



**To: Board Members**

**From: Frank L. Walsh, Township Manager**

**Date: July 1, 2022**

**Re: Manager's Semi-Annual Report**

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On behalf of the Meridian Township M-Team, I'm pleased to present the 2022 Semi-Annual Report of activities. The past six months have been at times very challenging, yet at the same time very rewarding.

The highlights include the recruitment of a new Finance Director/CPA, the potential development in Haslett, the announcement of Trader Joe's construction in Meridian, the return of Celebrate Meridian, earning an unqualified (clean) 2021 Audit, the appointments of Supervisor Jackson, Trustee Hendrickson and Trustee Wilson, the extensive effort with the Daniels Drain, continuing our efforts with new community signs, managing the massive water main break and Boil Water Notice, the addition of our new Project & Operations Director, our Juneteenth Celebration, earning our highest ever funding position with MERS and taking the initial steps to overhaul our outdated IT Infrastructure. Our team is committed to providing unparalleled customer service. We will provide a brief overview of the Report at the Board's July 12 meeting.

After reviewing the document, please let me know if you have any questions.

## ASSESSING

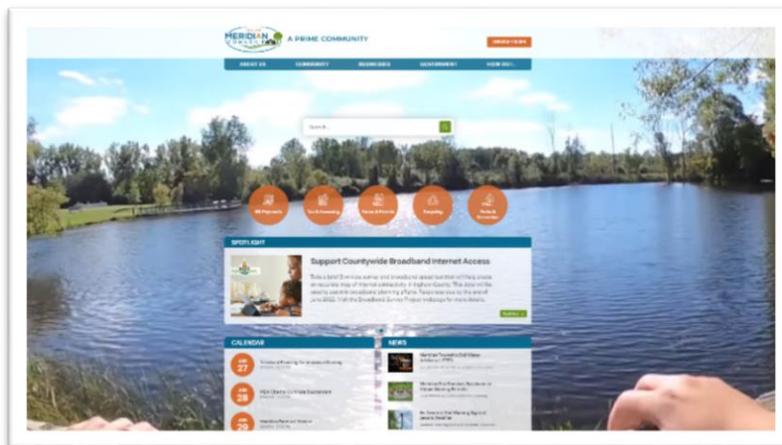
The Township's Board of Review has completed their meetings required by statute. The March meeting is an opportunity for property owners to appeal their assessment and apply for property exemptions. The Board of Review also meets one day in July and one day in December. The purpose of these meetings is to correct specific errors relative to the assessment of property and consider exemptions for poverty and veterans.

Efforts are continuing to defend and resolve appeals to the Michigan Tax Tribunal. The value in contention for pending appeals remains a low percentage of the Township's overall taxable value. Currently, four Michigan Tax Tribunal (MTT) appeals remain to be resolved for 2021. Efforts will be made to determine which of the pending cases can be resolved without a trial and which, if any, may need to be defended at trial. The 2022 appeal deadline has not yet occurred for all property classes; appeals will be received by the Township into the summer months.

The department has resumed the intern program, hiring two temporary staff members to assist with reappraisals this year. The reappraisal is currently focused on Hillbrook, Oak Grove and Ottawa Hills neighborhoods, roughly 360 parcels. Property owners are mailed questionnaires, the interns update photos, confirm structure measurements and note any changes since the previous inspection. This process allows us to ensure our assessment process is accurate and equitable, in addition to the work done by our full time appraisers.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### Meridian Township Website

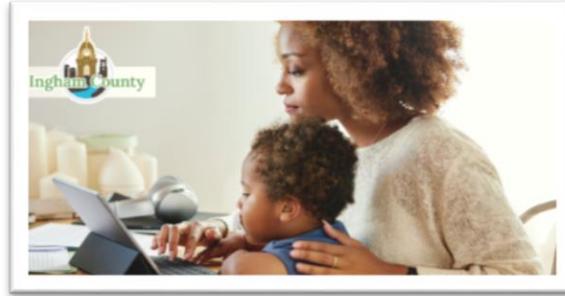


The Communications Department continues significant design and content revisions to the Township website with a deliberate effort to improve search engine optimization (SEO), accessibility, mobile friendliness as well as introduce new features and use of live web forms. Encouraging additional use and strengthening awareness of the Township web features is a goal of the Department. The reimplementations of QR Codes in print marketing materials have been successful in redirecting traffic to information on the Township website.

### Town Hall Room A/V Upgrades Project

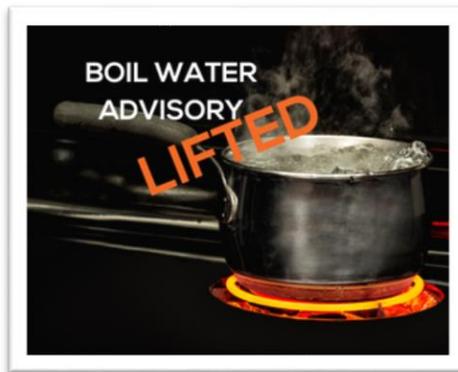
The purchase orders have been finalized and equipment for the Town Hall Room A/V Upgrades Project has been ordered. Due to supply chain issues, equipment is anticipated to arrive mid to late summer. The project install is slated for between the 2022 Primary and General Elections, tentatively September 2022. Smart Homes/Smart Offices engineers met with the electrical vendor, HR Electric LLC, to finalize the electrical work needed before all the new equipment is installed. The electrical work was completed at the end of May.

## Broadband



The Ingham County Board of Commissioners have committed a portion of the County's American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds to surveying residents and businesses to identify gaps in internet service. The Ingham County Broadband Task Force has partnered with Merit Network to create a survey to gather this valuable information. The survey launched on April 4. The Communications Department has created a broadband webpage, shared the information and will continue to promote the survey across our platforms to encourage Meridian Township residents to participate. Responses to the survey were due on June 3, 2022 and have been extended through the end of June or until the goal number of surveys have been reached.

## Marketing & Communications



The Communications Department worked with Administration and Department of Public Works staff on the release of emergency communications regarding the Boil Water Advisory issued on June 23 and lifted on June 25. Emergency communications efforts included website updates (emergency notification banner, news items & eNotification emails), Constant Contact digital newsletters (Meridian Happenings), HOMTV emergency notification TV crawl, press releases, media relations, and social media postings. Staff responded to multiple emails, social media and NextDoor comments during the Boil Water Advisory.



The Communications Team continues with the creation of marketing campaigns for Township events, department services and recruitment. These campaigns include press releases, event signage, pre-event signage, social media promotions, video promos, digital paid ads and website pages. The most recent campaigns include the Meridian Freedom Fest Honoring Juneteenth, Celebrate Meridian Festival and the 2022 Primary Election. Other promotions include department recruitment ads, flyers and signage.



As part of the year-long Wetland Education Campaign (#BuildBacktheBuffer), the Communications team continues sharing information about wetlands in the Township across multiple platforms. Recently, a Contractor Notice Flyer and Resident Notice Flyer was created to be mailed out. The purpose of the fliers was to remind residents of the Wetland Ordinance and what can and cannot be done near a wetland buffer.

Staff is excited to announce that Social News Desk, the Communications Department’s social scheduling provider, has added the LinkedIn platform. This allows for streamlined posting and scheduling on an additional social media account.

### **HOMTV Operations & Equipment**

Multimedia Production & Operations Specialist Diehl and local broadcast engineer continues to trace and label the cables in the HOMTV Server Room. In preparation for the Town Hall Room A/V Upgrades Project to take place in fall 2022, new schematics were created outlining the cables and ports from the Town Hall Room to the HOMTV Control Room to identify any issues before new equipment is installed.

