

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
TOWNSHIP BOARD JOINT MEETING - **APPROVED** –
PARK COMMISSION
PLANNING COMMISSION
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198
853-4000, Town Hall Room
TUESDAY, JANUARY 4, 2011 **6:00 P.M.**

TOWNSHIP BOARD

PRESENT: Supervisor McGillicuddy, Clerk Helmbrecht, Treasurer Brixie, Trustees LeGoff,
Ochberg, Veenstra (6:09 P.M.)
ABSENT: Trustee Dreyfus

PARK COMMISSION

PRESENT: Chair Banas, Commissioners Dersch, Wilson
ABSENT: Commissioners Aronoff, Stephens

PLANNING COMMISSION

PRESENT: Commissioners Beyea, Cordill, Deits, Goodale, Honicky, Jackson, Norkin, Scales
ABSENT: Commissioner Goldsberry

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

PRESENT: Chair Madle, Members Allen, Brixie, Ochberg, Richards, Vine, White
ABSENT: Members Barr, Ferguson, Morrison, Rowlee

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

PRESENT: Chair Hershiser, Members Beauchine, Jackson, Ohlrogge, Ochberg
ABSENT: Members Shoup, Sloan

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

PRESENT: Members Jackson, Kielbaso, Schools
ABSENT: Members Bagdasarian, Finley, Scherbarth, Thomas

LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD

PRESENT: Members Helmbrecht, Smith, Kielbaso
ABSENT: Chair Woiwode, Members Caszatt, Hatfield, Stephens, Webster

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

PRESENT: Chair White, Member Korrey
ABSENT: Executive Director Brake, Members Carpenter, Dale, Fisher, Raynak, Spanos, Weaver,
Wood

STAFF: Township Manager Gerald Richards, Director of Community Planning and Development
Mark Kieselbach, Director of Public Works and Engineering Ray Severy

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
Supervisor McGillicuddy called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
Supervisor McGillicuddy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

The secretary called the roll of the Board.

4. PUBLIC REMARKS

Supervisor McGillicuddy opened Public Remarks.

Fred Bell, 6306 Lake Drive, Haslett, noted his application has been submitted for reappointment to the Community Resources Commission.

Margo Smith, 1668 Fifth Avenue, Apartment B-1, Okemos, noted her application has been submitted for appointment to the Land Preservation Advisory Board. She stated she has an abiding interest in the environment and belongs to several environmental organizations.

Xavier Durrand-Hollis, 5358 Burcham Drive, East Lansing, noted his interest in being an active Township resident through service on a board or commission. He indicated his background is in the commercial insurance industry and believed an appointment to the Assessing Board of Review would be a good fit. Mr. Durand-Hollis listed several organizations of which he was a previous member and those to which he currently belongs.

Holly Cordill, 1484 Forest Hills Drive, Okemos, noted her application has been submitted for the Planning Commission, outlining her background in urban and regional planning as well as historic preservation. She highlighted her service on the City of Lansing's Planning Board for approximately eight years.

Keith Simons, 5385 Blue Haven Drive, East Lansing, noted his interest in being an active Township resident through service on a board or commission. He indicated he is a certified professional engineer specializing in traffic operations and road design.

Sarah Finley, 3985 Windy Heights Drive, Okemos, expressed interest in serving on either the Environmental Commission or Planning Commission, noting her background in horticulture and science communication.

Jan Criss, 2154 Riverwood Drive, Okemos, noted her application has been submitted for appointment to the Elected Official Compensation Commission. She indicated she is a retired high school business teacher with extensive experience as the head of finance for multiple organizations in which she has had membership.

Paula Johnson, 3758 Chippendale Circle, Okemos, noted her application has been submitted for appointment to the Elected Official Compensation Commission. She indicated she served as the Ingham County Register of Deeds for 32 years prior to retirement and brings a wealth of knowledge to the position.

Milton Scales, 1534 Downing Street, Haslett, noted his application has been submitted for appointment to the Planning Commission. He listed his service in state and local government, the vast majority as a conservation officer in the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) and the Department of Natural Resources and Energy (DNRE). Mr. Scales indicated the last 15 years of public service was spent as the Director of Criminal Investigations for MDEQ. Since retirement in 2010, he stated he is a political science teacher at Saginaw State University. Mr. Scales offered a long list of education and experience.

Ody Norkin, 3803 Sandalwood, Okemos, noted his application has been submitted for appointment to the Planning Commission. He indicated he is currently Vice-President of Michigan Flyer Motor Coach Company, promoting use of mass transit.

Supervisor McGillicuddy closed Public Remarks.

5. REPORTS/BOARD COMMENT/NEW WORRIES

A. Awards for Public Service

Supervisor McGillicuddy presented awards for public service to Planning Commissioner Dave Reicosky, Zoning Board of Appeals member Steve Stier and acknowledged awards would be mailed to Elected Officials Compensation Commission member Harold Schmidt, Planning Commissioners Tamara Jorkasky and Carole Wilcox, and Land Preservation Advisory Board member Mike Thomas.

