

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
TOWNSHIP BOARD REGULAR MEETING - **APPROVED** -
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198
853-4000, Town Hall Room
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2017 **6:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Supervisor Styka, Clerk Dreyfus, Treasurer Brixie, Trustees Deschaine, Jackson, Opsommer, Sundland
ABSENT: None
STAFF: Township Manager Frank Walsh, Assistant Township Manager/Director of Public Works and Engineering Derek Perry, Director of Community Planning & Development Mark Kieselbach, Police Chief David Hall, Director of Parks and Recreation LuAnn Maisner, Human Resources Director Joyce Marx, Finance Director Miriam Mattison, Director of Information and Technology Stephen Gebes, Interim Economic Development Coordinator Chris Buck

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

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

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS

Supervisor Styka led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

The secretary called the roll of the Board.

4. PRESENTATION

A. 2018 Recommended Budget

Manager Walsh provided a Powerpoint presentation on the 2018 Recommended Budget. Major expenditures included three Board goals for 2018: pension liability reduction, redevelopment of core commercial areas and fixing local roads. He summarized improvements in the Township infrastructure which have transpired over the last several years.

5. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Supervisor Styka opened Public Remarks.

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, provided information on pedestrian fatalities along Grand River Avenue in Meridian Township. He voiced concerns about ~~why a Board member was continually questioning overtime in the Clerk's Office. He showed a graph on the visualizer and stated~~ THE AMOUNT OF ATTENTION BEING PAID TO Clerk Office overtime WHEN IT IS ~~was~~ actually a small amount FRACTION of total Township overtime ~~and questioned why the Township Board was not examining large overtime costs in other departments.~~

Mary Shinkle, Congressman Mike Bishop's community liaison for Ingham County, presented a Congressional Tribute in Honor for Meridian Township's 175th Anniversary.

Supervisor Styka closed Public Remarks.

6. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT (None)

7. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Treasurer's Quarterly Report-Julie Brixie

Treasurer Brixie reported on delinquent personal property tax collection totals for 2012 through 2016 tax years, total 2017 tax year collections as of August 30, 2017, 2017 tax year distributions total as of August 24, 2017 and current fixed and non-fixed investments as of July 31, 2017.

Board member discussion:

- Three (3) substantial non-fixed investments are currently receiving a very low rate of return and inquiry as to whether they can be moved into a higher investment return account.
- The Treasurer explained why they are currently invested as indicated as there is a need to have diversity by investment type for portfolio safety

Treasurer Brixie reported the following:

- Her attendance last week at the swearing in ceremony for the Township’s new police officers as well as the Senior Celebratory Brunch at The Willows
- Charles Hagan, long time Assessing Board of Review (BOR) member, has donated all of his accumulated stipends to the Harris Nature Center

Trustee Deschaine reported the following:

- His attendance at the August 24th Transportation Commission meeting where discussion continued on the Redi-Ride millage and a presentation was given on railroad quiet zones

Supervisor Styka reported the following:

- Meridian Township was listed by www.niche.com as the number one place to live in Michigan
- HOMTV has been nominated for several awards by the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA) and the Central States Region of the Alliance for Community Media (ACM)
- 911 Memorial Quilt will be displayed from September 8th-11th at the Meridian Mall
- The Fall Recycling Event will be held September 30th at Chippewa Middle School parking lot
- Meeting with the new Superintendent of Okemos Public Schools
- Shaping the Avenue event in the Town Hall Room on September 14th from 5:00 PM until 7:00 PM to receive public input
- Current vacancy on the Planning Commission

Trustee Opsommer reported the following:

- CATA CEO Search Committee will be meeting during the month of September and October to vet applications submitted as a result of a comprehensive outreach effort

8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Treasurer Brixie moved to approve the agenda as submitted. Seconded by Trustee Opsommer.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

9. CONSENT AGENDA (SALMON)

Supervisor Styka reviewed the consent agenda.