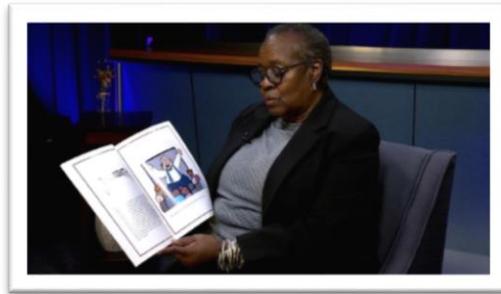
Staff has met with Comcast representatives to upgrade HOMTV’s internet bandwidth to improve streaming capabilities needed to produce live productions. A higher-level plan has been identified to allow for productions, including Township meetings, to once again be streamed on the HOMTV channel, website, YouTube and Facebook. Currently the quality of the video live streams have been impacted by slower internet speeds.

### **HOMTV Programming & Internship**

In 2022, HOMTV has started taking a different approach to storytelling. Instead of traditional news packages or longer format videos, staff has been utilizing creative storytelling techniques. This means that the videos are shorter format, anywhere from 30 seconds to 2 minutes, and are mostly shared on social media and includes graphics and music. The reason this change has been implemented is to better engage with the audience and to reach more viewers. Studies have shown that long format videos are not keeping the attention of viewers, especially while scrolling on social media. Staff learned the importance of these type of videos and examples of other stations implementing this approach by attending multiple video production webinars conducted by industry professionals.



Staff has contracted with a drone pilot to capture video footage and photos around Meridian Township during the summer and fall seasons of 2022. The drone video and photos will be utilized in upcoming promotional videos, social media posts, HOMTV programs/stories and publications. The most recent drone video is of the new Meridian Township logo painted on the North Water Tower.



As part of the Meridian Freedom Fest celebrating Juneteenth, HOMTV staff recorded a special video with Supervisor Patricia Herring Jackson. She read the book “Juneteenth – Celebrating Freedom”, which was written by Ingham County resident Julian Van Dyke. In addition to the storybook recording, HOMTV staff will be recording the Juneteenth Community Forum Discussion on June 19. This will be edited and scheduled for playback.

Staff is working with the Clerk’s Office to ensure “Your Choice 2022” election programming will help Meridian Township residents be aware of the upcoming 2022 election information, candidates and ballot proposals, as well as precinct and district changes in the Township. Primary election programs will begin in July.

The spring 2022 semester of the HOMTV Internship Program consisting of 5 interns ended on May 6. The summer 2022 semester began on May 16 with 3 new interns. Interns continue to be a valuable asset to the community by providing local news and information through interviews, programs, news stories, online articles, promos, meeting crew and more. Staff is working on revising the structure of the HOMTV Internship Program to attract more prospect interns to apply.

## **COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT**

After a record setting year for construction activity in 2021, the beginning of 2022 has started at a slightly slower, but still heightened pace. The Building Division has seen an uptick in the number of single-family homes under construction and commercial construction is beginning to pick up. The 2021 work of the Planning Division is coming to fruition, with the Sparrow project on Jolly Road nearing completion, the Hypershine car wash on Grand River well underway, and the Trader Joe’s building starting construction. Code Enforcement continues to keep our focus on the Winslow Mobile Home Park, while addressing other issues, including tall grass complaints, which are up nearly 30% over last year. We expect the remainder of the year to be as busy as the first half, with the Master Plan update kicking off, several Brownfield Plans coming to fruition, and construction commencing on some long-awaited projects.



**With the support of the Planning Commission, Township Board, and residents, formulate a process to update the Township's 2017 Master Plan.**

Staff has begun the process of formulating a plan to present to the Planning Commission and Township Board and this will be the focus of our work for the remainder of the calendar year until completion of the plan.

**Develop a policy, criteria, and procedure for expanding both permanent and temporary public art installations within the Township.**

Directors Clark, Maisner, and Schmitt and have begun discussing how best to promote art within the community. We will continue to work on this goal to bring forward a plan to improve art within the Township, as we have several ideas of how to begin implementing things on a smaller scale, before putting together a broad policy and programming around art.

**Continue to seek a commonsense approach to broaden our affordable housing opportunities.**

This is a very difficult issue, especially in light of the macroeconomics of the global economy. However, there are some things that we can do locally to provide more options and Staff is beginning to prepare some options for discussion. Some initial thoughts on potential changes include allowances for accessory dwelling units (which the City of East Lansing is also taking up), elimination/reduction of minimum unit sizes (which can scare off smaller projects), and changes in parking requirements, which would reduce development costs and incentivize more units, which should bring costs down. There is no single answer that is going to solve this problem, and frankly, the best answer is a regional approach, but we will begin to push locally towards some solutions.

**Create consistent enforcement of our wetland ordinance.**

Staff continues to investigate every claim of wetland impact that we receive, between Code Enforcement and

Engineering (for Soil Erosion purposes). We resolved the fill issue that occurred around Lake Lansing late in 2021 earlier this year. To date this year, we have only had one issue brought to our attention, where a contractor placed fill in a small area of wetland and then walked away from the job, leaving the homeowner in a bad position. With the assistance of our consultant, we were able to confirm that only a small area of wetland was impacted and created an easy to implement restoration plan that a new contractor is now putting into place. We continue to raise the issue of wetlands and buffers with every new construction project that is near any known wetland.

**Consolidate the number of Single-Family Residential and Multiple-Family Residential zoning districts.**

The Township Board approved, after a unanimous recommendation from the Planning Commission, the elimination of the RRR Zoning District earlier this year. Staff has prepared a second change to eliminate another single-family zoning district, which we will be bringing to the Planning Commission in July for initial discussion. After this amendment, future changes will become much more complicated, due to the fragmented nature of our current Zoning Ordinance. Staff is working through a strategy to continue to streamline things for residents and builders, where possible.

**Review the Existing Land Use Map and patterns in the Township in preparation for the Master Plan update.**

Staff has met with the Planning Commission subcommittee to focus on specific areas in preparation of the Master Plan update this fall. Additional meetings are expected, allowing the Planning Commission to have some areas of focus at the start the Master Plan update.

**Determine the best approach for implementation of Form Based Code principles in the West Grand River Avenue corridor.**

Staff continues to research this issue to be able to make a recommendation if a Form Based Code is workable for this area and how we could implement it, or if there is an alternative ordinance structure that will move us towards the design goals we are looking for in the Township.

**Kick off the 2022 update to the Township's Master Plan for Land Use.**

Staff continue to work towards a kickoff in the second half of the year for the Master Plan for Land Use update. We expect to have a request for proposals on the street shortly for the public input piece of the process and intend on preparing the update in house, using the input gained through the use of an outside consultant.

**Continue to work with both the City of Mason and the City of East Lansing on process improvements relating to all building permits.**

Staff has met regularly with both Mason and East Lansing and are implementing additional changes to further improve our shared workload. Our access to Mason records should be full-time/real-time, with changes being made by our IT department, in conjunction with their systems. Additionally, we have closed out a substantial portion of Mason's backlogged/expired permits where inspections had not been called in by the homeowner or contractor. With East Lansing, we meet in person quarterly to discuss specific issues, most recently about scheduling conflicts. We are moving towards full-time/real-time access for the East Lansing inspectors, but are working through IT issues at the City. After this year, we hope to transition this goal to become a regular part of our work, to make sure that everything is running as smoothly as possible.

**Investigate the potential of going completely paperless for all permitting.**

Staff has been working on this for much of the year and we will be prepared with a budget request for 2023 to implement an online permitting system for the Building Division. The Planning Division has largely been able to go paperless, for any applicant that is able to submit in that way, while leaving a paper option available for some applicants. We hope to be completely paperless in 2023.

**Update the standards of review for the Zoning Board of Appeals to be more in line with the State enabling legislation.**

In May, the Township Board, after a unanimous recommendation from the Planning Commission, approved the changes to the Zoning Board of Appeals standards of review. The ZBA has used these new standards at two meetings and it has substantially streamlined their work and decision making.

