



CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864  
Administrative Conference Room  
Wednesday, June 5, 2019 6:00 pm

PRESENT: Chair, Walter Benenson; Vice-Chair, Tunga Kiyak; Commissioner, Leslie Charles; Commissioner, Brian Seipel; Commissioner, Mike Nevells; Alternate Commissioner, Reti Adhi  
ABSENT: Alternate Commissioner, Kevin Thatcher  
STAFF: Deborah Guthrie, Communications Director; Brandie Yates, Executive Producer  
TOWNSHIP: Kathy Sundland, Meridian Township Board Trustee  
COMCAST: None

1. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Chair Benenson called the meeting to order at **6:00 pm**.

2. **PUBLIC REMARKS**

4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Commissioner Charles moved **TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS SUBMITTED**. Seconded by Chair Benenson

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Charles moved **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 2019 REGULAR MEETING**. Seconded by Chair Benenson.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

6. **COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR REPORT**

Updates completed to the project section of the Township website to include adding the Township to the social site Nextdoor to communicate with neighborhoods in the Township. Director's will be providing a 6-month review to the Township Board, the Communications Dept. is also combining social accounts and reducing the amount of separate accounts to help drive traffic. When logged in to Nextdoor as Meridian Township, it is mainly for posting news and information to the various neighborhoods in the Township. When logged in as the Township, you have to post as the voice and brand of the Township.

7. **TOWNSHIP BOARD LIAISON'S REPORT**

Electronic Board packets are coming and in the process. Medical Marihuana adoption for the Township passed, but the Township opted out of the recreational marihuana, the state will be controlling the application process, etc., zoning for senior living communities passed and the local road millage will be on the ballot for August election. It will be a bond and eliminate the current millage. The Redi-ride millage will also be on the ballot for the August

## Minutes – Communications Commission

June 5, 2019 6:00 pm

Page 2

election. Asking to renew with CATA for an additional 5 years. Township also held a groundbreaking ceremony for Marketplace on the Green Farmers' Market.

### 8A. **RECOMMENDED BUDGET 2020**

Would like to purchase the control room monitors and the rolling monitor for the Township Board meetings from the Approved Budget 2019. The remaining items from the Approved Budget 2019 will move to the Recommended Budget 2020 with no additional purchases.

There are concerns from the Commission about the declining budget and delaying purchases because if HOMTV keeps putting off making necessary replacement purchases, then everything could break down at the same time, which would lead to larger replacement costs. The Township needs to figure out a way to subsidize the Communications Department and the declining budget.

FCC has postponed the vote again. There is a rumor that the FCC may remove the clause that PEG channels will have to give money back to the cable providers.

Vice Chair Kiyak moved **TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDED BUDGET FOR 2020 AS SUBMITTED**. Seconded by Commissioner Nevells.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

### 9A. **SUBSCRIBER COMPLAINTS**

Need to add a box or additional comments on the complaint form to show a resolution on of the issue. Need to show how the issue was resolved and handled.

### **COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

The Commission discussed rather than doing a survey with the citizens, doing a survey about communication needs of the other Township Departments. The Commission was provided copies of older surveys and they discussed possibly doing a survey with the citizens after staff completes an internal informal review with the individual departments.

The Commission also suggested a new millage for the Communications Department and HOMTV or adding to existing millages to cover HOMTV's coverage expense. With the millage that covers the Senior Center, Meridian Cares and Recreation, when it is time for renewal, possibly asking for additional money to cover the communication items and needs.

The commissioners asked the question how are the communication components of the other Township Departments funded. The commissioners discussed that the Township needs to assess all of the communications it is currently doing and then what it is willing to support, then the Community Needs Assessment would come behind that and become the focus of the Communications Commission.

The Township already submitted a survey to the citizens, which included three (3) questions about the Communications Department. The commission recommended asking the departments in the Township based on the information received from the citizens, what are your needs from the Communications Department. More of an internal survey first.

## Minutes – Communications Commission

June 5, 2019 6:00 pm

Page 2

Staff will reach out and get an idea from the other departments if the Communications Department is meeting their needs and what needs do they have or will have of the Communications Department. Staff will provide all the older surveys for the Commission to review and look over.

Communication Needs Assessment will remain as a discussion item on the agenda.

### 10A. COMPLIMENTS/COMPLAINTS

Discussed including more of the compliments and kudos in the packets.

With the kid's camp, there should be a formal survey sent out, rather than just a "thank you".

### 11C. WEBSITE ANALYTICS

Staff will be creating a Meridian Township Business Page to change google searches from Meridian Charter Township to Meridian Township.

### 11F. HOMTV INTERNSHIP/ALUMNI

Staff discussed the Media Camp for Kids, signups, sponsors and the Showcase Event. The HOMTV Interns will assist with the camp. Staff also discussed the HOMTV training program provided to the Interns, how the interns move on to work in the industry and how the program will extend to younger generations.

### 15. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Seipel moved **TO ADJOURN THE MEETING**. Seconded by Vice Chair Kiyak.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously

Chair Benenson adjourned the meeting at 7:25 pm.