



AGENDA
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
TOWNSHIP BOARD – SPECIAL MEETING
June 3, 2025 5:00 pm

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS
3. ROLL CALL
4. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS
5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
6. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS
 - A. Board Goals and Action Plan
7. ADJOURNMENT

All comments limited to 3 minutes, unless prior approval for additional time for good cause is obtained from the Supervisor.
Appointment of Supervisor Pro Tem and/ or Temporary Clerk if necessary.

Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Meridian Township Board by contacting:
Township Manager Tim Dempsey, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 or 517.853.4258 - Ten Day Notice is Required.
Meeting Location: 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 Township Hall



To: Township Board
From: Tim Dempsey, Township Manager
Date: May 30, 2025
Re: Board Goal Setting

At the May 8 Board meeting, I provided a summary of progress on the 2025 Township Goals. After the discussion, the Board agreed to a special meeting with a work session format to discuss setting goals to align with the 2026 budget process.

For Tuesday's work session, I am recommending the Board discuss the following items:

- Organizational values
- 2025 Township Goals – determine which goals should remain in place
- Manager's identified issues – confirmation/revision
- Additional goals identification

For reference purposes, the following documents are available online:

- [2025 Township Board Top Five Goals](#)
- [2024 Top Goals](#) and [Action Plan](#)