**Complete Meridian Township’s recertification in the Redevelopment Ready Communities program.**

Staff continues to work on this item, through the other work we are doing. This includes:

- The upcoming Master Plan for Land Use update
- The Capital Improvement Plan, which Planning Staff is completely overhauling this year to be more forward looking
- Annually reviewing our fee schedule (see below)
- The Planning Commission Annual Report

We will continue to work on these items and several other items that will require Township Board approval, in advance of our recertification deadline of November 2023.

**Update all applications, forms, and fees that the Department utilizes.**

As mentioned previously, Staff is beginning our annual fee review, to determine if any changes need to be made for the upcoming year. In 2021, we recommended only minor changes to the fees. Along with the fees, we are planning on reviewing all applications and forms later this year, to make updates as necessary and ensure that we are meeting all brand standards for the Township. After this year, we hope to transition this goal to become a regular part of our work, to make sure that everything is always as up to date as possible.

**Modernize Vehicular Parking Standards for new developments in the Township.**

Staff has started research on this item, which will be a major overhaul to the Zoning Ordinance, but one that is warranted at this time. We plan on bringing an amendment to the Planning Commission by the end of the year for discussion.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**External Activities**

The Meridian Area Business Association (MABA) Annual Golf Outing was a hit on June 10<sup>th</sup> with a sponsorship from the Meridian Economic Development Corporation (EDC). MABA supports the Haslett Robotics Clubs, small business awards, local community projects and of course small businesses.

Amber Clark, LuAnn Maisner, Ashley Winstead and Melissa Massie will make up a Rotary golf team for this Annual Golf Outing. We will meet with the community June 27<sup>th</sup> and show our support.

Conversations and Coffee is a program run by the MSU Foundation to allow for small business owners to intersect with government and other organizations that can support their vision. We will start to attend to better network the community with available resources.

The following businesses have recently opened their doors:

- Click Pawsitive Pet Clinic
- Reborn Kicks
- Premier Martial Arts
- Evergreen Vet Clinic
- Nothing Bundt Cakes
- King Pho Vietnamese



The following are businesses that will open soon:

Evergreen Vet Clinic and Animal Rescue

Icy Dental

Joes on Jolly

Haslett Marathon

Wild West Tobacco-Haslett

King Pho Vietnamese Restaurant



### **Haslett Road Development**

The business operator Redico, a well-known senior community property management firm will take over ownership of the Haslett Road development site in 2022. Redico will be the primary operators of the community and have elected not to demolish the 1655 Haslett Road (old L&L grocery store). They have also elected to change the project name from Pine Village to “American Homes Meridian” to align with the other communities operated by Redico.

Discussion with CATA continues as we pursue the requirement of the developer to place a CATA transit shelter and stop near the Haslett development complex site. CATA has requested the stop to be included inside the 1673 Haslett Road project site. This will allow CATA to continue the current service provided to the Haslett residents.

A demolition application was picked up by the general contractor for the 1673 Haslett Road Project. Conversations with Redico the new operator, indicate a new project name and new ownership of the property to come soon. We will be seeing demolition within 30 days and construction to follow soon after. Gas connection was shut down by Consumers Energy June 13<sup>th</sup>. Additional items are being concluded on the checklist to commence demolition. We hope for demolition prior to the week of July 5<sup>th</sup>.

### **Village of Okemos Development**

The Village of Okemos Development Project must continue the forward momentum on the project to ensure the grant and loan issued by Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) remains available for use. For the project to remain eligible for the approved grant and loan, the developer must begin site demolition work by the end of 2022. The Township Board approved the use of the Meridian Redevelopment Fund (MRF) for about \$3.3M for infrastructure improvements in the public right of way. Staff are working with the Meridian Township legal team to draft an agreement to be made between the developer and the Township in support of how the funds will be used. The developer submitted a Brownfield Plan that was approved by the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BRA). The Township Board will see the plan before the end of summer to approve the final plans.

On May 31<sup>st</sup>, the Revitalization and Placemaking Grant was submitted by the Village of Okemos Development Team to the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) by the intended deadline. Meridian Township staff assisted in the creation of a strong application to support a workforce housing development. The application requests the total \$5M grant from MEDC to support 80-120% AMI clients to find affordable housing in Meridian Township.

Consumers Energy (CE) is a major player in the approvals for the Village of Okemos Project related to the high voltage wire burial. Our Department is working to get the teams aligned and have a plan for relocation or burial from CE that is feasible.

**Business Retention Program**

Small Business Week was the first week in May with Small Business Month as a month to build awareness of our startup businesses. Meridian is a host to a small business incubator with the capacity to build new high paying jobs in our community. For this week we submitted items for small business owners to use to build their businesses and continue to promote our small startups. The businesses in the Van Camp building were strongly promoted.



**Match on Main Meridian**

We are happy to report the Match on Main Meridian has an interested business owner in the Downtown Development Authority (DDA). Keller Williams of Okemos may be looking to do some work on the property and could use the Match on Main Program! Details to come.

**FINANCE DEPARTMENT**

**New Finance Director**

On May 16<sup>th</sup>, we welcomed our new Finance Director, Amanda Garber. Amanda brings 10 years of experience as a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and Municipal Finance Director.



**2021 Township Audit**

The annual audit has been presented and approved by the Board. All the required filings have also been submitted to the State of Michigan and other various agencies.

**Utility Billing**

Utility Billing (UB) is working short staffed with a maternity leave. We have a temporary worker that started on Monday, June 13<sup>th</sup> and is assisting the UB Department during the maternity leave.

**Pension**

Finance has received the actuarial report on the pension plan held with Municipal Employees’ Retirement System (MERS). The Plan is 72% funded as of December 31, 2021.

**Township Awarded Excellence in Financial Reporting**

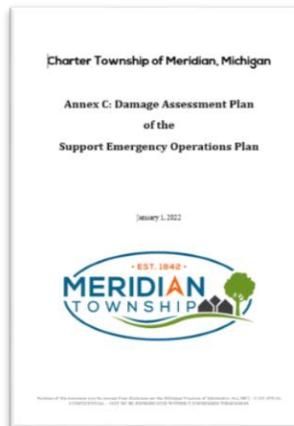
The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) awarded the 2020 Certificate of Achievement (COA) for Excellence in Financial Reporting to Meridian Township.

The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting. When a Certificate of Achievement is awarded to a government, an Award of Financial Reporting Achievement (AFRA) is also presented to the individual or department designated as primarily responsible for earning this honor.

**FIRE DEPARTMENT**

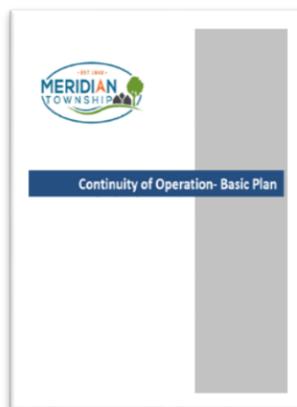
**Damage Assessment Plan**

The Damage Assessment Plan was presented to the Township Board earlier this year and has been approved. In March, the damage assessment team attended a two-hour training session. Forms have been developed. The next phase is training first responders on how to complete damage assessment “Windshield Surveys.”



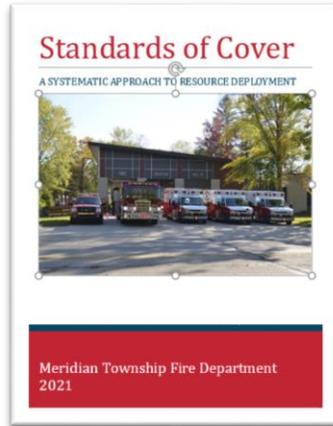
**Township Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)**

The COOP plan is still under development. The Main Plan is complete; functional and support plans are still being developed.



## Standard of Cover Document

The department's Standard of Cover document was started in late 2021 and is progressing on schedule. Additional research along with greater expansion on the main topics is expected throughout the rest of 2022.



