

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
TOWNSHIP BOARD REGULAR MEETING - **APPROVED** -  
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198  
853-4000, Town Hall Room  
TUESDAY, APRIL 7, 2009 **6:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Supervisor McGillicuddy, Clerk Helmbrecht (6:01 P.M.), Treasurer Brixie, Trustees Dreyfus, LeGoff, Ochberg, Veenstra  
ABSENT: None  
STAFF: Township Manager Gerald Richards, Director of Community Planning & Development Mark Kieselbach, Chief Engineer Younes Ishraidi, Police Chief Dave Hall, Director of Finance Diana Hasse, Attorney Andria Ditschman

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

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

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Supervisor McGillicuddy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Supervisor McGillicuddy called the roll of the Board.

4. PUBLIC REMARKS

Supervisor McGillicuddy opened Public Remarks.

Cecilia Kramer, on behalf of Ingham County Drain Commissioner Pat Lindemann, PO Box 220, Mason, spoke in support of the resolution for opposing the Repeal of Michigan's Wetland Protection Act.

Ann Alchin, 2227 Hamilton Road, Okemos, expressed support for the Nakoma Drive Sidewalk Connection in the Indian Hills subdivision.

Malinda Barr, President, Meridian Area Business Association (MABA), 1867 Lake Lansing Road, Haslett, gave an update of the Meridian Champions meeting of March 30, 2009. She explained that Meridian Champions is a group comprised of chairs of Meridian Township Commissions and MABA. Ms. Barr added Champions main mission is to open lines of communication and offer assistance to each other in working towards the common goals of the Township.

Bill Cambray, President, Indian Hills Homeowners Association, 4672 Chippewa Drive, Okemos, spoke in support of the Nakoma Drive Sidewalk Connection.

Leonard Provenchur, 5824 Buena Parkway, Haslett, spoke in support of Zoning Amendment #07050 and expressed appreciation for the presentation at the last Board meeting by Ingham County Road Commission's Managing Director Bill Conklin. Mr. Provenchur thanked the Board for its comment on the need to address continued flooding of North Okemos Road.

Will Tyler White, 2142-1/2 Hamilton Road, Okemos, expressed concern that Zoning Amendment #07050 would prohibit boat repair in a property owner's own yard. He also believed a home based business owner could not park commercial trailers in their yard under this proposed zoning amendment.

Supervisor McGillicuddy closed Public Remarks.

5. REPORTS/BOARD COMMENT/NEW WORRIES

Manager Richards announced Meridian Township is part of a group eligible to apply for and receive Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant monies of \$162,000.

Trustee LeGoff expressed a desire to introduce a resolution to coordinate the philosophies of the Township Board and the Okemos School Board.

Without objection, Supervisor McGillicuddy added Agenda Item #11G: Okemos School District School Closings.

Trustee Dreyfus reported the Cable Commission will be discussing a promotional video for Meridian Township to tie into the economy and showcase how the Economic Development Corporation has used tools to promote Meridian Township at its next quarterly meeting. He noted he participated in a teleconference as part of a Michigan Townships Association subcommittee looking at state statutes as they relate to townships.

Trustee Ochberg announced the Supervisor, Clerk and Trustee Ochberg attended a form based code seminar which designs the outcome for an area and adjusts the code to guarantee the outcome. While she concluded the Township as a whole was not “ready” for this concept, she thought there may be certain areas in the Township conducive to form based codes (i.e., Grand River Corridor and future study areas).

Treasurer Brixie reported the Groundwater Management Board met last week and is currently looking at its bylaws largely in response to legislation for large water users.

Trustee Veenstra expressed support for the reappointment of Quenda Story to the Capital Area District Library Board.

6. APPROVAL OF AGENDA — OR CHANGES

**Treasurer Brixie moved to approve the agenda amended as follows:**

- **Remove Agenda Item #7H: Appointment to the Community Resources Commission. Seconded by Trustee Ochberg.**

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

7. CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor McGillicuddy reviewed the consent agenda.

**Treasurer Brixie moved to adopt the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Trustee Ochberg.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Dreyfus, LeGoff, Ochberg, Veenstra, Supervisor McGillicuddy, Clerk Helmbrecht, Treasurer Brixie  
 NAYS: None  
 Motion carried unanimously.