Attachments: 1. 2025 Board Goals Progress Update
2. Organizational Values

2025 Board Goals

Progress Update

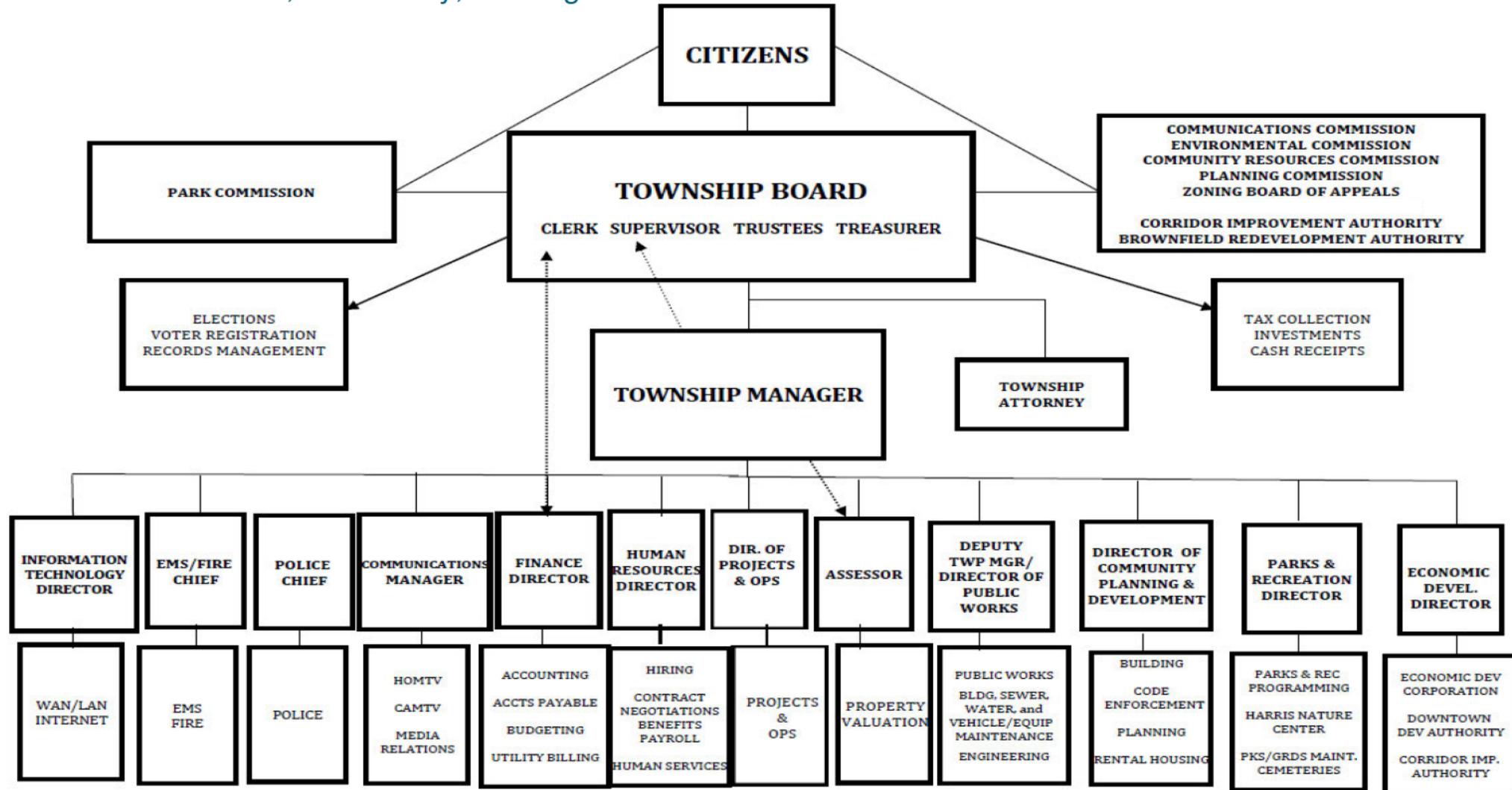


Tim Dempsey
Township Manager



GOAL 1: PROVIDE SUPERIOR, CITIZEN DRIVEN SERVICES

Provide exemplary service to the community while actively soliciting contributions from citizens, volunteer boards, commissions, authorities, and regional partners to strengthen the connection between the staff, Board, community, and region.





GOAL 2: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Implement environmentally friendly and sustainable policies for both public and private projects while investing in replacement of aging infrastructure throughout the Township.

Solar Projects

- Utilizing two grants to construct solar arrays that will produce 100 percent of the annual energy usage at the Historical Village and the North Fire Station
- Construction is anticipated for fall of 2025 to early 2026

Pathway Projects

- Finalizing RFP to construct a boardwalk on the north side of Bennett Road immediately west of Bennett Woods Elementary to minimize the disturbance to the wetlands
- Construction will likely occur in summer or fall of 2025.

Local Road Program

- Designing a bioswale at Marshall Park to alleviate flooding near the Columbia Street/Lake Street intersection, filter storm water entering Lake Lansing, and help beautify Marshall Park
- Piloting a new asphalt mix that utilizes recycled tire rubber to improve the flexibility and useful life of asphalt
- Utilizing asphalt and cement treatments to strengthen the existing road base to reduce how much asphalt has to be used in road resurfacing



GOAL 3: ENHANCE REDEVELOPEMNT IN KEY AREAS

Enhance our standing as a prime location to develop, own, and operate a business, with a focus on the redevelopment of our primary commercial areas: downtown Okemos, downtown Haslett, Carriage Hills, and the Meridian Mall.

Haslett Village

- The Township Board recently approved a Housing TIF policy allowing the developers to present a revised Brownfield Plan.
- An updated brownfield plan is expected to be submitted next week incorporating Housing TIF and begin the formal review and approval process.

Village of Okemos

- Staff is compiling an updated development prospectus.
 - Working to better define infrastructure hurdles and related costs (Okemos Road reconstruction, drainage improvements, overhead power lines)
- The Downtown Development Authority is considering a subcommittee/task force to work on next steps in the development process.
- Informal discussions with prospective developers are ongoing.



GOAL 4: SENIOR/COMMUNITY CENTER

Following the Senior/Community Center Task Force's recommendation in Spring 2025, continue to move towards construction of a new facility, starting in late 2025 or early 2026.

- The Task Force completed its work in March after commencing its work back in September 2024.
 - Two recommendations provided to the Board – Senior Center only and combined Senior & Community Center
- The Township Board approved moving forward with operating and bond millages for the August 5, 2025 election.
 - If voters approve, design work would commence immediately after the election and construction would begin in 2026 with a 2027 projected completion.
 - Staff are developing communication materials to provide factual information: web page, slide deck, FAQ, and related information as needed.