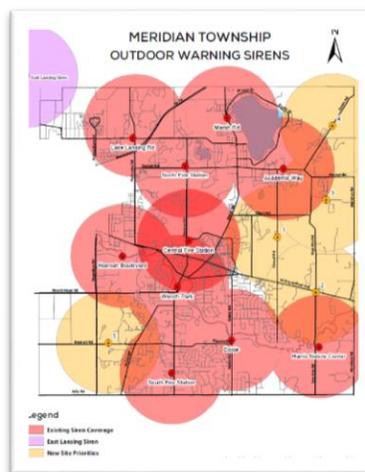
## Fire Department Strategic Plan

The orientation for this process has been developed and is under review. A committee will be formed in early summer to work through the Strategic planning process.



## Emergency Siren Project

The installation of the eleventh outdoor warning siren is being finalized with West Shore. The siren will be located at the intersection of Hagadorn Road and Bennett Road. The remaining four sirens will be installed on Cornell Road, Grand River and Van Atta, Green Road, and Tihart.



## Recruiting and Succession Planning

Recruiting and retention processes are continuing to be evaluated to ensure that the right employees are hired and will fit in well at the Meridian Township Fire Department. Over the past year, EMT/firefighters, paramedics, and firefighters have been hired part time and were sponsored to EMT, paramedic, and firefighter training.



The Department is currently sponsoring one individual, Brandon Curling, to EMT school, with the intent to send him to paramedic school in the fall of 2022. The goal is to hire Brandon full-time in January 2023 and fill a vacancy at that time.

The Department currently has 33 firefighters and is seeking qualified candidates to fill one vacancy. Working with Lansing Community College and Ascension Hospital, the Department has been recruiting paramedic students and EMTs to fill this vacancy along with three additional vacancies (two in January 2023 and one in June 2023). Four students have been interviewed thus far. This process will likely include sponsoring up to four individuals to paramedic school in the fall.

Two promotional processes have been completed in 2022 to fill a June Captain vacancy and two Battalion Chief positions in January 2023. Two Captains will be promoted to Battalion Chief in January, so a second Captain promotional process will occur in September to fill those positions.

### 2022 Retirements:

- Bill Richardson, Captain (6-22-2022)
- Bill Priese, Training/EMS Chief (4-1-2022)

### 2022 Promotions:

- Samantha Weber, promoted from Firefighter to Lieutenant (6-23-2022)
- Chris Johnson, promoted from Lieutenant to Captain (6-22-2022)
- Bob Caretti, promoted from Firefighter to Lieutenant (3-14-2022)
- TJ Booms, promoted from Lieutenant to Training/EMS Chief (3-7-2022)

### New Hires:

- Timothy Brighton (4-4-2022)
- Mike Weber (2-14-2022)
- Jared Gentner (2-7-2022)

## Apparatus Update

Across the country, supply chain and staffing issues have caused many delays in the build time and delivery of new vehicles. Updated delivery dates for Fire Department ordered vehicles:

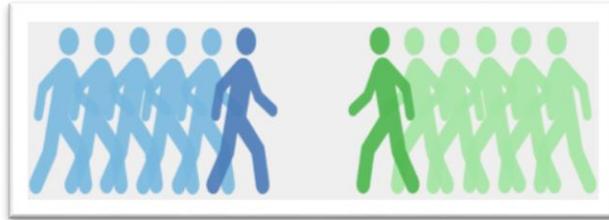
- 2020 ladder is scheduled for delivery in August 2022.
- 2022 ambulance chassis has been delivered to Braun as of June 22, 2022. Braun has estimated a delivery date of October 2022.
- 2022 command vehicle has been built by Ford as of June 22, 2022. An estimated delivery date is pending.

- 2023 pumper was ordered in December 2021 due to anticipated delivery delays and an increase in cost to order later. The estimated savings from purchasing early is approximately \$150,000. Currently, the build time for this pumper is 21 to 24 months with delivery expected in late 2023.

## HUMAN RESOURCES

### Employee Traffic

Since the last update in mid-April of this year, Human Resources welcomed more than twenty-seven new hires, including temporary election workers and temporary seasonal (summer) workers. There were ten departures, as well as two retirements, and two promotions.



### Union Contract Negotiations

Contract negotiations are under way with four of our unions whose contracts will expire at the end of the year. The Township first met with each group the week of May 9<sup>th</sup> and look forward to the next round of discussions coming up in July.

### Recruitment & Retention Wage Scale Adjustments and Stimulus Inflationary Payment (SIP)

- The Board-approved Police Officers' wage scale modification intended to improve recruitment and retention was implemented in May.
- The Board-approved Firefighters' wage scale modification intended to improve recruitment and retention was implemented in June.
- The Stimulus Inflationary Payments that were approved for all permanent Township staff were deposited into employee accounts on Friday, June 10<sup>th</sup>.

### COVID-19

The Township continues to manage COVID-related scenarios and works closely with staff in order to safely get through this leg of the journey. The current protocol still includes contact tracing for those who were in close contact with someone who tested positive, helping employees when they are symptomatic and working through the steps with employees who test positive for the virus.

- Effective Tuesday, February 22, 2022 the Township no longer required, but permitted optional masking for employees and visitors. Employees working through COVID-related circumstances (i.e.; close contact, symptoms, and/or positive test result) notify our designated COVID coordinator(s) and may be required to mask temporarily based on the appropriate protocol for their circumstances.
- Since April, the Township has completed more than 80 COVID-related communications with employees, including close contact notifications, walking employees through the protocol, and any required follow-ups/reporting.



## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

### **Brightline IT Presentations and Work**



Brightline made presentations of their network findings to various internal groups and finalized with a presentation to the Township Board. With funding and budget amendments approved by the Township Board, initial network hardware has been ordered, and project kickoffs are scheduled to start as the second quarter of 2022 ends.

### **Evaluation of Meraki Firewall & Switches**



Updated switches and firewalls are here for testing in our environment. The switch that manages the Township's external connections has been replaced with a fully functional Meraki device that is already improving throughput to network devices and internal users. Configuration of the test firewall is still under way.

### **Reconfiguration of Voice & Data Connections to Township Facilities**

Township Staff continues work with AT&T to upgrade telecom connections to all of our remote facilities. This work is expected to be completed before the end of the first quarter of 2022.

### **Shared Mechanical Inspection Calendars for Meridian Township & City of East Lansing**

Township Technology staff continues to work with the Department of Community Planning & Development in conjunction with the City of East Lansing to find a way to make the mechanical inspection process more efficient for people in both jurisdictions.

### **Email Report Support for Police Department & Community Planning & Development**

Several incidents brought about the need to review mailboxes for content matching specific criteria presented themselves at various points throughout the second quarter. IT staff assisted with creation, execution, and then export of the requested content.

### **Evaluation of Upgrades to PowerDMS Compliance Management Software**

The Police Department is considering additional optional features available with the Compliance Management System. IT Staff helped to quantify the benefit of the additional features that translate to a tripling of the current costs. These are currently being evaluated based upon these improvements with respect to other 2022 budget amendments.

### **Evaluation of Purchase of JustFOIA Service to Help Manage FOIA Requests**

Several departments are considering new software to help Manage Freedom of Information Act requests. IT Staff helped to quantify the benefit of the new software that would cost approximately \$10,000/year. This expenditure is being evaluated based upon the expected increased efficiencies and with respect to other expected 2022 budget amendments.



### **Workspace Reconfiguration to Accommodate a Half Dozen New Summer Interns**

With the addition and relocation of various employees around our facilities, IT staff worked with end user departments to set up additional network accounts, workstations, and telephone extensions in a variety of locations.

### **Evaluation of Marketplace on the Green for Addition of Wi-Fi Services**



The Technology Team met with Parks & Recreation Staff and external contacts to discuss options to have Wi-Fi at the Marketplace on the Green Facility. The initial wireless network will be rolled out to meet the needs of staff & vendors operating on-site, and then expanded to offer limited Wi-Fi service to facility patrons and visitors.

### **Replacement Computers for Police Cars**



IT staff has completed configuration of all in-car computers used in police cars & motorcycle units. Installation of the new units is expected to be completed prior to the end of the second quarter.