Trustee Veenstra reported his attendance at the December 16, 2010 Tri County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC) meeting where the Commission approved the hiring of Susan Pigg as the new Executive Director of TCRPC.

6. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Treasurer Brixie moved to approve the agenda as submitted. Seconded by Clerk Helmbrecht.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 6-0.

7. CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor McGillicuddy reviewed the consent agenda.

Treasurer Brixie moved to adopt the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Trustee Ochberg.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees LeGoff, Ochberg, Veenstra, Supervisor McGillicuddy,
Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Helmbrecht

NAYS: None

Motion carried 6-0.

8. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY (None)

In response to allegations from a representative of Michigan Open Carry, Trustee Ochberg requested the Township Attorney research the legality of the Township's current restrictions for carrying weapons in public parks.

Supervisor McGillicuddy announced she had already forwarded this issue to the Township Attorney and is awaiting a response.

9. ACTION ITEMS

A. Appointments to Boards and Commissions

Trustee Ochberg moved to adopt the Supervisor's recommendations and proposed changes for appointments to boards and commissions.

Trustee Veenstra moved to vote on each appointment on an individual basis. Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.

Without objection, the Board consented to vote on each appointment on an individual basis.

Trustee Veenstra moved to appoint Keith Simons and Xavier Durand-Hollis to the Board of Review for two-year terms ending December 31, 2012. Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 6-0.

Trustee Ochberg moved to appoint Patrick Crowley to the Cable Communications Commission for a three-year term ending December 31, 2013. Seconded by Trustee LeGoff.

Treasurer Brixie moved to table this appointment until the Board receives more information from other applicants which may be coming forward. Seconded by Trustee Veenstra.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 6-0.

Trustee Veenstra moved to appoint Fred Bell to the Community Resources Commission for a two (2) year term ending December 31, 2012. Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 6-0.

Trustee Veenstra moved to appoint Sherry Fisher to the Downtown Development Authority Board for a four-year term ending December 31, 2014. Seconded by Trustee Ochberg.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 6-0.

Trustee Veenstra moved to appoint Paula Johnson to the Elected Officials Compensation Commission to fill a vacancy created by resignation for a term ending December 31, 2011. Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 6-0.

Clerk Helmbrecht moved to appoint Jan Criss to the Elected Officials Compensation Commission for a five-year term ending December 31, 2015. Seconded by Supervisor McGillicuddy.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 6-0.

Trustee Veenstra moved to appoint Michael Thomas to the Environmental Commission for a three-year term ending December 31, 2013. Seconded by Trustee Ochberg.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 6-0.

Trustee Ochberg moved to appoint Sarah Finley to the Environmental Commission for a three-year term ending December 31, 2013. Seconded by Supervisor McGillicuddy.

Treasurer Brixie moved to table this appointment until the Board receives more information from other applicants who may be applying for both the Environmental Commission and the Planning Commission. Seconded by Trustee Veenstra.

VOICE VOTE: Motion failed 3-3 (LeGoff, Ochberg, McGillicuddy)

VOICE VOTE ON THE MAIN MOTION: Motion carried 6-0.

Trustee Ochberg moved to appoint Margo Smith to the Land Preservation Advisory Board for a four-year term ending December 31, 2014. Seconded by Supervisor McGillicuddy.

Treasurer Brixie moved to table this appointment until the Board receives more information from other applicants. Seconded by Trustee Veenstra.

VOICE VOTE: Motion failed 3-3 (LeGoff, Ochberg, McGillicuddy)

VOICE VOTE ON THE MAIN MOTION: Motion carried 6-0.

Treasurer Brixie moved to appoint Susan Elder to the Pension Board for a three-year term ending December 31, 2013. Seconded by Trustee Veenstra.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 6-0.

Trustee Ochberg moved to appoint Milton Scales to the Planning Commission for a three-year term ending December 31, 2013. Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 6-0.

Treasurer Brixie moved to appoint Holly Cordill to the Planning Commission to fill a vacancy created by resignation for a term ending December 31, 2011. Seconded by Trustee Veenstra.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 6-0.

Trustee Ochberg moved to appoint Ody Norkin to the Planning Commission for a three-year term ending December 31, 2013. Seconded by Supervisor McGillicuddy.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 6-0.

Trustee Veenstra moved to appoint Matt Sloan to the Zoning Board of Appeals to fill a vacancy as Alternate #2 for a term ending December 31, 2011. Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 6-0.

Supervisor McGillicuddy recessed the meeting at 6:37 PM to allow newly appointed members to be sworn into office by Township Clerk Mary Helmbrecht.

Supervisor McGillicuddy reconvened the meeting at 6:47 PM.

10. VISION SESSION/ENDS: Joint Meeting with Township Boards and Commission
Supervisor McGillicuddy explained the purpose of the joint meeting was to promote alignment within our community among boards and commissions and to discuss future goals of each body. She requested the various Boards and commissions discuss 2010 accomplishments of the respective bodies, as well as goals for the ensuing year.