GOAL 5: IMPROVE CITIZEN OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATION

Tell our story better by enhancing communications through social media, homeowners' associations, communitywide and major events, and any other mechanism to better engage our diverse, multicultural community.

- Released the 2025 edition of Prime Meridian Magazine, which showcased our community through storytelling and imagery
- Utilized Reels on Facebook and Instagram to share recaps of community events, encouraging participation in future events
- Collaborated with WLNS to promote our community events and increase event attendance
- Increased sponsorship revenue by 33% from 2024 to 2025, enhancing our community event offerings
- Scheduled three community listening sessions at different locations across the Township



KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION – MANAGER’S PERSPECIVE

- Senior & Community Center ballot proposals
- 2026 Budget and long-term financial planning – keeping wages and benefits competitive
- Expiring millages: Parks (2025), Police and Fire (2026), Local Roads (2027)
- Ongoing infrastructure needs with roads, water, and sewer

Organizational Values

An organization's values are principles that shape behavior and decisions. They should serve as an overarching guide for all decision making and actions of elected officials, staff, and volunteers.

Examples

- *Superior, Citizen Driven Services* – Provide exemplary, consistent public services that meet the needs of residents
- *Fiscal Responsibility* – Utilize public funds ethically and efficiently to ensure the long-term financial health of the Township
- *Environmental Sustainability* – Manage Township facilities, programs, and natural resources to protect and enhance the environment
- *Communication* – Share information frequently and through multiple channels with residents and other stakeholders
- *Stakeholder Engagement* – Actively and regularly seek input and feedback from residents and other stakeholders on key Township issues and decisions

Additional Examples

- *Accountability*
- *Collaboration*
- *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*
- *Employee Well-Being*
- *Integrity*
- *Respect*

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fw: Township Board 2026 Goals - June 3 Special Meeting
Date: Tuesday, June 3, 2025 9:53:41 AM

From: Angela Demas <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, June 3, 2025 9:48:33 AM
To: Township Board <Townshipboard@meridian.mi.us>
Subject: Township Board 2026 Goals - June 3 Special Meeting

Dear Fellow Board Members,

As I am attending the Michigan Association of Municipal Clerks (MAMC) Summer Conference this week, I will unfortunately miss the upcoming Township Board Meeting focused on discussing our goals. However, I would like to share my thoughts in hopes that they can be part of the conversation as we prepare to decide on our 2026 Township goals.

I believe our Board should focus on the following goals to ensure the continued growth and well-being of our Township and community:

1. Promote Environmental Sustainability

Our Township should prioritize environmentally sustainable practices for our projects. This can include using green infrastructure techniques in road construction and focusing on the maintenance of our trails and pathways to support increased walkability. We should also expand the use of renewable energy through our solar projects.

2. Redevelopment of Key Economic Areas

We should focus on strategic redevelopment in key areas to attract new businesses and multi-use developments. We should continue to focus on the redevelopment of Downtown Okemos, the Four Corners of Haslett, and the Carriage Hills Shopping Center as they have been designated as priority redevelopment sites or specifically known as Potential Intensity Change Areas (PICA's). We should also focus on aiding the revitalization of the Meridian Mall area. We can enhance the functionality of our downtown areas by incentivizing developers and working with small business to help redevelop these locations. While working on these changes, it's important to preserve the unique character of each of these areas and align new development with our long-term economic growth goals.

3. Strengthen Citizen Outreach and Communication to Build Community Engagement

We should focus on exploring a variety of communication options to increase public involvement. We should also continue supporting our Township publications, including our newsletters and the Prime Magazine, while also expanding digital communication using social media and other online platforms. It's important to partner with local media so to amplify our Township messages. We also should focus on hosting more community events, coffee hours, and listening sessions/town halls to gather feedback and encourage community conversation. Our goal should be to increase public participation by ensuring access to local decision-making to build trust in the Township and our Board.