### **Printer Services for 2022 Summer Taxes**

Technology Staff performed milestone services to the printers used in the Treasurer's Office to print tax bills. This was done to avoid any preventable issues as the Township transitions to a new style of tax bill.

## **PARKS & RECREATION**

### **Work in a cooperative manner with the Park Commission and the Department of Natural Resources to develop the 2022-2026 Five Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan.**

The Five-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan provides an opportunity to obtain input from the community, as well as, identify trends to assist in determining future capital projects. The update was conducted by in-house staff and included community surveys, opportunities for public input, staff recommendations and a public hearing. Both the Park Commission and Township Board approved the updated plan before it was submitted to the Tri-County Regional Planning Office and to the Grants Division of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. This plan is required by the MDNR to qualify for state and federal grant funding.

### **Work with the Environmental Commission to create a successful Wetland Campaign and Green Projects Initiative.**

The Wetland Campaign and the Build Back the Buffer Initiative were adopted into the Parks and Recreation Department Five-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2022-2026. Emma Campbell, Stewardship Coordinator worked with a local Eagle Scout Candidate to develop and build a wetland buffer in an area in Central Park South adjacent to the existing pond. This project will serve as a demonstration area with interpretive signage and serve as an educational attraction in the park.

### **Demolish house on 5280 Okemos Road in preparation of building support facilities for the MSU to Lake Lansing Trail.**

The Township received a grant from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund to assist in acquiring this parcel at the end of 2021. Demolition of the house and land restoration was completed in April, 2022. Site planning for development will occur later this year.

### **Improve capacity and safety by expanding parking at North Meridian Road Park and Central Park South.**

These paving projects are being planned and implemented in cooperation with the Engineering Department. Based on rising costs, we may only be able to complete one of these projects this year.

### **To improve water quality at Central Park South Pond, install floating purification islands planted with native vegetation.**

The five floating islands were ordered, received and planted utilizing native plants grown from seed collected in parks and land preserves. These islands are currently sitting on the shoreline for three weeks to control the watering schedule. They will be anchored out into the pond in the next week or so. The islands were planted by staff and volunteers. This method for water filtering was recommended by Park Commissioner Mark Stephens.

### **Foster an effective education plan regarding the Community Services Millage Renewal.**

Staff from the Parks and Recreation Office, Meridian Senior Center and Human Services are working cooperatively on messaging for this millage renewal with a final draft due shortly. This millage supports Recreation, Meridian Senior Center, and Human Services programs.

### **Recreation and Special Events**

- Moonlight Sledding took place in January at North Meridian Road Park with music, hot chocolate and a bon fire. 400 people took part in the family portion of the event and an additional 100 Teens participated in their own late-night time slot.
- Flashlight Easter Egg Hunt – took place on Saturday, April 16 with 410 children participating.
- Love a Park Day took place on Wednesday, April 20 with 30 volunteers, Park Commissioners and Staff participating. Other organizations such as the Haslett-Okemos Kiwanis Club and Forest Hills Neighborhood Association and others will conduct clean-up activities on an alternate date.
- Mom to Mom and Kid to Kid Garage Sale took place at Marketplace on the Green on Sunday May 1 with 46 vendor booths rented and over 200 customers.
- Music at the Market Summer Concert Series took place every Wednesday evening in June and will continue through September from 6:00 pm – 8:30 pm. Bands include Garage Sale Band, Showdown, Sea Cruisers, School of Rock and Atomic Annie! Sponsors include Orthopaedic Rehab Specialists Physical Therapy, Embassy Transportation, Fahey Schultz Burzych Rhodes PLC, Midwest Power Equipment and MSU Federal Credit Union.
- Celebrate Meridian Festival– On this beautiful day on June 25<sup>th</sup>, the community came together to recognize the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday, as well as, our Prime community at Central Park and Marketplace on the Green. The event included a fun children’s area complete with kiddie rides, giant inflatables, games, fun foods, and tours of Nokomis and Historical Village. It was very exciting to utilize Marketplace on the Green for our first large special event since the pandemic. This venue was fully utilized with a beverage tent, multiple food vendors, outstanding entertainment on the Delta Dental Stage, business booths and at dusk, a fireworks finale! The day also kicked off with a full-house at the Farmers’ Market! Estimated attendance is as follows: Farmers Market – 3,000; Children’s game area – 3,500, Marketplace on the Green – 2,500; area

parking lots to watch the fireworks – 10,000. Estimated visitors who enjoyed the event: 20,000+/-.

Planning and execution of this festival included staff from nearly every Township Department and a large number of volunteers from Township Boards and Commissions, Township Staff, and a large contingent from 242 Church. A majority of the event was funded through generous donations from local businesses.

- Meridian Heritage Festival – Planning is underway for the return of the Meridian Heritage Festival. Meetings are underway with the Friends of Historic Meridian and Nokomis. The event is scheduled for Saturday, October 1, 2022.
- Youth Sports – Mike has been very busy this year with administering all of the following programs:
  - 262 basketball



- 202 registered in Baseball
- 758 registered in Soccer 80 teams
- 217 Baseball
- 153 Softball
- 163 Tee ball
- Playmakers running club 37 Participants
- Sporties for Shorties – 245- 4,5, and 6 year olds(Classses all full)



- Adult Sports
  - Kickball 4 teams
  - Sand volleyball 7 teams
  - Softball 7 teams
  - 55+ fitness group averaging 25+ per day (Monday-Wednesday-Friday program)

## **Dog Parks**

Our dog parks continue to be successful and popular with 553 Small Dog Park members and 661 Large Dog Park members. Dog parks are not just for dogs, they are for people too! Many friendships and social connections are made with fellow dog owners. In June, we hosted a “Yappy Hour” event at each of the Dog Parks with 30 large and 20 small dog participants. The event included doggie treats, people snacks, music, and BYO drinks.

## **Deer Management**

The Police Department culled 200 deer during January – February 2022. The program involved the support the Township Board, Departments of Public Works, Parks and Recreation, and Police, together with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Division, and the Sportsman against Hunger Organization. The culmination of efforts from these entities resulted in 330 deer harvested, 7,414 lbs. of venison donated to local food banks, and a 23% reduction in reported car/deer accidents from 2010. (200 deer were culled by the police in 2022 and 130 deer were harvested in fall of 2021 by the volunteer archers).

## **Consumers Energy Easement Request**

Received a donation of \$1,000 from Consumers Energy in exchange for an easement in Wonch Park that funded a new bench in Ferguson Park.

## **Grant Reimbursements**

All of the final paperwork for final grant reimbursements were completed for the following projects: Central Park Regional Pathway; Historical Village Bridge and Restroom; Harris Nature Center Pavilion; Harris Nature Center Waterless Restroom; and MSU to Lake Lansing Trail Hub Acquisition.

## **Hillbrook Park**

Worked with Ingham County Drain Commissioner’s Office to locate and plant 40 trees in the park as part of a recent drain project in the park.

## **Red Cedar Water Trail**

Several area Rotary clubs (Williamston Sunrise and Satellite; Haslett/Okemos; East Lansing; and Lansing) are teaming up to develop a program that strives to bring recreation back to the Red Cedar River. A water trail map developed by our staff has served as a model for this implementation plan. Our hope is that by working together with Ingham County, Williamston, Williamstown Township, East Lansing and Lansing, that grant monies can be found to fund launch sites, amenities, and signage as well as ongoing river maintenance.

## **Park Maintenance Division**

Much of the work completed by the maintenance staff is repetitive in nature but extremely important in creating, maintaining and supporting our community’s prime image. This work includes: snow removal on pathways and parking lots, mowing and trimming in parks (130-acres) mowing and trimming along pathways, (72 miles), mowing 20 miles of park trails, pavilion and restroom cleaning, trash removal, and miscellaneous repair and maintenance. This year we experienced ongoing vandalism in multiple areas in the Central Park/Nancy Moore park area that demanded over \$4,000 worth of staff time and facility repair. The Police dedicated time to finding and apprehending the culprit.