The adopted Consent Agenda items are as follow:

A. Communications

1). Board Determination (BD)

BD7E-1 Ingrid K. and William E. Schultz, 1280 Sebewaing, Okemos; RE: Request for the Board to consider a twenty (20) year assessment for Herron Creek Sanitary Sewer Special Assessment District #50

BD10C-1 Dr. William and Nancy Williams, 4383 Elmwood Drive, Okemos; RE: Zoning Amendment #07050

(2). Board Information (BI)

BI-1 Jeff Verdun, General Manager, Hampton Inn & Suites, 2200 Hampton Place, Okemos; Support for the Okemos Pointe Office Park project

BI-2 Louis M. Shelburg, 2825 Roseland, East Lansing; RE: Reconfiguration of the Okemos School District

(3). Commission Linkage (CL)

CL-1 Memorandum from Marsha Madle, Economic Development Corporation (EDC) Chair; RE: Invitation for the Board to attend a joint meeting with the EDC, Meridian Area Business Association and the Okemos Downtown Development Authority Board of Directors on Thursday, April 16, 2009 at 7:30 a.m. in the Township Municipal Building

(4). Staff Communication/Referral (SC)

SC-1 Memorandum from Cindy Cummings, Police Records Supervisor; RE: Current list of licensed vendors and non-licensed persons or nonprofit organizations engaged in soliciting or canvassing dated April 1, 2009

SC-2 Memorandum from Township Manager Richards and Recycling/Energy Coordinator Harvey; RE: Report on Energy Efficiency in Meridian Township

(5). On File in the Clerk’s Office (OF)

Material received at the March 17, 2009 Board Meeting  
 Murphy Elementary School, 1875 Lake Lansing Road, Haslett; Petitions in support of building a spray park in the community  
 Murphy Elementary School, 1875 Lake Lansing Road, Haslett; Petitions in support of repaving Lake Lansing in front of the school

**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 Ochberg.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Dreyfus, LeGoff, Ochberg, Veenstra, Supervisor McGillicuddy, Clerk Helmbrecht, Treasurer Brixie  
 NAYS: None  
 Motion carried unanimously.

B. Minutes

**Treasurer Brixie moved to approve and ratify the minutes of the March 17, 2009 Regular Meeting as submitted. Seconded by Trustee Ochberg.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Dreyfus, LeGoff, Ochberg, Veenstra, Supervisor McGillicuddy, Clerk Helmbrecht, Treasurer Brixie  
 NAYS: None  
 Motion carried unanimously.

C. Bills

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

Common Cash	\$ 282,201.41
Public Works	\$ 183,097.60
Total Checks	\$ 465,299.01
Credit Card Transactions	\$ 15,225.74
Total Purchases	<u>\$ 480,524.75</u>
ACH Payments	<u>\$ 843,856.26</u>

**Seconded by Trustee Ochberg.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Dreyfus, LeGoff, Ochberg, Veenstra, Supervisor McGillicuddy, Clerk Helmbrecht, Treasurer Brixie  
 NAYS: None  
 Motion carried unanimously.

[Bill list in Official Minute Book]

- D. Planning Commission Review of Harris Nature Center Improvements  
**Treasurer Brixie moved to forward the proposed improvements for the Harris Nature Center, located at 3998 Van Atta Road, to the Planning Commission to complete the required review for location, character and extent for the river overlook deck. Seconded by Trustee Ochberg.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Dreyfus, LeGoff, Ochberg, Veenstra, Supervisor McGillicuddy, Clerk Helmbrecht, Treasurer Brixie  
 NAYS: None  
 Motion carried unanimously.

- E. Herron Creek Special Assessment District #50, **Resolution #5**  
**Treasurer Brixie moved to approve the Herron Creek Sanitary Sewer Special Assessment District No. 50 - Resolution No. 5, which approves the special assessment roll; designates the project as “Herron Creek Sanitary Sewer Special Assessment District No. 50”, the assessment roll as the “Herron Creek Sanitary Sewer Special Assessment District No. 50”, and the district as the “Herron Creek Sanitary Sewer Special Assessment District No. 50”; adopts the amount of \$601,210.90 as the final amount for the assessment roll; and orders and directs the assessment roll to be paid and collected. Seconded by Trustee Ochberg.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Dreyfus, LeGoff, Ochberg, Veenstra, Supervisor McGillicuddy, Clerk Helmbrecht, Treasurer Brixie  
 NAYS: None  
 Motion carried unanimously.

