

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
TOWNSHIP BOARD REGULAR MEETING **-APPROVED-**
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos MI 48864-1198
853-4000, Township Hall Room
TUESDAY, August 18, 2020 **6:00 pm.**

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

ABSENT: None

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, Parks and Recreation Director Maisner, Finance Director Mattison, Human Resources Director Tithof, Communications Manager Yates

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 Clerk called the roll of the Board.

4. PRESENTATIONS - NONE

5. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Supervisor Styka opened public remarks at 6:01 pm.

Supervisor Styka closed public remarks at 6:02 pm.

6. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

Manager Walsh reported:

- Marketplace on Green is nearing the completion; working with Director Maisner and Park Commission on the Grand Opening Ceremony; but need to verify the number of attendees allowed at the event
- About 70% of the local roads project list is completing; have had few complaints and the weather has been cooperating
- Fencing is being installed for the Large Dog Park across from the Marketplace on Central Park Drive
- Construction is underway for the new pavilion and restroom building projects at the Harris Nature Center
- Currently drafting the 2021 Township Budget; the document is required to be delivered to the Board 120 day before the end of fiscal year and will be delivered by August 31; the

budget hearing has been scheduled for September 15 and budget deliberation by the Township Board on September 22 starting at 6 pm; items affecting the budget: 1) state revenue sharing will be \$300,000 less for this year; 2) drain projects are up \$275,000 and 3) pension costs are up \$600,000 if the Township follows the 5.35 rate of return model provided by MERS or if use 7.35 model, it could be less; items to be identified in the budget for funding: commitment to road; to solar; and to diversity, equity and inclusion; purchase of the ladder truck (commitment from the millage); expanding the emergency siren program; meeting the actual required contribution to retiree health care and pension; Celebrate Meridian; IT upgrades and redevelopment fund; received call from the President's Office at MSU and they will not be welcoming students this fall which effects the students and local economy

- Staff has discussed the open position of the Director of Economic Development and are suggesting updating the position to Director of Neighborhoods and Economic Development and splitting the job between attracting business to the Township and increasing the connectivity with the 90 neighborhoods in the Township

7. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Treasurer Deschaine

- Attended the Land Preservation Advisory Board meeting addressing the investment of the funds of the program
- As election commissioner and to keep good records, would like to include the election results with the minutes

Clerk Dreyfus

- Gearing up for the November elections five weeks from the start on September 24
- Discussions on delivery dates of ballots and educational information will be provided to HOMTV
- Obtaining enough Election inspectors, Precinct Chairs and Co-Chairs
- Already pre-stuffing envelopes and other materials in anticipation of ballots because the current AV list is over 13,000
- Absent voter applications are received and input daily
- Since this past election was 83% AV ballots and with the prediction of at least 80% for the upcoming election, staff is working to increase inspectors for the AV Board, will have three teams instead of two and relocating the Board to the Town Hall Room. This will relocate Precinct 6 (Municipal Building) to the Haslett High School Gym along with returning Precinct 3 to that location.
- There have been issues at Precinct 10 (Service Center) and this precinct will also be relocated to the Haslett High School

Trustee Opsommer

- Attended the Land Preservation Advisory Board, recommended acquisition of the 7.9 acres next to the Nemoke Preserve (agenda item 12F) and reviewed projects for elevated viewing decks in the preserves, conservation and stewardship activities including invasive species mitigation and tree planting projects
- CATA Board of Directors will meet on Wednesday, August 19, 2020, via zoom at CATA.org

8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Trustee Opsommer moved to approve the Agenda. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

9. CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor Styka reviewed the consent agenda.

Treasurer Deschaine moved to adopt the Consent Agenda as presented. Seconded by Trustee Opsommer.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

A. Communications

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

B. Approval of Minutes – August 6, 2020 Regular Meeting

Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve and ratify the minutes of the Virtual Regular Meeting of August 6, 2020 as submitted. Seconded by Trustee Opsommer.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

C. Bills

Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve that the Township Board approve the Manager’s Bills as follows, seconded by Trustee Opsommer:

Common Cash		\$	1,151,259.62
Public Works		\$	564,994.85
Trust & Agency		\$	3,115.17
	Total Checks	\$	1,719,369.64
Credit Card Transactions		\$	6,634.11
7/30/2020-8/12/2020			
	Total Purchases	\$	<u>1,726,003.75</u>
ACH Payments		\$	<u>550,780.68</u>

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

D. 2021 Budget Public Hearing Date

Treasurer Deschaine moved that a Virtual Public Hearing be held, via Zoom, at 6:00 pm on September 15, 2020, for the purpose of taking comments regarding the 2021 Charter Township of Meridian Recommended Budget. Seconded by Trustee Opsommer.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

10. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY - NONE

11. HEARINGS - NONE

12. ACTION ITEMS

A. Rezoning #20010 (Ho Cho) 5654 Okemos Road

Trustee Opsommer moved to adopt the resolution to deny Rezoning #20010 to rezone 4.67 acres located at 5654 Okemos Road from RR (Rural Residential) to RAA (Single Family-Low Density). Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine.

Board discussion:

- Site has wetlands along the frontage, request did not fit rural residential; request did not follow the Land Use Map
- following the recommendation of the Planning Commission

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

B. Rezoning #2030 (Planning Commission) 5937 Potter Street – Introduction

Trustee Jackson moved to adopt the resolution to approve for introduction Rezoning #20030 to rezone 0.10 acre located at 5937 Potter Street from C-1 (Commercial) to RN (Mixed Residential). Seconded by Clerk Dreyfus.