## **Special Maintenance Projects**

- Built and installed a sled library at North Meridian Road Park and filled it with sleds for the public to use.
- Built and installed new snowshoe racks for renting snowshoes at the Harris Nature Center.
- Upgraded existing pole barn at 5280 Okemos Road with a new roof to utilize for storage temporarily until a formal plan is developed and implemented.
- Built two dumpster corrals (Central Park/Marketplace) in order to hide the dumpsters for a better aesthetics.
- Installed four foul poles on the softball field at Towner Road Park.
- Completed laying brick pavers around the Gazebo at Historical Village as part of an overall renovation project.

- Relocated pod to Marketplace to serve as an information booth for the Farmers' Market.
- Installed new collapsible bollards at trail/pathway entrances in Central Park, Nancy Moore Park and Nemoke Trail.
- Re-keyed all buildings in the Historical Village in order to create a much needed master key.
- Installed fresh impact material/safety surface at all playgrounds.
- Completed annual playground inspections.
- Installed new service gate at the Large Dog Park.
- Installed one electronic wind screen at Marketplace on the Green.
- AED installed at Towner Road Park funded by the pickle ball players.
- Completed laying brick pavers around the Gazebo at Historical Village as part of an overall renovation project.



### Stewardship in Parks and Preserves

January – June 2022 Stewardship Volunteer Hours = 452.5 hours of service completed.

- 19 Stewardship Saturdays: Invasive species removal, litter cleanup, native plant installations, wetland buffer restoration.
- Six Weekday Warriors (weekday volunteering opportunities): Invasive species removal, litter cleanup, native plant installations.
- Four trainings/Workshops completed: two Invasive Species Field Training (one community training, one staff training), two Vernal Pool Patrol volunteer monitor training.
- Over 2,800 pounds of litter removed from Central Park Drive, Nancy Moore Wetland, Red Cedar Natural Area, and Central Meridian Uplands.

### Meridian Conservation Corps (MCC) Educational Programs



- Wetland Education & Restoration Campaign launched February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022. Spearheaded by the Environmental Commission, the program is focused on educating residents and businesses on wetland protection and conservation. The Meridian Conservation Corps has offered programs and restoration work,

such as Wetland Walks, wetland cleanups throughout the Township, and native wetland buffer restoration.

- Five Wetland Walks hosted at different wetland sites in Township parks and preserves; 76 participants.
- Central Park South was a candidate for a wetland buffer restoration, to reduce flooding, and destructive mowing. Eagle Scout, Ethan Olds, agreed to take on the project with direction from staff. 112 native plant species were installed on June 4, 2022.
- Planting a Native Meridian in 2022
  - Thousands of seeds collected by volunteers from parks and preserves, grown by local native plant nurseries, and so far 348 transplants have been installed in Township preserves and parks.
  - Development of comprehensive Native Plant Guide for Homeowners as a way to increase awareness on the importance of native plants, provide direction and resources for garden installation, as well as increase deer resistance gardens in the Township.
  - Five Township residents are participating in our Grow a Native Meridian Program, where residents can adopt a native plant for their garden for future seed collection from the MCC.
- Continuation of educational presentations for the community covering the following topics; The Environmental Benefits of Planting Native, Wetland Conservation & Restoration, and Invasive Species Training.

## Harris Nature Center



- Annie's Big Nature Lesson was back for the spring of 2022 (5 schools, 8 classes, 189 students).
- 100 Kindergarteners from Hiawatha Elementary School in Okemos enjoyed full day programs this spring at the nature center. In addition, 205 Kindergarteners from Wilkshire Early Childhood Center in Haslett enjoyed field trips to the center this spring.
- Participated in MSU Science Festival Virtual Wildlife Programs: 11 classes, 264 students.
- Summer Camp began on June 21<sup>st</sup> with 481 children already enrolled for the summer. Only a few spots remain open.
- Work for the new paved trail leading to the bird observation deck is set to begin in June.
- HNC is celebrating its 25th Anniversary in 2022 with an event on July 23<sup>rd</sup>. Planning is well underway for an all-day free event with extended building hours.
- The spring Native Plant Sale was a huge success with HNC selling over \$7,000 worth of native plants. A second sale will be held on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022.
- HNC Foundation funded 7 school bus scholarships so far in 2022 for a total of \$700.
- HNC has welcomed over 2,000 drop-in visitors between January and June.

## Farmers' Market

- The Farmers Market continues to be a shining star in our community and began operations outdoors at Marketplace on the Green from January- April on two Saturdays per month.
- The number of vendors participating ranged 16 to 35 vendors, avg. 24 vendors/day.
- Customers: ranged 263 to 1,530 customers/day, avg/day – 536, Total – 4,288.
- The spring/summer season runs from May through October on Saturdays with Wednesdays starting in June.
- Vendors: ranged 44 to 56 vendors, avg. 50 vendors/day.
- Customers: ranged 2,403 to 3,304 customers per day, avg/day – 2,805, Total – 22,422.

- Wednesday Market started in June for the first time. Participating vendors ranged 20 to 31, avg. 24 vendors/day. Customers ranged 304 – 680, Avg. 432 customers/day, Total – 1,730.
- Food Assistance for Jan – June
  - Total EBT dispersed = \$5,533
  - Total Double Up Food Bucks dispersed = \$3,110
  - Total food assistance customers (incl. duplicates) = 173
  - Total New food assistance customers = 30
- Music at the Market Concert Series takes place every Wednesday evening in June through September, 6:00 pm – 8:30 pm. We have a great line-up, including Garage Sale Band, Showdown, Sea Cruisers, School of Rock and Atomic Annie!
- Gleaning at the Meridian Farmers Market- Total gleaned over 4 weeks = 104lbs. (only 2 vendors participating) this program provides an opportunity for vendors to “give away” leftover foods from market to donate to local food banks.
- Food Waste Recycling at the Meridian Farmers Market (Pilot Project) Slow start – Now have about 6-10 users per market, filling one 64 gallon cart per 2 weeks

## Meridian Senior Center



The Meridian Senior Center, located at Chippewa Middle School, provides for the educational, physical and social needs of adults aged 55 and over. Operation of the Meridian Senior Center is a collaborative effort between the Okemos School District and Meridian Township. With a current membership of 267, the Senior Center is an important community focal point for enrichment, socialization and fitness for our older adults. The Senior Center had 39 new members join between January and June 2022.

Over 600 programs were conducted during the first half of the year with the most popular being:

- Fitness and exercise: Jazzercise Lo, Balance and Core, Yoga and Warm Water Aquatics (with 908 participants)
- Health and Wellness: Massage, Reiki (with 90 participants)
- Games: Euchre, Bridge, Mah-Jong, Puzzles (with 87 participants)
- Education/Lifelong Learning (67 participants)
- Community Outreach Program: DJ Bingo and BBQ (50 participants)
- Congregate meal program (with 42 participants)

## POLICE DEPARTMENT

### Fill All Vacant Positions while Simultaneously Working Toward Creating a Diverse and Inclusive Workforce.

- Officer Isabela Acker and Officer Jack Akers graduated from the Mid-Michigan Police Academy in May and are currently in field training. Officer Acker received a sponsorship from MTPD to attend the academy.
- Recruitment of Danny Mora, Jacob Gonzalez and Natalie Tyndall to attend upcoming police academy with the intent to hire them.





**Begin Preparations for the 2022 MLEAC Re-Accreditation Assessment, Which Will Take Place in December 2022.**

- Assignment of co-accreditation manager Sergeant Curt Squires.
- Assignment of officers on each platoon to make efforts toward completing re-accreditation.



**Prepare Staff for Succession Due to Retirements or Promotions through Training and Mentoring.**

Continue to provide training to supervisors through Michigan State University School of Staff and Command and First Line Supervisor courses.