Treasurer Brixie moved to adopt the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Clerk Dreyfus.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

A. Communications

(1) Board Deliberations (BD)

BD 13A-1 Rick Blunt, Senior Pastor, Okemos Community Church, 4737 Okemos Road, Okemos; RE: Master Plan Draft Concerns: Parking for Okemos Community Church in the Okemos PICA

(2) Board Information (BI)

- BI-1 Judy and Gordon Tuthill, 1609 Downing Street, Haslett; RE: Appreciation for the Gus Macker Tournament being hosted by Meridian Township and desire to have the tradition continue next year
- BI-2 Christopher G. Nugent, President, Horizon Bank of Lansing, 2151 W. Grand River, Okemos; RE: Appreciation for the Gus Macker Tournament being hosted by Meridian Township and desire to have the tradition continue next year
- BI-3 Mike Price, Executive Director, Greater Lansing Sports Authority, 500 East Michigan Avenue, Suite 180, Lansing; RE: Appreciation for the Gus Macker Tournament being hosted by Meridian Township and desire to have the tradition continue next year
- BI-4 Todd Osborn, Director, Emergency Management, Jackson National Life, 1 Corporate Way, Lansing; RE: Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grand Application Period
- BI-5 Judy Ratkos and Michael Lott, 5970 E. Sleepy Hollow Lane, East Lansing; RE: Sleepy Hollow Sanitary Sewer Special Assessment District
- BI-6 Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett; RE: Pedestrian Fatalities along Grand River
- BI-7 Trustee Opsommer; RE: Overtime for the Clerk's Office (2007-2016)

(3) Regional Linkage (RL)

- RL-1 Trenton M. Smiley, Marketing & Communications Director, Capital Area District Libraries, 401 S. Capitol Avenue, Lansing; RE: Appreciation for the Gus Macker Tournament being hosted by Meridian Township

(4) Staff Communications

- SC-1 HOMTV Executive Producer Brandie Yates; RE: National Association of Telecommunications Offices and Advisors (NATOA) and Central States Region of the Alliance for Community Media (ACM) Honors for HOMTV Programming
- SC-2 Director Kieselbach; RE: Shaping the Avenue Open House on September 14, 2017 at the Meridian Township Municipal Building from 5:00 P.M. until 7:00 P.M.

Material handed out at the August 22, 2017 Board Meeting

Donna Rose, 6207 Cobblers Drive, East Lansing; RE: Marihuana Regulation
 Donna Rose, 6207 Cobblers Drive, East Lansing; RE: National Aging and Disability Transportation Center (NADTC)'s *Providing Person-Centered Transportation Information to Older Adults and People with Disabilities* Webinar on August 23, 2017 at 2:00 P.M.

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 Clerk Dreyfus.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Deschaine, Jackson, Opsommer, Sundland, Supervisor Styka, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
 NAYS: None
 Motion carried unanimously.

B. Minutes

(1) Treasurer Brixie moved to approve and ratify the minutes of the August 15, 2017 Regular Meeting as submitted. Seconded by Clerk Dreyfus.

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

NAYS: None
 Motion carried unanimously.

(2) Treasurer Brixie moved to approve and ratify the minutes of the August 22, 2017 Special Meeting as submitted. Seconded by Clerk Dreyfus.

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

NAYS: None
 Motion carried unanimously.

C. Bills

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

Common Cash	\$	763,507.67
Public Works	\$	759,608.92
Trust & Agency	\$	3,060,545.66
 Total Checks	 \$	 4,583,662.25
 Credit Card Transactions (Aug. 10 th to Aug 30 th , 2017)	 \$	 11,926.81
 Total Purchases	 \$	 <u>4,595,589.06</u>
 ACH Payments	 \$	 <u>1,299,383.75</u>

Seconded by Clerk Dreyfus.

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

NAYS: None
 Motion carried unanimously.