- F. Okemos Road Water Main Payback District  
**Treasurer Brixie moved to approve the resolution establishing water system benefit charges for Okemos Road (Fox Hollow Drive to Jolly Road) establishing a 1986 cost of \$16.44 per linear foot of frontage, plus 5% annual increase; however, no benefit shall be less than \$1,800 for 1986 (plus 5% annual increase), and no benefit for a single-family residence shall exceed \$2,000 for 1986 (plus 5% annual increase), and no benefit for other than a single-family residence shall exceed \$2,500 for 1986 (plus 5% annual increase). Seconded by Trustee Ochberg.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Dreyfus, LeGoff, Ochberg, Veenstra, Supervisor McGillicuddy, Clerk Helmbrecht, Treasurer Brixie  
 NAYS: None  
 Motion carried unanimously.

- G. Business Loop I-69 Water Main Payback District  
**Treasurer Brixie moved to approve the resolution establishing water system benefit charges for BL-69 (Lake Lansing Road to Whitehills Coves) establishing a 2004 cost of \$41.10 per linear foot of frontage, plus 5% annual increase, however, the 2004 benefit for single family residences shall be \$4,500.00, plus 5% annual increase. Seconded by Trustee Ochberg.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Dreyfus, LeGoff, Ochberg, Veenstra, Supervisor McGillicuddy, Clerk Helmbrecht, Treasurer Brixie  
 NAYS: None  
 Motion carried unanimously.

8. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY (See Agenda Item #9A)

9. HEARINGS

- A. Champion Woods Public Streetlighting Improvements Special Assessment District #322  
 Supervisor McGillicuddy opened the public hearing at 6:38 P.M.

Chief Engineer Ishraidi summarized the proposed special assessment district as outlined in staff memorandum dated April 2, 2009.

Supervisor McGillicuddy announced the public hearing will remain open due to the late mailing of notices.

Trustee LeGoff inquired as to why there are several "short streets" without streetlights.

Chief Engineer Ishraidi responded the "short streets" do not have proposed streetlights because those streets are not scheduled for development at this time. He added the two cul-de-sacs and Sophia Parkway can be considered as Phase I for streetlight placement.

Public hearing and action on the same issue during a Board Meeting: (See Agenda Item # 8 (Questions for the Attorney))

- Q. Because we are keeping this open, could I still have this on for action next week so that people could still come in and speak to the hearing before we act on it? Or, would it be more proper just to wait on action for two meetings?
- A. Action is going to follow the public hearing, correct? Yes, you can place it on for action following the public hearing.

Trustee Veenstra stated he believed there are too many streetlights. He urged the Board to recognize that Consumers Energy has a bias toward placing too many streetlights in a development so it can sell more electricity. He requested the Board find someone to design our streetlighting districts in the near future that is not in the business of selling electricity.

- B. Jolly Oak Road Public Road Improvements Special Assessment District #36  
Supervisor McGillicuddy opened the public hearing at 6:45 P.M.

Chief Engineer Ishraidi summarized the proposed special assessment district as outlined in staff memorandum dated April 2, 2009.

J. Richards Robinson, 1690 Watertower Place, Suite 500A, East Lansing and attorney for Kurt Boegner, formally protested the assessment for parcel #33-02-02-33-376-010, the property currently housing Value Tire. He stated Mr. Boegner's assessment of \$53,529.26 is grossly disproportionate to any alleged benefit to his property and requested the parcel be removed as a property to which the benefits have been apportioned.

[Written protest on file in the Clerk's Office]

Trustee Veenstra inquired as to why the assessment district does not "go" all the way to Okemos Road.

Chief Engineer Ishraidi responded that from Okemos Road to the first drive west of Okemos Road has already been paved.

Trustee Veenstra asked staff to address the issue of an equal assessment for this parcel since the property fronts on Jolly Road and he believes there is strong argument there is not much benefit for Mr. Boegner in having Jolly Oak Road paved.

Chief Engineer Ishraidi responded the property owner has a drive on Jolly Oak and it is used by customers to access Value Tire. He believed there is a direct benefit to this property owner in having Jolly Oak paved.

Trustee Veenstra believed the question is whether Mr. Boegner's benefit should be equal to other property owner's who have their sole access off Jolly Road.

Supervisor McGillicuddy announced the public hearing will remain open due to the late mailing of notices.

- C. Wetland Use Permit #09-01 (Delta Dental), request to fill and excavate wetlands for expansion and redesign of a pond and to construct parking spaces at 4100 Okemos Road  
Supervisor McGillicuddy opened the public hearing at 6:54 P.M.