Provide Officers and Sergeants with other task specific leadership training to better prepare them for promotions.



**Assist the Parks Department with the deer management efforts to reduce property damage and traffic crashes.**

- Two Sergeants and six Officers participated in removing 200 deer from herds that affect high accident locations.
- Accidents involving deer reduced from 51 in the first six months of 2021 to 29 in the first six months of 2022.



## **Provide Leadership in the Law Enforcement Community through Involvement in Collaborative Professional Law Enforcement Training.**

- Partnered with area law enforcement agencies to develop a critical skills training. Meridian Township Police Department provides instructors to countywide training for officers in decision-making process.
- Involvement in Michigan State University School of Staff and Command and First Line Supervisor schools as class facilitators and receiving free training for our officers in these classes.
- Involvement in countywide use of force instructor development course, to provide additional training to our use of force instructors.
- Early discussion regarding a large-scale AVI training in October involving law enforcement, fire, EMS, schools, tow companies, and many others. The intent of the training will be to bring the full scope of an AVI situation to light from many perspectives, identifying any area that needs to be improved.

## **PUBLIC WORKS & ENGINEERING**

### **2021, 2022 and 2023 Township Road Program**

We are nearly finished completing our 2021 reconstruction projects. We are finishing four 2021 roads located in White Hills Lakes: Pine Hollow Dr., Fenwick Ct., Mereford Ct., and Overglen Ct. This work began on June 6, 2022.

Our 2022 milling road projects (i.e. reconstruction) have begun, with the addition of the 1.03 miles thanks to the Board's appropriation of \$1.3 million of ARP funding for the Local Road Program. Adding the additional 1.03 miles to the 2022 local road program will save the Township considerable resources as these road projects won't be subject to 2023 inflation. We experienced 45% inflation per mile from 2021 to 2022 for reconstruction projects.

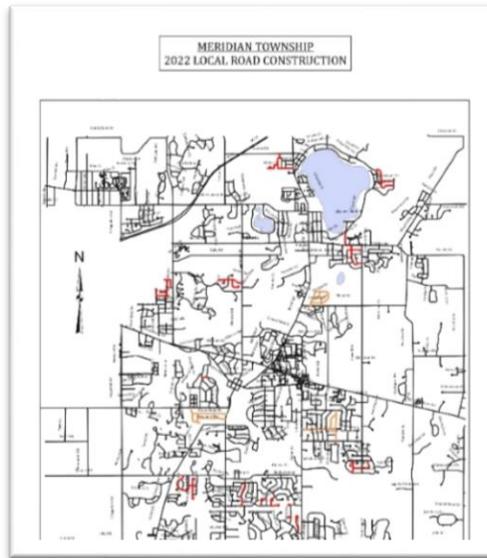
We did not complete any of the 2021 preventative maintenance road projects last year. We were able to get our 2021 preventative maintenance contractor to take on our 2022 projects at the same cost as their 2021 bid. This will save the Township considerable resources by avoiding inflationary costs over the past year and help get us back on schedule.

The 2021 and 2022 crack seal work on all of our roads and trails will be completed by early July. 2021 and 2022 cape sealing work will be completed in August and September. These will be the first cape seal projects the Township has done.

We are in final review of our 2022 crush-and-shape road bid with the Ingham County Road Department. This requires more engineering work due to the storm water drainage component of roads that do not have curb and gutter. We are also working to disconnect sump pumps from the sanitary sewer system and connect them to the storm drain system as part of our Timberlane St. Project, which requires additional engineering work for this bid. Once this RFP is completed in one to two weeks, we will have our 10-year road program back on schedule.

We are finalizing a list of 2023 road projects to begin engineering work on so we can bid them in November when we expect to get the lowest bids. The final list of roads will then be announced publicly in December or January.





### **Daniels Drain Update**

After 19 public meetings were held since 2015, we finalized the Daniels Drain Drainage Project Special Assessment Roll on May 3, 2022 with the Board's adoption. We conducted about 80 one-on-one meetings with residents, and responded to hundreds of phone calls and emails, regarding prospective assessments for the Daniels Drain project since November of 2021.

We received and completed a FOIA request for all eight years of documents and communications regarding the Daniels Drain.

We received one appeal of the Daniels Drain Drainage Project Special Assessment Roll and are in the process of preparing for this appeal.

### **Chapter 20 Drain Conversion**

We have held two meetings with the Ingham County Drain Commission office regarding converting our Chapter 20 drains to Chapter 3, 4 or 8 drains. We are currently having internal discussions about the pros and cons of converting our Chapter 20 drains.

It is clear that the Board would lose any and all authority to petition, or not petition, drain improvements for Chapter 20 drains if we convert them. Meaning the Board would no longer be able to prevent drain improvements it deems as unnecessary. If the Board converts the Chapter 20 drains, this authority would be solely held by the Ingham County Drain Commissioner.

We are working to determine what controls we would have over the Chapter 20 drains moving forward, outside of choosing to petition or not petition the improvements, if we were to keep them as Chapter 20 drains.

### **2022 Solar Project**

The RFP to construct two 20 kW solar arrays on the carports at the public safety building was successful.

We received two bids, one of which came in under the budgeted amount of \$100,000. We just received the signed contract back from the winning bidder and held a pre-construction meeting with the contractor.

Construction is scheduled to begin in early September and will take an estimated 1-2 weeks to complete.

This is the Township's fourth consecutive year of completing a solar project to help us meet our goal of 100% renewable energy use by 2035.

### **Grand River Ave Project**

We successfully completed our water main work in conjunction with the Grand River Ave construction project at the end of March.

### **Successfully Negotiated a Letter of Agreement with the Department of Public Works and the Department of Parks and Recreation Technical, Professional and Officeworkers Association of Michigan (TPOAM)**

This process was collaborative and helped build trust and relationships. It has also raised morale across the union.

This letter of agreement (LOA) is designed to compensate our lead workers appropriately for their supervisory responsibilities. Under this letter of agreement, effective March 17, 2022, lead workers will receive a \$4.81 hourly wage increase, which amounts to \$10,000 annually.

This letter of agreement is also designed to help compensate and incentivize our Department of Public Works and Department of Parks and Recreation employees for serving on-call and responding to emergencies after-hours. Our employees sign up to serve on-call for one-week shifts throughout the year. They are paid a \$250 stipend for serving an on-call shift and receive an additional \$100 for holiday weeks. This LOA increases the stipend to \$300 per week, \$400 for holiday weeks. It also establishes a new \$40 stipend for each after-hours response.

### **Okemos Road Bridge Project**

On March 2, 2022, the Ingham County Road Department informed the Township that the Okemos Road Bridge Project was one month behind due to delays caused by AT&T relocating their utilities. We worked with the Ingham County Road Department on a plan to get the project back on schedule, which the Board approved.

The plan allowed for work, only on this specific project, between 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. (i.e. the normal hours we permit construction work Monday through Saturday under our ordinance), on Sundays, but not holidays, until May 23, 2022.

This helped the contractor to meet EGLE's May 1 deadline for removal of old abutments and piers, as well as, installation of new abutments. It will also allow the bridge deck to be poured during the proper conditions for the concrete to cure.

We hope the project will stay on schedule and the new bridge will open in late November.



### **North Water Tower Construction Project**

The preventative maintenance of the north water tower was recently completed, as well as, two rounds of testing of the water quality. Both tests were negative.

The north water tower will become operational again on June 27, 2022. Our new Township brand is prominently displayed on the north water tower facing east and west traffic on Saginaw Hwy (M-78).

We thank the Board for waiving our ordinance prohibiting Sunday construction hours to get the North Water Tower operational again in the shorten timeframe possible.



### **Meridian Township Recycling Center Update**

We continue to work internally on a long-term solution to our transfer and recycling center. We submitted a grant application to EGLE on April 20 for a new recycling center located behind the Service Center.

We also completed 2022 grading work on the service drive to the transfer and recycling center. The service drive is in much better condition.