[Bill list in Official Minute Book]

D. 2017 Township Board Meeting Schedule Amendment

Treasurer Brixie moved to amend the 2017 Regular Board Meeting Schedule by changing the Tuesday, November 7, 2017 Regular Board Meeting to Thursday, November 9, 2017. Seconded by Clerk Dreyfus.

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

NAYS: None
 Motion carried unanimously.

10. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY (None)

11. HEARINGS

A. 2018 Recommended Budget

Supervisor Styka opened the public hearing at 6:49 P.M.

- Public
 Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, voiced concern with the cost of hosting the Celebrate Meridian and Gus Macker Events, inquiring about the amount of money received through sponsorships for these events. He offered several positive comments about the recommended budget for 2018.

- Staff
 Manager Walsh clarified that, in the event the Township hosts these events next year, staff will do better in negotiating with food truck vendors so expenditures do not exceed revenue, specifically where overtime costs are concerned.

Supervisor Styka closed the public hearing that 6:53 P.M.

12. ACTION ITEMS

- A. Lake Lansing Watershed Management Special Assessment District (2018-2027)-Resolution #3 and #4

Assistant Township Manager/Director of Public Works and Engineering summarized the special assessment district as outlined in staff memorandum dated September 5, 2017.

[Trustee Deschaine left the room at 6:55 P.M.]

Treasurer Brixie moved to approve Lake Lansing Watershed Management Special Assessment District (2018-2027) Resolution #3, approving the proposed improvements to Lake Lansing, and directing staff to proceed with the improvements; defray the cost by special assessment, and directing staff to prepare the assessment roll for hearing and final approval; and to approve Resolution #4 setting a Public Hearing for October 3, 2017. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Jackson, Opsommer, Sundland, Supervisor Styka, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
 NAYS: None
 Motion carried 6-0.

- B. Michigan Economic Development Corporation’s Redevelopment Ready Communities (RCC) Program
 Interim Economic Development Coordinator Chris Buck summarized Michigan Economic Development Corporation’s Redevelopment Ready Communities Program as outlined in staff memorandum dated September 5, 2017.

[Trustee Deschaine entered the room at 6:58 P.M.]

Trustee Jackson moved [and read into the record] NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN hereby authorizes the Charter Township of Meridian to participate in the Michigan Economic Development Corporation’s Redevelopment y Communities (RCC) Program. The Township is willing to allow use of limited Township resources to support the RCC Program and commits to allowing the Planning Division to champion and engage in the RCC Best Practices and Evaluation protocol with the intent to improve the processes and communications with the Township stakeholders. The Township Board will work with staff, boards and commissions, residents and the MEDC as our community moves forward in seeking RCC certification. Seconded by Trustee Opsommer.

Board discussion:

- Staff members and one Board member have signed up for the training provided to learn how to utilize the RCC

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Deschaine, Jackson, Opsommer, Sundland, Supervisor Styka, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
 NAYS: None
 Motion carried unanimously.

13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. Okemos Community Church – PICA

Board discussion:

- Appreciation for staff's quick response by redrawing the Okemos PICA map to reflect the concerns of the Okemos Community Church
- Reminder that the objection by the church was due to extension of a street across their parking lot which would eliminate the church's current use of their property
- Board member preference to have residents within 500 feet of the proposed PICA zones receive notification of the draft Master Plan
- Reminder that the church's objection shows the Township's current process regarding the Master Plan is working
- Staff review of the process used by the Township to heighten public awareness regarding the Master Plan

It was the consensus of the Board to send the revised Okemos PICA map to the Planning Commission for consideration and incorporation into the draft Master Plan.