Director Kieselbach summarized the wetland use permit request as outlined in staff memorandum dated April 3, 2009.

Michael Colpetzer, Spicer Group, 230 S. Washington Ave., Saginaw, consultant for Delta Dental, stated Delta Dental has gone beyond the Township's requirements to make the site as environmentally friendly as possible.

Supervisor McGillicuddy expressed appreciation for the habitat diversity Delta Dental will be creating and the attention to detail for the campus.

Mr. Colpetzer stated Delta Dental is working to make both the site and building LEED certified.

Trustee Ochberg spoke to the native plantings close to the pond which will help alleviate contamination by the geese resulting in cleaner water downstream from the pond.

Treasurer Brixie expressed appreciation for the level of thought and complexity of the proposed landscape plan.

Treasurer Brixie inquired if the applicant had read the Environmental Commission report in which the Commission offered to assist in the plant assessments in the first three to five (3-5) years.

Mr. Colpetzer responded that part of the Township recommendations also contained a statement by staff requesting involvement and Township consultant involvement during the review process to ensure success. He believed part of that success is monitoring and making sure it moves along according to plan.

Trustee Veenstra noted the applicant intended to fill in nearly one-half acre of wetland in order to expand the parking lot and inquired if the applicant felt it needed the additional amount of parking.

Mr. Colpetzer responded Delta Dental estimated the need for all of the additional parking in order to serve its employees. He added that it is not necessary to fill the entire .45 acres of wetland, but Delta Dental is mitigating for the entire amount, due to the probability that a portion of the water which supports the wetland will be impacted.

Trustee Veenstra indicated the Environmental Commission suggested use of permeable paving in the parking lot and inquired as to the consultant's reaction to the suggestion.

Mr. Colpetzer responded part of the original discussion with the Ingham County Drain Commissioner resulted in the determination that bioswales would be used as the process to handle parking lot runoff. He noted the use of porous pavement was investigated and it is a complicated process. Mr. Colpetzer stated that while there are appropriate places for pervious pavement, any standing water which freezes will destroy the pervious pavement.

Trustee Ochberg confirmed that the presentation at the Zoning Board of Appeals carefully laid out expected future personnel expansions which supported the exact amount of parking for which a variance was requested.

Trustee Veenstra noted the Environmental Commission's comment regarding the undesirability of reed canary grass and spoke to the importance of preventing it from becoming established. He asked if the applicant had specific plans to prevent it from becoming established in the first place.

Mr. Colpetzer responded part of the five (5) year monitoring plan looks at the species which grow at the location and there are provisions for eradication of invasive species as part of the overall mitigation plan.

Trustee Veenstra asked if the applicant's plans to expand and reshape Wetland A through excavation and dredging would destroy the natural state of the wetland and then the applicant would totally rebuild Wetland A.

Mr. Colpetzer responded the quality of Wetland A is somewhat suspect. In order to create enough depth, water will be diverted around the edge of the pond through excavation. He stated that, in effect, all existing wetland around the edge of the pond will be eliminated. Mr. Colpetzer added he believed the "in line detention system" was originally part of the Smith Drain and Delta Dental widened it to offer a water feature on the property.

Trustee Veenstra inquired if there was any way to preserve the natural fish in the pond.

Mr. Colpetzer responded there was some discussion at the Environmental Commission regarding the existence of fish in the pond, but it is more likely frogs. He added that during the summer, the pond is approximately one (1) to two (2) feet deep and is not a fishery or high quality habitat. Mr. Colpetzer added that after reconstruction, the habitat will be able to traverse the Smith Drain and repopulate the wetland.

Trustee Dreyfus noted the mitigation for filling in Wetland C (.45 acres) is only .3 acres, less than the 1:1 ratio required in the Township's ordinance.

Mr. Colpetzer stated the overall mitigation for the portion of Wetland A was determined to be 1:1 and the other portion would be 1.5:1. He indicated some of the portion that is being mitigated for the .45 acres is being mitigated in the pond; only .3 acres is the emergent wetland type.

Trustee Dreyfus asked if there would be a sacrifice of one type of wetland (emergent) by expanding the pond itself.