Meeting participants discussed the following goals, objectives and concerns as well as ideas for Board goals:

Environmental Commission:

- Role as educators to the public via Green Theme presentations
- Recognition of community members through Environmental Stewardship Awards
- Pseudo regulatory function to review wetland use permits
- Preparation of a phosphorus fertilizer brochure
- Improve understanding of and relationship with the Land Preservation process
- Review documents which created the Environmental Commission
- Consideration of coordinating activities with the professional environmental consultant in the review of wetland use permits
- Possible commission removal from its role in the wetland review process
- Board request for more publicity of the Green Theme presentations
- Board request for a copy of the Green Theme program schedule in the Township Board packets

Park Commission:

- Commission oversees a 910 acre park system
- Implementation of a newly drafted Five Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan once adopted
- Summary of findings from three community forums, community questionnaire and an on-line survey regarding the Township's park system
- Public hearings on the Master Plan will be held in February, 2011
- Completion of the North Meridian Road Park Restroom Facility by Fall, 2011
- Continued work on the design and construction of an Historical Village fishing dock in 2011
- Development of the Township's first dog park in Legg Park
- Continued work toward improving Towner Road Park targeted for a sports park
- Continued financial assistance from the Harris Nature Center's Foundation Board in launching a river overlook project
- Discussion of alternative funding methods with the failure of the Headlee override millage and its corresponding effect on general fund monies for the park system
- Relationship of the park system to Land Preservation properties, many of which border local parks
- Continued underfunding of Meridian Township's park system
- Measurable upswing in the number of park volunteers, who are acknowledged through Volunteer Recognition Awards

Downtown Development Authority (DDA):

- Vision for the future detailed in the DDA's 20 year finance plan
- Completion of installation of LED streetlights in downtown Okemos as part of the streetscape improvements
- Third annual art walk to be held in June, 2011
- Work toward designation of the Camelback Bridge as an historic site
- Improvement in the DDA's Facebook page
- Importance of a vibrant downtown to afford a sense of place in the community
- Implementation of a tree sculpture festival in conjunction with the current Earth Day Festival hosted by Douglas J
- Vision for future development of an Arts and Cultural Center

Economic Development Corporation (EDC):

- Strategic Long-Term Planning Meeting on January 13, 2011 at 3:00 PM facilitated by Susan Pigg
- Committee formed to conduct a feasibility study on the establishment of a Phase 2 incubator (e.g., wet lab), working with the City of East Lansing in a cost-sharing effort
- Accepting applications for the MARC Awards through the end of the week
- MARC Entrepreneur of the Year Awards to be held on January 27th

Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA):

- Outline of the process for cases which come before the ZBA for decisions
- Obtain accredited training specific to the Zoning Board of Appeals

Planning Commission:

- Appreciation to Planning Commission staff member for her excellent assistance in providing materials necessary for members in their deliberations
- Continue to focus development in the Township core to accomplish Township goals of sustainability, smart growth and walkability
- Use of the MUPUD ordinance to change the design of property located at Mt. Hope and Hagadorn Roads
- Continued work on a home-based business ordinance
- Worked on a wind energy ordinance
- Worked on a commercial planned unit development
- 2011 review of the amended MUPUD ordinance
- 2011 review of the Township's Master Plan
- Review of assumptions underlying the Master Plan as generational changes have occurred since its last review
- Focus on smart growth for the Township
- Need to address the medical marijuana issue

Board members discussed the following:

- Request to examine "town gathering" locations (e.g., town square, fountain) within the Township for possible inclusion in the Master Plan
- Request for examination of possible locations for universal accessibility to accommodate the aging community and keep it connected to the Township's natural environment when reviewing the Master Plan
- Cost of universal accessibility in Township parks
- Request to look at attracting youth to the community through the use of trails and pathways when reviewing the Master Plan
- Exploration of increased connectivity between Township parks and Land Preservation properties
- Consideration of higher density development along the Grand River Corridor (especially between Park Lake Road and just west of Northwind Drive) in the event the bus rapid transit system comes to fruition
- Need for greater access to and use of the Township's Land Preservation properties
- Suggestion to request the Land Preservation Advisory Board design primitive trail systems for Land Preservation properties

9. PUBLIC REMARKS

Supervisor McGillicuddy opened Public Remarks.

William Cleary, 1896 Danbury East, Okemos, spoke to the cost and maintenance of Land Preservation properties and suggested the Board refocus its priority on public safety.

Supervisor McGillicuddy closed Public Remarks.

10. FINAL BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Trustee Veenstra agreed that with the failure of the Headlee override millage, revenues will shrink in 2011 and 2012, while noting regulations cost money. He also spoke to excessive regulation as a restriction on citizens' liberties.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Supervisor McGillicuddy adjourned the meeting at 7:55 P.M.

SUSAN MCGILLICUDDY
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

MARY M. G. HELMBRECHT, CMC
TOWNSHIP CLERK

Sandra K. Otto, Secretary