B. 2018 Recommended Budget

Board and staff discussion:

- Appreciation to staff for its thorough compilation of the recommended budget which reflects the Board's three main goals for 2018
- Recommendation to make the proposed \$1.1 million payment towards reduction of the MERS pension obligation in the current budget year instead of waiting until 2018
- Staff agreement to make the MERS payment in 2017 as MERS investments will yield a higher rate of return than current Township investments
- The 2018 recommended budget will be reduced by the \$1.1 million proposed to be spent in the current budget year
- The 2018 recommended budget will reflect what the cash balance will be on December 31, 2018 regardless if action is taken on the MERS payment this year
- The actuarial report produced in May, 2018 will be a good "barometer" if the Board decides to make the \$1.1 million payment this year
- Part of the proposed payment will be applied to the clerical pension obligation and place that pension system close to the state average of 78% funded
- As a result of the proposed payment, the Township's overall MERS portfolio will significantly increase
- Plan by staff to place the additional funds into MERS' surplus fund
- Staff reminder the Township has a ten year smoothing and the years of 2008-2009 will soon drop off
- Money for the Fire Department's ladder truck will be placed in the appropriate Motor Pool Fund each year for the next four (4) years prior to its cash purchase
- Proposed one-time additional money to the Roads Fund will result in more money being earmarked by the Township than collected through the .25 road millage
- Appreciation for the EDC's involvement in a RCC program to encourage core area development
- RCC program will come before the Board for formal approval prior to implementation
- Road repair as a significant item of concern expressed by Township residents
- Recommendation that a task force be created to consider an increase in the road millage
- Concern with the Township becoming a "bank" when money is earmarked for economic development
- Board member concern with use of taxpayer money earmarked for economic development being decided by business owners who sit on the EDC board and the potential for personal bias and favoritism
- Preference for the Board to have a thorough discussion on the proposed RCC Fund prior to its inclusion in the 2018 Budget
- Board member belief the proposed economic development fund (RCC fund) is the proper response to citizen input

- Board member belief the budget should include a \$50,000 one-time payment towards a solar energy program, possibly placed on a Township owned building which mirrors the Okemos Public School program
- Question regarding the efficiency realized through solar energy as it relates to the old HVAC systems in Township owned buildings
- Preference to consider a licensing structure for the five (5) different medical marihuana facilities in 2018 which could result in considerable additional revenue for 2019
- Suggestion for the Board to work with the Planning Commission to decide where these various medical marihuana facilities should be located
- Reminder that some of the medical marihuana businesses will operate out of offices and look very similar to other business type fronts
- Money obtained through a medical marihuana licensing structure could be utilized to fix local roads

[Clerk Dreyfus left the room at 7:50 P.M.]

- Appreciation for Board members who are thinking “outside of the box”
- \$5.1million proposed to be paid in 2018 towards MERS’ long-term pension debt includes \$2.5 million for the actuarial required contribution (ARC) payment, \$1.5 million toward police and fire, \$900,000 toward the Teamsters pension and \$200,000 towards clerical
- \$300,000 will be paid toward the Township’s closed pension plan
- \$400,000 will be paid toward retiree health care (OPEB)

[Clerk Dreyfus entered the room at 7:54 P.M.]

- Appreciation for the additional one-time general fund commitment of \$300,000 to local road improvements
- 25 year life cycle for most roads in Meridian Township
- Need for the MRF program to redevelop the three identified core areas in the Township (four corners of Haslett, Carriage Hills and downtown Okemos)
- Appreciation for the creation of an Economic Development Director position within the Township
- Possibility of using MRF monies to develop streetscapes, art, etc.
- 2018 Recommended Budget is a document which reflects the Board’s priorities
- Preference for \$50,000 to be labeled as a green initiative as opposed to solar energy
- Suggestion to have the Environmental Commission make a recommendation to look at how the \$50,000 green initiative should be invested
- Staff explanation the MRF program is designed so that monies are distributed after project completion
- MRF monies will be very competitive
- Ways to increase the viability of the MRF
- Little change in the car/deer accidents despite the Deer Management Program, due to chronic wasting disease changing the intent of the program
- 2017 data will soon be available

It was the consensus of the Board to place this item on for Action at the September 19, 2017 Board meeting, making the proposed \$1.1 million pension payment to MERS in 2017, modifying the 2018 budget accordingly and add \$50,000 to the recommended budget to incorporate a solar energy/green project.