Andrea Kline, Environmental Consulting and Technology, 2200 Commonwealth Boulevard, Suite 300, Ann Arbor, and the applicant's wetland consultant, stated the pond was originally designed to create an emergent shelf what was attractive both visually and from the perspective of wildlife habitat. She indicated more emergent habitat will be created than originally in place. Ms. Kline noted the impact on emergent and shrub scrub wetland compared to how much is being created leaves a deficit with the shrub scrub wetland.

Supervisor McGillicuddy closed the public hearing at 7:20 P.M.

#### 10. ACTION ITEMS/ENDS

Supervisor McGillicuddy opened and closed public comment.

##### A. First Quarter Budget Amendments

Director Hasse summarized the amendments as outlined in staff memorandum dated April 3, 2009.

**Treasurer Brixie moved that the Township Board approve the 2009 Amended Budget as reflected on Page 3 of the memorandum to the Township Board from the Finance Director dated April 3, 2009. Seconded by Trustee Ochberg.**

Board members discussed the following:

- Efficiency of Township operations reflected in the fund balance
- Estimate of proposed contributions to the Comcast lawsuit from other municipalities
- Contributions of \$21,000 out of the anticipated \$35,000 have been collected to date

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Dreyfus, LeGoff, Ochberg, Veenstra, Supervisor McGillicuddy, Clerk Helmbrecht, Treasurer Brixie

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

B. COPS Grant Application

**Trustee Ochberg moved to authorize the Meridian Township Police Department to apply for funding for two (2) additional police positions under the COPS Hiring Recovery Program. Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.**

Board members and staff discussed the following:

- Concern with possible revenue decline next year
- Program allows for requesting exemptions due to financial stress
- Application may result in no additional staff, one or two additional staff
- Penalty for noncompliance is ineligibility for future COPS grants
- Difficult to make projections relative to the economy three (3) to four (4) years out
- State revenue sharing to the Township projected in this budget year to continue at the same level as the last few years
- Likelihood that federal stimulus money will aid in balancing the state budget relative to state revenue sharing
- Revenue from property taxes expected to be flat to a slight increase for 2009-2010
- Property taxes comprise approximately 58% of the general fund revenue
- Minor modifications could be made within the normal budgeting process or through use of fund balance if revenue declines

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Dreyfus, LeGoff, Ochberg, Veenstra, Supervisor McGillicuddy, Clerk Helmbrecht, Treasurer Brixie  
 NAYS: None  
 Motion carried unanimously.

C. Zoning Amendment #07050 (Planning Commission), request to amend Section 86-2 Definitions, Section 86-368(b)(9) Outdoor Storage of a trailer or recreational vehicle, and Section 86-506 Outdoor Storage of commercial vehicles and trailers, to facilitate regulation of recreational and utility trailer storage in single-family residential districts, **Final Adoption**

Manager Richards clarified Robert’s Rules of Order by stating that once an action item has been defeated, a motion to “reconsider” must be initiated at the meeting where the item was initially defeated. He added that in any subsequent meeting, Robert’s Rules of Order provides for an established procedure to “renew” a motion where any Board member can move to take up the same action that was previously defeated, with any other Board member seconding the motion.

**Trustee Ochberg 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. 2009-02 entitled “Ordinance Amending the Code of the Charter Township of Meridian, Michigan, Chapter 86, Article I, by amending Section 86-2, and Chapter 86, Article V, Division 2, by amending Section 86-503.”**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Clerk of the Charter Township of Meridian is directed to publish the Ordinance in the form in which it is finally adopted at least once prior to the next regular meeting of the Township Board. Seconded by Clerk Helmbrecht.**

Board members discussed the following:

- Township history of enforcement generally by complaint only

**Trustee LeGoff offered the following friendly amendment to Sec. 86-503(a):**

- Delete the words “oil or fuel” and insert “automotive fluids”

**The amendment was accepted by the maker and seconder.**

**Trustee Dreyfus offered the following friendly amendment to Sec. 86-503(a):**

- Delete the words “automotive fluids” and insert “oil, fuel or antifreeze.”

**The amendment was accepted by the maker.**

**Trustee Veenstra offered the following amendment:**

- **Delete the language in Sec. 86-503(a) and insert “No inoperative recreational vehicle, watercraft and/or trailer shall be stored outdoors in any residential district, or if it is leaking oil, fuel or antifreeze.”**

**The amendment died for lack of a second.**

Board members discussed the following:

- Encourage staff to track complaints so data is available when the Board addresses storage in the right-of-way at a future meeting
- Concern with enforceability of the registration requirement relative to an owner’s intent for off-road vehicle use
- Amendment moves toward elimination of safety hazards and visual blight

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Dreyfus, LeGoff, Ochberg, Supervisor McGillicuddy,  
 Clerk Helmbrecht  
 NAYS: Trustee Veenstra, Treasurer Brixie  
 Motion carried 5-2.

