

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
TOWNSHIP BOARD REGULAR MEETING **-APPROVED-**  
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos MI 48864-1198  
853-4000, Township Hall Room  
TUESDAY, September 3, 2019 **6:00 pm.**

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

ABSENT: Trustee Sundland

STAFF: Township Manager Walsh, Deputy Township Manager/Director of Public Works Perry, Fire Chief Hamel, Police Chief Plaga, Community Planning Director Kieselbach, Information Technology Director Gebes, Principal Planner Menser, Economic Development Director Buck, Communications Director Guthrie, Finance Director Mattison, Human Resources Director Marx, Parks and Recreation Director Maisner

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Supervisor Styka called the meeting to order at 6:00 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. Lifesaving Recognition

Supervisor Styka and the Board recognized Meridian Township Chief of Police Ken Plaga and Sergeant Ed Bensonen for their heroic lifesaving efforts in rescuing a woman from Walden Pond on August 26, 2019.

Quality Dairy presented Chief Plaga and Sergeant Bensonen free coffee for one year at any Quality Dairy Location.

B. Okemos Solar Car Competition

Supervisor Styka recognized the Okemos Solar Racing Club for their impressive performance competing at the Solar Car Challenge 2019.

C. 2020 Township Budget Presentation

Manager Walsh provided an overview of the Township's 2020 Recommended Budget and highlighted key goals for 2020.

## 5. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Supervisor Styka opened public remarks at 6:41 pm.

David Relcosky 3036 Pine Knoll Dr., Okemos; spoke on the conservation and preservation of the monarch butterfly and their habitats (Non-Agenda Item).

Leonard Provencher, 5824 Buena Pkwy., Haslett; spoke on the 2020 Township Budget (Agenda Item 11A/13B), and the Okemos Road Boardwalk project (Non-Agenda Item).

Craig Patterson, P.O. Box 369, Mackinaw City; spoke in support of Amendment to Chapter 66 Tax Exemption – PILOT introduction (Agenda Item 12A).

Neil Bowlby 6020 Beechwood Dr., Haslett; showed appreciation to Chief Plaga, discussed the future Road Preservation Program (Non-Agenda Item) and discussed Agenda Item 11A/13B.

Jim Giguere, 6253 Fenwick Ct., East Lansing; spoke in support of Tentative Preliminary Plat #19012 (Agenda Item 13D).

Supervisor Styka closed public remarks at 6:51 pm.

## 6. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

Manager Walsh reported: discussed Redi-Ride Millage payments, and staff funding changes.

## 7. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Treasurer Deschaine reported:

- Attended Transportation Commission Meeting; Okemos Road Bridge replacement, truck road route adjustment.
- Hosted Capital Area Treasurers meeting.
- Provided the Quarterly Treasurer's Report.

Supervisor Styka reported:

- Announced Harris Nature Center events and activities.
- Announced the Police Citizen's Academy.
- Mixed-Media Okemos High School art on display in the Town Hall Room.

Trustee Opsommer reported:

- Attended Land Preservation Advisory Board meeting; Foster-Davis Nature Preserve site visit.
- CATA Smart Station outside of new East Lansing Target store.
- Approximately 44 New CATA "Nova" buses will be put into service.

## 8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**Trustee Opsommer moved to approve the Agenda. Seconded by Clerk Dreyfus.**

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 7-0

9. CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor Styka reviewed the consent agenda.

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

Treasurer Deschaine requested to remove the Approval of Minutes - August 8, 2019 Regular Meeting from the Consent Agenda (9B) and place it on for Action under new Agenda Item 12C.

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

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 Opsommer.**

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

NAYS:

Motion carried 6-0

~~B. Approval of Minutes – August 8 2019 Regular Meeting~~ - **MOVED TO AGENDA ITEM 12C**

C. Bills

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

<b>Common Cash</b>		\$	<b>1,072,187.83</b>
<b>Public Works</b>		\$	<b>1,132,625.40</b>
<b>Trust &amp; Agency</b>		\$	<b>2,911,683.10</b>
	<b>Total Checks</b>	\$	<b>5,116,496.33</b>
<b>Credit Card Transactions</b>		\$	<b>21,789.46</b>
Aug 2 to Aug 28			
	<b>Total Purchases</b>	\$	<b><u>5,138,285.79</u></b>
<b>ACH Payments</b>		\$	<b><u>4,094,805.20</u></b>

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

NAYS:

Motion carried 6-0

10. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY – NONE

11. HEARINGS

A. 2020 Township Budget

**Supervisor Styka called the public hearing to order at 7:06 pm.**

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Dr., Haslett; discussed increased personnel costs and operational costs of the Human Resources Department and Community Planning and Development Department, and increases in “sick leave incentive pay,” in Administration and Human Resources Department.

**Supervisor Styka closed the public hearing at 7:10 pm.**

12. ACTION ITEMS

A. Amendment to Chapter 66 Tax Exemption – PILOT Introduction

**Trustee Opsommer moved to approve the resolution for introduction of the amendment to Chapter 66, Article II to allow for a tax exemption and Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) for persons and families of low to moderate income. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine.**

Director Keiselbach provided an overview of the proposed ordinance amendment.

Board discussion: Tax credit housing for families making 30%-60% of the county median income, poverty rate among people 18-65 years old is 16%, increased younger population below the poverty line, possible community burden of PILOT programs, developer led efforts for ordinance amendment, amount of taxes captured between Township and other jurisdictions, developer should pay fair share of property taxes, estimated rate of return and detailed project finances should be provided to Board for financial transparency in order to qualify for PILOT, 16% of Meridian residence are “low income” per federal rates, impact on captured taxes across jurisdictions, belief that this development provides affordability as a public good, Meridian Township lacks development of this nature, proposed PILOT lasts for 15 years.