### **MSU to Lake Lansing Trail Update**

We have completed all land acquisition for the MSU to Lake Lansing trail with the acquisition earlier this year at the south end of Dawn Ave.

We have also completed the tree removal for Phase 1 of the MSU to Lake Lansing Trail.

We are currently going through the final review of the engineering plans for Phase I with MDOT. We must secure MDOT's approval of the engineering plans because they administer the federal TAP grant that is funding \$1.7 million, or 56.67%, of Phase I of the MSU to Lake Lansing trail.

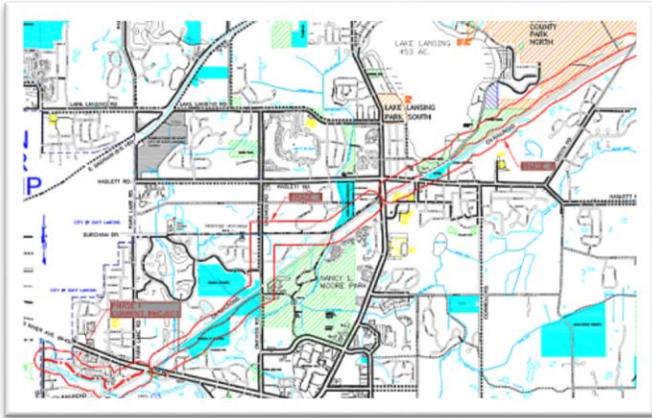
Here is a breakdown of the funding sources for Phase I of the MSU to Lake Lansing Trail:

1. \$1.7 million (TAP Grant)
2. \$950,000 (County Trails and Parks Millage)
3. \$350,000 (Township Pathway Millage)

We expect the bids to come in higher than our estimates and will work with the County to secure any remaining funding that is needed.

Once we have MDOT's approval, we will bid Phase I of the project, which is the most difficult to construct as it includes the bridge over the Red Cedar River behind the MSU Music School on Hagadorn Rd and the trail along the north side of the river to Grand River Ave.

We are working to complete the Phase II engineering plans. We are also in the process of securing the easement from Consumer's Energy for use of their right-of-way for Phase III of the MSU to Lake Lansing Trail.

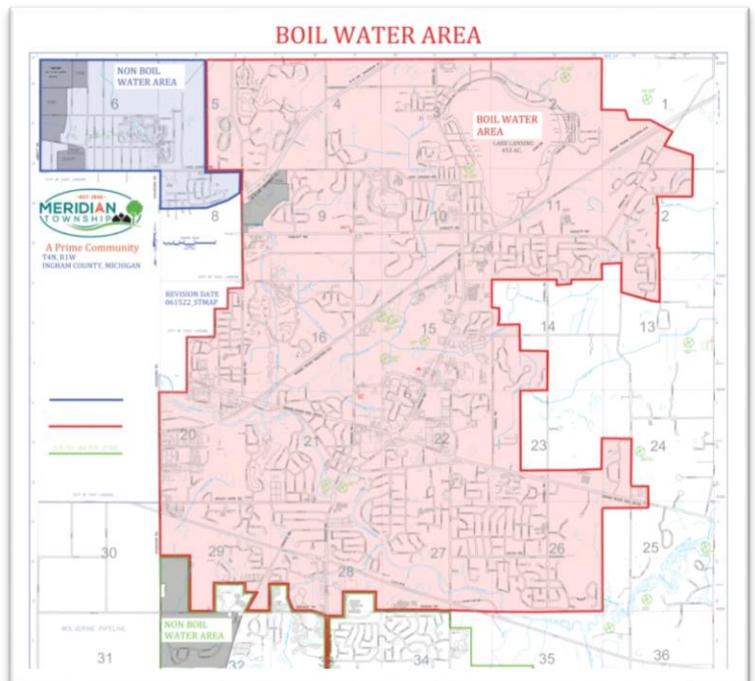


**Water Main Break at Haslett and Park Lake Roads**

One of the worst water main breaks the Township has ever experienced occurred on June 23 at 10:03 a.m. when our 24 inch water main running parallel to Park Lake Rd began to separate at the northwest corner of Park Lake and Haslett Roads due to road construction to widen the intersection to add dedicated left turn lanes to Haslett Rd.

The water main break was caused by the excavation of virgin soils acting as a thrust block to a 45 degree turn in our water main. When the road contractor excavated these soils, the bell and spigot began to separate at this 45 degree turn due to the pressure in the water main. However, the bolts held which prevented the main break from further depressurizing the Township’s water distribution system.

When reports first began coming in, we immediately activated our crews and our emergency contractor. We were able to restore water to all customers in 23 minutes by closing the valves to the north and south of the main break in concert with the East Lansing Meridian Water & Sewer Authority (ELMWSA).



We then worked with ELMWSA to determine which zones of the Township were impacted and produced a map to communicate this information and issue the boil water advisory by 12:26 p.m.

We then answered hundreds of phone calls and emails to address any and all concerns that residents had regarding the water main break. The boil water advisory was lifted on June 25 at 5:30 p.m. after both rounds of testing came back negative for microbial contamination.

Emergency repairs were completed on the water main by Friday at 7 a.m. (less than 24 hours). We poured concrete at the 45 degree turn in our water main to act as a new thrust block and prevent another contractor from removing the thrust block in the future. Our system functions perfectly fine with this section of water main isolated and out of service. Therefore, we gave the concrete the full weekend to cure before putting this section of water main back into service on June 27.

We will learn from this experience and work to get more residents subscribed to the Township’s emergency alert system (i.e. Everbridge). We currently have about 7,300 subscribers. We will look to increase this number by adding how and why residents should subscribe to our website, water bills and in other Township resources so more residents receive direct email and text alerts the next time we have an emergency.

### **Customer Service**

As always, we continue to work diligently to address all inquiries from residents, which ranged from 2 p.m. water main breaks, to getting a “Do Not Block the Intersection” sign installed for the Sylvan Glen neighborhood off of Dobie Rd, to making sure the Daniels Drain

## **PROJECT MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS**

### **Township Sign Project**

We have a completed sign plan with corresponding draft RFP for the Municipal Complex, Central Park, Central Park South, Historical Village, Marketplace on the Green, Towner Road Park, Newton Road Park and the four welcoming signs at the borders of our Township.



We own the parcel for the northern welcoming sign on Marsh Road. This is the parcel where our existing welcoming sign is located. We are working to secure easements for the east, west and south welcoming signs. Letters have gone out to the property owners of our three desired locations and we have conversed with each of the owners. We are hoping to have the easements secured soon.

In May, we submitted an application with the Planning Commission for a special use permit for our digital message board signs, going in at the Municipal Building and Marketplace on the Green. Our application was approved at the June 13<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **Okemos Library Roof Project**

The draft RFP is nearly completed, we are working to input the technical specifications needed.

## Computer Replacement Project

Along with the IT Department, we have been researching our options for computer replacements. At this point, we are gathering pricing information for both purchasing and leasing desktop and laptop units. It is our goal to improve the process in which we phase out computers and lessen the number of computers that lie dormant in storage after being phased out.

## Broadband & Fiber Upgrades

With help from Director Gebes and the IT Department, we are working to upgrade our broadband and fiber connections at all Township facilities. These upgrades coincide with the upgrades recommended by Brightline in their assessment.

## Railroad Quiet Zones

We have a meeting scheduled with OHM, the consultants we are using to walk us through the process of implementing railroad quiet zones, primarily the CN crossing on Okemos Road. At this meeting, we will be discussing the scope of the work and outlining responsibilities.

## Staff Directory

With the assistance of the Communications Department, a staff directory was published and distributed on June 2. After listening sessions provided feedback that employees would like a directory with employee pictures listed, headshots were scheduled with each department. We had an employee participation rate of 85% in getting photos taken for the directory.

Any updated information received when compiling contact information for the staff directory will be used to update the staff directory located on our website. These changes should be made by the end of July.