- D. Zoning Amendment #08120 (Township Board), amendment to reduce the number of off-street parking spaces required for office uses, **Final Adoption**  
**Treasurer Brixie 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. 2009-03, entitled “Ordinance Amending the Code of the Charter Township of Meridian, Michigan, Chapter 86, Article VIII, Division 2, by amending Section 86-755.”**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Clerk of the Charter Township of Meridian is directed to publish the Ordinance in the form in which it is finally adopted at least once prior to the next regular meeting of the Township Board.**

**Seconded by Trustee Dreyfus.**

Board members discussed the following:

- Request for staff to monitor how this amendment works to obtain data on the reduction
- Allow reductions in required parking if a developer has plans to reduce parking requirements (e.g., building on a bus line, program to promote car pools)

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Dreyfus, LeGoff, Ochberg, Veenstra, Supervisor McGillicuddy, Clerk Helmbrecht, Treasurer Brixie  
 NAYS: None  
 Motion carried unanimously.

- E. Nakoma Drive Sidewalk Connection  
**Trustee LeGoff moved to approve the construction of a five (5) foot wide sidewalk along the east side of Nakoma Drive from the Red Cedar River to North of Ottawa Drive, and that the project be funded from the Township General Fund (\$30,000 estimate) and from contributions of \$10,000 from the Indian Hills Homeowners Association. Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.**

Board members discussed the following:

- Construction of the sidewalk as a safety issue
- \$30,000 to come from the fund balance
- Bids on the project will determine actual cost of the sidewalk

- Second quarter budget amendment will actually appropriate the money

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Dreyfus, LeGoff, Ochberg, Veenstra, Supervisor McGillicuddy, Clerk Helmbrecht, Treasurer Brixie  
 NAYS: None  
 Motion carried unanimously.

F. Resolution for Opposing the Repeal of Michigan’s Wetland Protection Act  
 Supervisor McGillicuddy summarized proposed action at the state level to repeal the Wetland Protection Act

**Trustee Dreyfus moved [and read into the record] NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Township Board of Meridian Township hereby urges the Michigan Legislature to oppose any attempt to repeal Part 303 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act or to relinquish Michigan’s delegated regulatory authority under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township Board of Meridian Township hereby urges the Michigan Legislature to appropriate funds necessary to support the continued implementation of Part 303 for the coming fiscal year.**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be sent to Governor Jennifer Granholm and Meridian Township’s delegation to the State House of Representatives and State Senate. Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.**

Board members discussed the following:

- Projected \$2 million savings out of a state budget deficit of \$1 billion
- Governor supported stronger protection of wetlands during speeches earlier in the year
- Cost of flooding through failure to protect wetlands will easily overrun projected \$2 million savings

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Dreyfus, LeGoff, Ochberg, Veenstra, Supervisor McGillicuddy, Clerk Helmbrecht, Treasurer Brixie  
 NAYS: None  
 Motion carried unanimously.

11. DISCUSSION ITEMS/ENDS

Supervisor McGillicuddy opened and closed public comment.

A. Champion Woods Public Streetlighting Improvements Special Assessment District #322

Board members and staff discussed the following:

- Board goal of reducing unnecessary streetlighting whenever possible
- Concern with excess energy usage and light pollution
- Old school planning regarding an entire street lit with streetlights
- Streetlights were placed in position prior to the public hearing

Q. What authority do we have regarding the number of streetlights?

A. [inaudible]...to the special assessment district. Obviously, the streetlights are already there. The Board is not required to approve that request because they can make a determination the improvement is not in the best interest of the Township based on these other policies that you’ve set for the Township having to do with lighting. However, if they are already there, the developer has probably already paid for them. As a Board, you can determine that you won’t be going through the process of the special assessment district, because you don’t think it is in the best interest of the Township.

- Q. To clarify, the developer can, in fact, install streetlights according to their own plan as part of the development without needing approval if they decide they are going to figure out how to pay for it?
- A. That's a question for Mr. Ishraidi. That's another issue as to what is allowed in the ordinance; that's two separate issues.