C. Vacant and Abandoned Building Ordinance

Director Kieselbach summarized the proposed Vacant and Abandoned Building Ordinance as outlined in staff memorandum dated September 1, 2017.

Board discussion:

- Appreciation for the inclusion of commercial buildings within the proposed ordinance
- Preference to mirror the City of East Lansing’s fee structure as the Township shares inspectors with that municipality

- Staff research indicated all communities which had a vacant and abandoned building program had a fee structure
- City of Lansing, Delta and Delhi Townships do not have such a program
- Proposed ordinance as a mechanism to heighten awareness of blighted areas
- Suggestion to have a separate fee structure for blighted commercial areas v. blighted residential areas
- Fee should have a direct correlation to the cost of the inspection(s)
- Township currently charges the same amount as East Lansing for reinspection fees
- Inquiry as to the Township cost of the program as it relates to fees charged
- Staff to research the costs experienced by Townships who charges fees for blighted commercial areas
- Mechanics of the fee structure for multi-family inspections
- For multi-family buildings, Meridian Township inspects one-third of all units every year, common areas are inspected every year, and there is a separate fee for each bedroom
- Process used for a tall grass violation v. nuisance violation
- Current Township ordinance(s) covers public nuisance violations
- Reminder the Township has a complaint driven violation system with corresponding enforcement
- Mortgage foreclosed homes are at the base of the problem this proposed ordinance attempts to address
- Preference for a registration with corresponding inspection(s)
- Mechanics of staff determination relative to a vacant or abandoned building violation
- Inclusion of a 180-day clause for temporary absence with notification to the Township
- Properties of registered “snow birds” are monitored by Meridian Police
- Owner would have 90 days to register a building after Township review of fire or weather damage
- Township currently has the ability to require an owner to repair a leaky roof in a vacant dwelling dependent upon the amount of water damage
- Township will perform an inspection once a building is registered
- Concern about the Township needing keys to get access to vacant buildings
- Preference for the word “initiative” to be explained in Section 14-208
- Inquiry as to ways in which Township staff can enter a vacant building (application form must include an emergency number for a local responsible party; i.e., property maintenance company)
- Several “snow birds” and residents who go up north for the summer make payment arrangements with the Treasurer’s Office and are coded in the system

It was the consensus of the Board for staff to provide a different fee schedule based on Board comment, and solicit Township Attorney review prior to moving forward with a proposed vacant and abandoned building ordinance.

14. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Supervisor Styka opened Public Remarks.

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, addressed several items on tonight’s agenda. He spoke to the lawsuit filed against the Township filed by Summer Park Realty regarding the proposed rezoning for the Walnut Hills Golf Course.

Leonard Provencher, 5824 Buena Parkway, Haslett, addressed the quality of HOMTV camera coverage. He spoke to personnel costs for police and fire in 2018, questioning whether taxes should be increased or police and fire personnel reduced. He requested an explanation of the projected budget numbers for these two (2) departments.

Supervisor Styka closed Public Remarks.

15. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Manager Walsh noted the 2018 recommended budget presentation will be available on the Township website tomorrow and will also be available in hard copy. He explained a portion of the proposed increase in the budget is pension costs and much of the remainder is increased personnel.

Supervisor Styka clarified HOMTV is working with a skeleton crew this evening.

Trustee Opsommer noted the other change in the Okemos PICA dealt with reconfiguring the "old" rights-of-way and converting them to pathways.

Trustee Deschaine announced the next EDC meeting will be held this upcoming Thursday morning at 7:30 A.M.

Clerk Dreyfus reaffirmed his earlier suggestion for the Planning Department to send out a mailing within a 500 foot radius of each of the proposed PICA zones to ensure greater community input.

16. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Deschaine moved to adjourn. Seconded by Clerk Dreyfus.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Styka adjourned the meeting at 9:05 .P.M.

RONALD J. STYKA
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

BRETT DREYFUS, CMMC
TOWNSHIP CLERK

Sandra K. Otto, Secretary