Board discussion:

- This parcel is adjacent to properties of RN zoning and this parcel was not rezoned when several other parcels were rezoned in this area. The current owner indicated a desire to have this parcel rezoned to RN. This rezoning was initiated and recommended by the Planning Commission

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

C. Special Use Permit #19191 (Green Peak Innovations LLC)

Trustee Opsommer moved to adopt the resolution approving Special Use Permit #19191 to construct a commercial medical marijuana provisioning center on an undeveloped parcel (Parcel I.D. 20-127-003) located on the east side of Northwind Drive, south of Grand River Avenue. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski.

Board discussion:

- The parcel is part of the overlay district for Northwind Drive and Dawn Avenue; the parcel fronts on Dawn Avenue and is adjacent to the old industrial district in the area; the parcel has sat vacant, without an address until recently and this development will not displace a current business. Four of the partners live in the Township.
- The applicants have promised a new, state-of-the art facility that will be secure; well lit; and odor proof. This project is in the right location on Dawn Avenue and near the campus.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

D. Rezoning #20040 (Michigan Baptist Convention) 4606 Hagadorn Road - Introduction

Treasurer Deschaine moved to adopt the resolution to approve for introduction Rezoning #20040 to rezone 4.999 acres located at 4606 Hagadorn Road from RR (Rural Residential) to PO (Professional Office). Seconded by Trustee Wisinski

Board discussion:

- This request was submitted last year as part of a new development which included student housing; the project idea was not well received but this rezoning request to PO is. It is a better fit for this parcel.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

E. Firefighter Candidate Sponsorship

Trustee Jackson moved to support the Fire Department’s sponsorship of paramedics to attend the Fire Academy providing wages and tuition to qualified candidates. Seconded by Trustee Sundland.

Board discussion:

- Fire Chief summarized the sponsorship is a recruitment tools. He currently has a candidate from the Ingham County Fire Academy. She will give a one-year commitment to the Township for this sponsorship and she will fill a spot on December 1. Currently 28 of the 32 member crew are paramedics/firefighters and hopes to have a future discussion on hiring EMT/firefighters and sending them to paramedic school. Fire Academy full tuition is approximately \$5,000 but for this case, she is getting 17-18 credits for free, the Township will be paying lab fees of approximately \$1,060; uniform costs of approximately \$200 and part-time hourly wage of \$13.75 for a total \$7,000-\$10,000.
- Board members support this recruitment tool; requiring a commitment for the sponsorship and encouraging young professionals for the Township; and for both public safety departments being proactive in recruitment for the Township.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

F. Land Preservation – Tax Reversion Property Acquisition Recommendation

Clerk Dreyfus moved to support the recommendation from the Land Preservation Advisory Board to acquire Parcel Number 33-02-02-15-100-010, a 7.97-acre property that is adjacent to the Nemoke Land Preserve. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.

Board discussion:

- Director Maisner reported this is an opportunity for the Land Preservation Advisory Board (LPAB) to obtain acreage adjacent to Nemoke Land Preserve and Nancy Moore Park. This acquisition assists with connectivity. LPAB reviewed this parcel previously when it was up for tax sale and LPAB feel there are valuable assets to the parcel and strongly recommend its purchase.
- The purchase price is \$2,000 and the parcel is adjacent to the railroad track.
- The Forfeiture Coordinator has been informed the decision on the parcel would be made this evening by the Township Board but the LPAB recommended its purchase and it will not be added to the auction list at this time
- There are two other two parcels up for tax sale. The parcel on Meridian Road near Sherbrook is several hundred feet long, 60 feet wide is undevelopable, and the second one is on Hatch Road and is an island type parcel that backs up to five homes.
- During the Land Preservation Millage discussion, re-focusing to maintenance of the preserves was mentioned as important but this opportunity is a prime example of why having reserve funds for acquisition is also important. Even though the Program has exceed its goals, there is a need to have funds available to acquire additional acreage to expand the current inventory and expand out to protect ecologically sensitive areas of the Township.
- Director Maisner reported there is approximately \$4 million in reserves and the Township is in a position to acquire future parcels.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

G. Planning Commission Appointment

Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve the appointment made by Supervisor Styka of Mark Blumer to the Planning Commission for a term ending 12/31/2021. Seconded by Trustee Jackson

Board discussion:

- Mr. Blumer has been employed in the Assistant Attorney General’s Office and tried some of the Township’s civil manners. His legal background and abilities of analysis and following the law will be a great benefit to the Planning Commission.
- Mr. Blumer stated thanked the Township for their consideration, worked with Supervisor Styka at the Attorney General’s Office. He had recently retired but was called back to assist with the management of the newly reorganized criminal prosecution division but with the COVID breakout and he and wife being in a vulnerable category, he was had to leave the position. He is looking forward to the appointment

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

14. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Supervisor Styka Opened Public Remarks at 6:47 pm.

Supervisor Styka Closed Public Remarks at 6:48 pm.

15. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Treasurer Deschaine spoke on the news that there will not be students on the MSU campus this fall, how it will affect the economy of East Lansing and Meridian Township. This decision will also effect the budget for this fall and the need to be cautious when making budget decisions for next year. He asked the Township Manager to keep the Board informed and to check with area organizations and neighborhoods for their input.

Supervisor Styka reported that normally 6-7,000 of the 40,000 students enrolled usually live in the Township but also a majority of them spend at area businesses. This will be a significant loss to the economy for this area. A majority of the staff from MSU also live in the Township.

Manager Walsh confirmed the reports from MSU and stated when he attended the civil hearing held by Magistrate Blumer; he was well prepared and looks forward to his participation on the Planning Commission

16. CLOSED SESSION - NONE

17. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Opsommer moved to adjourn. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 7-0.

Supervisor Styka adjourned the meeting at 6:52 pm.

RONALD J. STYKA,
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

BRETT DREYFUS,
TOWNSHIP CLERK