Board members and staff continued discussion on the following:

- Streetlights for Champion Woods not initially part of the development, but the result of a request by the property owners
- Staff aware of light pollution issues expressed by the previous Board so the ordinance was revised
- Light is limited due to use of the cut off design of lights which directs the lumens in a downward position
- Lack of streetlights in a subdivision may constitute a public safety concern
- Lighting is the most effective method of preventing crime
- Lights create the perception of safety
- Need for a compromise between night sky, energy and safety
- Township involvement in the number of streetlights during the proposed plat process
- Township determines who designs the streetlighting districts
- Possible use of a lighting consultant who can design streetlight districts with a balance between energy conservation, light pollution and safety

**The consensus of the Board was to continue the public hearing on April 21, 2009 and also place this item on for action at the same meeting.**

- B. Jolly Oak Road Public Road Improvements Special Assessment District #36  
**The consensus of the Board was to continue the public hearing on April 21, 2009 and also place this item on for action at the same meeting.**
- C. Wetland Use Permit #09-01 (Delta Dental), request to fill and excavate wetlands for expansion and redesign of a pond and to construct parking spaces at 4100 Okemos Road  
**The consensus of the Board was to place this item on for action at the April 21, 2009 Meeting.**
- D. Joint Jurisdiction of Wetland Protections (Army Corps of Engineers)  
**The consensus of the Board was to delay discussion, pending the State Legislature's action on the Governor's recommendation to relinquish control of wetland permitting.**
- E. National Citizen Survey, Operational Questions  
Manager Richards summarized the questions developed from topics suggested at the February 3, 2009 Board meeting.

Board members discussed the following:

- Economic Development
  - Economic prosperity is the number one Board goal for 2009
  - Option of funding an Economic Development Ombudsman position to assist applicants in the processes for starting and expanding business in the Township
  - Distinction must be made to either develop business or maintain the value of real estate in the community through enhancing the sense of neighborhood and pride in homes
  - Some neighborhoods identify with the neighborhood schools
  - Maintain economic viability of the main identity of the Township as a residential community
  - Township already has the Meridian Asset Resource Center (MARC) to aid business development
  - A good balance of business and residential necessary for a vibrant community
  - LEAP dues of \$35,000 budgeted for economic development issues
- Renewal of the CATA millage
  - Millage should be placed on the ballot to be decided by the voters

- Millage renewal question on the survey will provide public input on tax implications
- Redi-Ride service will expire at the end of 2009 unless the millage is renewed
- Need for cost estimate on library service change to ascertain impact on the residents' taxes
  
- Form of Government
  - Question on prior survey resulted in public opposition
  - Questions on this topic from the 2003 survey revealed contradictory responses
  - Need for cost estimate on the procedure
  - Generalized question will provide direction whether this topic should be explored further
  - Concern with including language which indicates becoming a city would increase taxes
  
- Central Fire Station
  - Questions on the survey will provide public input on tax implications for the residents
  - Cost estimate dependent upon several factors (e.g., two (2) v. three (3) fire stations, location)
  - Questions can be asked in a manner to determine a level of support
  - Each station must be manned with a specific number of personnel
  - Questions will provide information to the Board for future discussion of this topic relative to either modernization, replacement or consolidation
  - Purchase of the "Mini MAC" was to allow for the possibility of expansion at the current Central Fire Station site
  - Incorporation of survey question language relative to location and additional money needed
  - Staff to use Board comments in the formulation of revised survey questions
  
- Community Gardening
  - Cost can be quantified for providing water only
  - Cost of providing water dependent upon location as it relates to water line installation
  - Need to ascertain level of community interest before investing time
  - Community gardens entirely different than community sustained farms
  
- Survey reveals priority of the Township residents
- Cost of survey approximately \$10,000
- 1,200 mailed surveys to randomly selected households which is confidentially processed
- Information provided to the Township on the survey results

**The consensus of the Board was to include questions on Central Fire Station Replacement, Form of Government and Community Gardens with Economic Development being an additional topic if space allows. Questions for the selected areas will be refined and reviewed under Discussion at the April 21, 2009 Board meeting.**

F. Response to Meridian Economic Development Corporation (EDC) Meeting Discussion  
 Manager Richards addressed topics discussed at the February 12, 2009 EDC meeting.

