growth operations, color-coding overlays, misdemeanor and civil infraction,

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

NAYS:

Motion carried 6-0

B. ~~Board and Commission Appointments~~

**Supervisor Styka moved Item 12B to a future meeting**

C. Annual Performance Review Township Manager

**Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve the submitted 2018 Annual Performance Evaluation for Frank L. Walsh, Meridian Township Manager. Seconded Trustee Jackson.**

Board discussion: Trustee Opsommer read Manager Walsh’s 2018 Evaluation written by Supervisor, consensus was he received excellent scores in all performance areas, ~~consistently “excellent” scores is not productive for the Township citizens or Manager, there is always room for improvement and opportunities available for growth, completion of 2018 Board Goals speaks to Manager performance, Manager’s excellent community outreach, Manager has not received any constructive criticism, evaluation accurately reflects performance.~~

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

NAYS:

Motion carried 6-0

D. Sierra Ridge #2 & #3 Streetlighting SAD #426 – Resolution #3

**Trustee Opsommer moved to approve Sierra Ridge #2 & #3 Public Streetlighting Improvement Special Assessment district #426 – Resolution #3, which approves the construction of the public improvement, the estimate cost, and defraying the cost by special assessment; determines the special assessment district and directs the making of an assessment roll. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.**

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

NAYS:

Motion carried 6-0

E. 2019 Goals – Action Plan

**Treasurer Deschaine moved to adopt the attached 2019 Meridian Township Action Plan. Seconded by Clerk Dreyfus.**

Board discussion: Treasurer Deschaine read the 2019 Goals – Action Plan

**Trustee Jackson moved to add the following amendments, Seconded by Trustee Opsommer:**

**SECTION E: Replace “CONNECTION” with “CONSTRUCTION”**

**SECTION C: Add “AND FOCUS REDEVELOPMENT EFFORTS IN DOWNTOWN HASLETT AND CARRIAGE HILLS”**

**SECTION H: Add “MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP POLICE”**

Board discussion: definition of breaking ground, changing the meaning of current goal

VOICE VOTE ON AMENDMENTS: Motion failed for lack of majority.

**Trustee Opsommer moved to add the following amendments, Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine:**

**SECTION E: Replace “CONNECTION” with “CONSTRUCTION”**

**SECTION H: Add “MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP POLICE”**

VOICE VOTE ON AMENDMENTS: Motion passed 6-0

Board discussion: status of developments, viable possible developments

VOICE VOTE ON ORIGINAL MOTION: Motion passed 6-0

F. 2019 Wage Schedule Adjustments

**Trustee Jackson moved to Approve the Township Manager’s recommended adjustments to the 2019 Wage Scale for the Director of Parks & Recreation, Communications Director, and Information Technology Director, based on years of service and performance. Seconded by Trustee Opsommer.**

~~Board discussion: Desire for equitable wage scale, wage scale adjustments due to longevity and pay discrepancies, differences between private and public sector wage scales, increases in both wage scale and Manager's salary will impact union negotiations regarding pay rate increases for their members, importance of pay studies and concern none were conducted, use of random wage increases to garner favor and loyalty, comparison to other departments, current pay scale is too narrow and increases come too quickly, not enough bands within the large yearly step increases, gender inequity as reason for wage increases, Department Directors are like VPs, pay increases are deserved but need for new pay increase system, Manager is at top of pay scale and everything is relative to that, no gender inequity but longevity and step increase inequity, pay scale should depend on length in one position – not based on anniversary date of initial hire.~~

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

NAYS: Clerk Dreyfus

Motion carried 5-1

13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Georgetown #3 Streetlighting SAD #425

**Board consensus to place this item on for action at the next Board meeting.**

B. Georgetown #4 Streetlighting SAD #427

**Board consensus to place this item on for action at the next Board meeting.**

14. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Supervisor Styka Opened Public Remarks at 8:03 pm.

Supervisor Styka Closed Public Remarks at 8:04 pm.

15. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Clerk Dreyfus stated:

- ~~Inappropriateness of Calling the Question (stopping Board discussion and immediately voting) as a tool to quiet dissenting opinions of Board members, minimum of two rounds of discussion is needed before Calling the Question.~~
- ~~Board needs to practice civility and respect towards all members.~~
- ~~Archie Virtue Award concerns were directed towards Township policy, not towards any individual.~~
- ~~Some Board members view disagreements with public policy as a personal attack on staff or the Manager, they ignore the issues raised and disparage the dissenting Board member.~~
- ~~Right and duty as Clerk, who signs Township checks, to review and approve expenditures, Board should be grateful Clerk is exercising due diligence as part of his statutory duties.~~
- ~~Board procedure needs to be unbiased and detached from emotions.~~

Trustee Opsommer stated:

- Calling the Question limits repetitiveness.
- Attacks should not be made towards individuals.
- Question about minutes not taken during subcommittee meeting on Dec 27, three Board members on Trustee Selection Subcommittee present (not a quorum of the Board).

Clerk Dreyfus responded:

- ~~No official Board meeting on Dec 27<sup>th</sup>, unaware of any special meeting of the Board.~~
- ~~Questioned why no one in Town Hall Room walked 30 seconds to Clerk's Office to get assistance, if needed.~~

Treasurer Deschaine stated:

- Supported use of Calling the Question to avoid repetition.

16. ADJOURNMENT

**Trustee Opsommer moved to adjourn. Seconded by Supervisor Styka.**

VOICE VOTE:            Motion carried            6-0

**Supervisor Styka adjourned the meeting at 8:13 pm.**

17. POSTSCRIPT – PHIL DESCHAINED

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RONALD J. STYKA,  
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

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BRETT DREYFUS,  
TOWNSHIP CLERK