4. **Develop a Senior and/or Community Center Guided by Public Input**^[SEP]

The planning and development of a new senior and/or community center should be rooted in public engagement and input. The Special Election is August 5, 2025 and Meridian Township voters will be able to decide on two millage proposals on the ballot; the Meridian Township community and senior center operating millage, and the Meridian Township community and senior center project bond. The outcome of the upcoming election will impact the direction of development. Depending on the results, the project may involve creating a joint community and senior center, funded through millage revenue and a state grant. Alternatively, if millage funding is not approved, development may focus solely on a senior center, utilizing the state grant and potentially using general fund resources. Either way, the facility should offer multi-use spaces that can be for recreational, educational, and wellness use as outlined in the department plans. The design must emphasize accessibility, sustainability, and adaptability through public input. Following the Special Election, this goal should be further refined and adjusted based on the outcome.

5. **Expand Access to Affordable Housing**^[SEP]

We must take a proactive approach to addressing housing affordability. We should explore increasing the supply of affordable housing through zoning, incentives for developers, and potential partnerships with nonprofit organizations. We should also continue maintaining our existing affordable housing units. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) can be used to assist the development of affordable housing opportunities. Our housing policy should continue to be guided by equity and community input to ensure that residents of all income levels have a place in our Township.

I look forward to discussing these ideas further together and hearing your perspectives in a future Board meeting. Thank you for considering these suggestions as we work together to aid our Township.

Best regards,

Angela Demas

Meridian Township Clerk



A Prime Community

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] | Okemos, MI 48864
[lections](#)

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fw: Work Session on Board Goals for 2026
Date: Tuesday, June 3, 2025 11:23:13 AM

From: Phil Deschaine <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, June 3, 2025 11:14:07 AM
To: Board <Board@meridian.mi.us>
Subject: Work Session on Board Goals for 2026

Fellow Board Members,

I will be unable to attend tonight's work session on setting our goals for 2026.

The four goals outlined by Manager Dempsey at our May 20th Board meeting are a very good framework for us to build on. They are specific, tangible, and can be addressed by the Board in 2026.

Building on these goals, here are the four goals that I believe the Board should have for 2026:

- 1. Senior & Community Center:** We will need to act immediately after the August 5th millage vote by our residents. If the millages are approved, I strongly believe we need to find private money to fill in the gap to build the complete Senior Center/Community Center that has been proposed by the board. If it fails, I believe we need to be decisive and purchase and renovate an existing building to replace the senior center. It is imperative that we take quick action and not lose the 5-million-dollar grant from the State of Michigan.
- 2. 2026 Budget & Financial Planning:** For the past 14 years, Meridian Township has benefited from rising property tax and revenue sharing. We cannot assume this will continue indefinitely. The State has already reduced their revenue estimates for the next year by \$320,000,000 and this will impact Meridian Township as well. Housing values could very well level off in the next 12 months, rather than the 5% to 8% increases we have seen in the last decade. Both will likely have a negative impact on the amount of revenue we will receive in 2026 and the following years. At the same time revenue may stagnate or go down, we will be facing large financial pressure to address our capital improvements, provide competitive wages, and pay for large increases in our costs for health insurance, for the goods and services essential to Township operations.
- 3. Keeping Wages and Benefits Competitive.** Our most essential assets are the 166 employees who serve Meridian Township's 45,000 residents. Over the past 5 years they have received modest pay increases while they have endured much higher costs for housing, food, and other essentials to keep their families healthy and safe. Just as we fixed the wage gap with our Police & Fire professionals in 2024, we now need to ensure that we are paying competitive wages that provide the rest of our employees with a competitive wage that keeps them on our team and not enticed to leave by offers of higher wages and benefits.
- 4. Okemos Four Corners Redevelopment.** We need to focus on doing all we can to help spur the re-development of Downtown Okemos in 2026. I believe we need to be open

to new ideas that reflect the changing economics that have heretofore stalled this redevelopment of this essential part of our Township.

Phil Deschaine

Meridian Township Treasurer



O: [REDACTED] | M 517.410.0061
5151 Marsh Road | Okemos, MI 48864