Board members and staff discussed the following:

- Possible MABA survey sent to its membership regarding what the Township could do to aid business in the Township
- Inventory of Township businesses would provide data to the Board on business types in the Township
- "Champions" membership consists of the chairs of the EDC, Planning Commission, Land Preservation Advisory Board, Environmental Commission, Parks Commission, Supervisor McGillicuddy and the MABA President
- High profile individuals in the community who unintentionally perpetuate negative stereotypes regarding the Township being a difficult place to do business without substantive examples
- Opening the lines of communication with the business community will change the perception that Meridian is a difficult township in which to do business
- Board decisions can be for both the residents and the business community
- Many business owners also live as residents in Meridian Township
- Need to bring the residential and business community together

- Pursue “branding” in the Township through a multi-faceted approach
- Suggestion for Board members to “rotate” through the Champions meetings
- Invitation to the business community for topic specific discussions at the Champions group
- Consideration of a Meridian “stimulus” for employee home purchase in specific areas of the Township
- Suggestion to create a business license program for a nominal fee which would provide up-to-date information which could be incorporated into a business directory on the Township website
- Belief that approximately one-third of Meridian residents have a home based business
- Possible repeal of Township ordinance which prohibits employees in a home-based business
- Dramatic increase in internet businesses while “brick and mortar” businesses are on the decline
- Original purpose of the Economic Development Corporation as noted in its enabling legislation was to help fund development projects
- Need for branding questionable as Board ends and goals speak to regional cooperation
- Concern that some suggestions are ‘reinventing the wheel’
- MABA website lists Meridian businesses by type of service offered
- Use of free software to conduct survey of the business community
- Possible update of the EDC business directory which was created several years ago

G. Okemos School District School Closings

Trustee LeGoff spoke to Policy goals for prosperity, appreciating property values, thriving neighborhoods, walkable communities and healthy public schools contained in a resolution she presented for consideration.

Board members discussed the following:

- Possible closing of two neighborhood elementary schools
- Concern property values surrounding closed neighborhood schools will decline
- Closed elementary schools will decrease walkability in those neighborhoods
- Single family owner occupied houses will not be preserved in these areas resulting in more rental homes
- Schools within the Township are in a serious financial crisis
- Request by the Okemos School Board for the Township Board Liaison to sit on its steering committee and provide information for the steering committee to use in its deliberations
- One component in Policy 1.4 Cultural Heritage Ends is excellent schools and libraries
- Belief Okemos Schools is trying to maintain excellence and move forward to continue providing the community with high quality education
- Not the role of the Township Board to take a position on which elementary schools should be closed
- Part of a school district’s health is fiscal health
- Okemos School Board website contains in-depth information on reconfiguration options
- According to public comment made at the school meetings, two options taken off the table early in the process were closing Edgewood Montessori and consolidation of school districts
- Board Liaison comment that the closing of Edgewood Montessori and school district consolidation were both considered by the steering committee as options
- Board member option to attend school meetings as individual citizens to address the impact on his/her neighborhood if the local school is closed
- Belief that consideration should be given to schools that do not define the neighborhood other than geographically (e.g., Central Elementary)
- Encourage individual Board members who have an opinion on this issue to contact the Okemos School Board
- Suggestion that the Montessori program currently housed in the old Edgewood school building be moved to Central Elementary to deter speeding caused by traffic coming from outside the neighborhood

12. PUBLIC REMARKS

Supervisor McGillicuddy opened Public Remarks.

Ganesh Reddy, 3614 Ponderosa Drive, Okemos, commended the Board on its accomplishments since November, 2008. He believed the Board should look at consolidation with East Lansing and other neighboring communities for fire services instead of building a new Central Fire Station. Mr. Reddy believed Chippewa Middle School and Central Elementary School should be closed and converted to office space as they are both on Okemos Road, the main thoroughfare in Meridian Township. He suggested the Township work with LEAP, Ingham County Economic Development Corporation and Michigan State University Extension Center instead of creating a Economic Development Ombudsman position.

Mr. Reddy encouraged the Board to address the long term effects for the Township based on revenue concerns around the state, partly through consolidation of departments and elimination of the affected department director positions.

Supervisor McGillicuddy closed Public Remarks.

13. FINAL BOARD COMMENT (None)

14. ADJOURNMENT

Supervisor McGillicuddy adjourned the meeting at 9:55 P.M.

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SUSAN MCGILLICUDDY  
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

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MARY M. G. HELMBRECHT, CMC  
TOWNSHIP CLERK

Sandra K. Otto, Secretary