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

NAYS: Clerk Dreyfus

Motion carried 5-1 (Clerk Dreyfus)

B. Bond Authorizing Resolution

**Trustee Opsommer moved to Adopt the Resolution to Authorize Issuance of General Obligation Unlimited Tax Bonds, Series 2019 as presented. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.**

Deputy Manager/Director Perry provided an overview of the bond sale process now required due to the successful passing of the Road Bond Millage.

Board discussion: strategy and purpose of bonding.

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

NAYS:

Motion carried 6-0

C. Approval of Minutes – August 8 2019 Regular Meeting

**Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve and ratify the minutes of the Regular Meeting of August 8, 2019 as amended. Seconded by Trustee Opsommer.**

Treasurer Deschaine provided amendments to the proposed Regular Meeting of August 8, 2019 Draft Minutes.

Board discussion: over representative of one view, not concise enough.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 5-1 (Clerk Dreyfus)

13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Special Use Permit #19121 Woodward Way

Director Kieselbach provided information on a Special Use Permit request from Woodward Limited Dividend Housing Association to construct a group of buildings east of Sirhal Drive, North of Whole Foods, and west of Greencliff Drive.

Board discussion: property is appropriately zones, housing project is consistent with rezoning conditions, public utilities present, open space exceeds requirements, Planning Commission approval, attractive elevation drawings, adjustments to egress and ingress to avoid “cut-through” concerns, LEED Certification, attracts low to moderate income families, parking contained inside the development, inclusion of landscaping berm.

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

Supervisor Styka requested Agenda Item 13D be considered next.

D. Tentative Preliminary Plat #19012 (Giguere Homes)

Director Kieselbach provided information on a Tentative Preliminary Plat requested by Giguere Homes for a subdivision consisting of seven lots north of Robins Way and East of Hulett Road.

Board discussion: creation of new public road, natural preservation areas, tree buffers, tentative preliminary plat grants approval for one year, all conditions met, some conditions will not occur until Final Plat, developer’s efforts with surrounding neighborhoods.

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

## B. 2020 Township Budget

Manager Walsh provided responses to citizen concerns about personnel and administrative costs.

Board discussion: possible funding for Climate Sustainability Plan for 50% “non-grid” power consumption, possible funding for Green Infrastructure Grant, Franchise and PEG Fee inclusion in the General Fund, HOMTV associated revenues moved to General Fund, anticipated drop in Franchise and PEG Fees, good standing of General Fund, spending exceeding revenues due to “one-time expenses,” meeting police and fire pension payments, road improvement, increased taxable values of community, road management program administration, use of General Fund for road maintenance, possible use of pervious pavement, use of Redevelopment Fund to promote green infrastructure, police and fire staffing, IT staff adjustments, number of hourly vs. salary employees, Public Works and Engineering staff adjustments, no loss in Communications Department functions, continued investment in parks and greenspace, long-term plan for healthcare funding, self-insured vs fully-funded, administrative costs for medical marihuana, different Fire Department fees, longevity plan for personnel, orders of priority with Communications Department/HOMTV, Truth and Taxation Statute vs Uniform Budgeting and Accounting Act,

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

**Supervisor Styka moved for a 10-minute recess at 9:15 pm.**

**Supervisor Styka moved the meeting back to order at 9:25 pm.**

## C. Franchise and PEG Fees

Manager Walsh provided information on a proposed amendment to Township Ordinance 70-28(c7) that would route 100% of Franchise and PEG Fees into the Township General Fund, due to a complete reorganization of the Township Communications Department.

Board discussion: details of absorbing Franchise and PEG fees into the General Fund, view of budget implementation amendment, existing fund balance in the Cable Fund, staff ability to continue services, possible use of excess funds for consultant services as needed, ordinance was intended to allocate fees to HOMTV, concern with using fees as income for the General Fund, customers are paying directly for PEG fees and public service programming, HOM-TV tie in with Administrative Department.

**Board consensus to place this item up for action at the next meeting.**14. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Supervisor Styka Opened Public Remarks at 9:48 pm.

Supervisor Styka Closed Public Remarks at 9:49 pm.

15. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS - NONE16. CLOSED SESSION

- A. Consider a Confidential Written Legal Opinion Regarding an Employment Severance Agreement
- B. Strategy Session/Update Concerning the Negotiation of Pending Collective Bargaining Agreements

**Trustee Opsommer moved to take the meeting into closed session under Section 8 of the Open Meetings Act to, A, Consider a Confidential Written Legal Opinion Regarding an Employment Severance Agreement and B, Conduct a Strategy Session/Update Concerning the Negotiation of Pending Collective Bargaining Agreements. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine.**

Board Discussion: Clerk Dreyfus expressed concerns about the legality of going into closed session. He read a section from the Open Meetings Act, stated it was not permissible to go into closed session to discuss a severance package for a Department Director.

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

NAYS: Clerk Dreyfus

Motion carried 5-1(Clerk Dreyfus)

Supervisor Styka moved the meeting into closed session at 9:52 pm.

**Treasurer Deschaine moved to return the meeting to open session. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.**

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 6-0

**Supervisor Styka moved the meeting back into open session at 10:17pm.**

17. ADJOURNMENT

**Treasurer Deschaine moved to adjourn. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.**

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 6-0

**Supervisor Styka adjourned the meeting at 10:18pm.**

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RONALD J. STYKA,  
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

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BRETT DREYFUS,  
TOWNSHIP CLERK