

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
REGULAR MEETING TOWNSHIP BOARD -**APPROVED**-
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos MI 48864-1198
517.853.4000, Township Hall Room
Tuesday, November 12, 2024, 6:00 pm

PRESENT: Supervisor Hendrickson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee McCurtis,
Trustee Sundland, Trustee Wilson, Trustee Trezise

ABSENT: NONE

STAFF: Interim Manager Schmitt, Deputy Manager Opsommer, Chief Hamel, Manager Diehl,
Chief Grillo, Marketing & PR specialist Stohlin

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Supervisor Hendrickson called the November 12, 2024, Regular Township Board meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS

Supervisor Hendrickson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Supervisor Hendrickson asked for a moment of silence in memory of Auden Robison.

3. ROLL CALL

Clerk Guthrie called the roll of the Board. Supervisor Hendrickson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee McCurtis, Trustee Wilson, and Trustee Trezise present at 6:02 pm.

4. PRESENTATION

A. Pancake Breakfast

Ted Ferris, representing Boy Scouts of America, along with Fire Fighter Amanda Arnett and Fire Fighter Nate Lafayette presented checks to Muscular Dystrophy Association and Boy Scouts of America. Troops #97, #164, #125, and Pack #264 were present and received recognition for their fundraising efforts.

B. Volunteers of the Year Recognition

Deputy Manager Opsommer honored ZBA Chairperson Alexia Mansour for her service to the community. Chair Mansour thanked the Deputy Manager Opsommer and the Board for their recognition and support.

Interim Manager Schmitt honored Environmental Commission Chairperson and Planning Commission Member Dr. Bill McConnell for his service to the community. Chair McConnell thanked Interim Manager Schmitt and the Board for their recognition and support.

C. Senior/Community Center Task Force Update

Josh Robertson, task force member, gave an overview of the task force's work to date. Preliminary site review and have narrowed list of ten to three choices. The first choice is to utilize the space the Township owns behind Central Fire Station and is favored for proximity to current infrastructure. The second choice is 1410 Grand River Ave which would need to be purchased by the Township and is favored for the ability for expansion and additional park space. The third choice is the former Younkers site at Meridian Mall because some work has already been put into this location.

D. Warning Sirens

Chief Hamel gave an update on the now completed project. He thanked the Board for their support, thanked West Shore for installation, thanked Consumers Energy for donating the sirens, and thanked Director Massie for taking on the project during his leave of absence.

E. Tribute of Appreciation for Clerk Deborah Guthrie

Supervisor Hendrickson thanked Clerk Deborah Guthrie for 22 years of service to the Township, including 4 years of service on the Board. Clerk Guthrie thanked Supervisor Hendrickson and the Board for their recognition.

F. Tribute of Appreciation for Trustee James McCurtis

Supervisor Hendrickson thanked Trustee James McCurtis for his long-time service to the community as well as for his short but necessary tenure on the Township Board. Trustee McCurtis thanked Supervisor Hendrickson and the Board for their recognition.

5. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Supervisor Hendrickson opened comments from the public at 6:48 pm.

Supervisor Hendrickson closed comments from the public at 6:49 pm.

6. INTERIM TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

Interim Manager Schmitt gave updates about the following:

- Director Massie and Chief Hamel are working on a community AED project that has been presented to the EDC and will be presented to the Board at a future meeting.
- Alaeidon Township Building Services contract is being completed and will be presented to the board at a future meeting.
- New Chief Building Official position has been posted as current Official John Heckaman is planning to retire.
- Plante Moran is working through the absence of a Finance Director.
- Farmers Market 50th anniversary mural dedication on Nov 23rd before the market.
- New Parks Commission and Board Members will be sworn in in on the 20th at noon.
- Thanked Clerk Guthrie and Trustee McCurtis for their service.

7. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS OF ACTIVITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Trustee Wilson updated the Board regarding the CRC. The CRC received \$10,000 amendment to budget to support needs in the community, the total budget has largely been spent helping residents, and they are currently seeking contributions to the Holiday Basket program to serve 280 families.

Treasurer Deschaine thanked the Scouting USA volunteers, Chair Mansour, Chair McConnell, Chair Guthrie, and Trustee McCurtis for their respective services to the community.

Trustee Sundland updated the Board regarding the EDC. The EDC discussed the Heart Safe project Interim Manager Schmitt mentioned with reference to the AED project and the EDC is sponsoring the Lunar New Year celebration at Meridian Mall.

Clerk Guthrie highlighted the Resolution in Support of Native American History Month that appears on the consent agenda and directed residents to the Nokomis Cultural Center's website to learn more about local Native American culture and offer support. She gave an update about the election expressing her appreciation to election staff for managing over 14,500 absent ballots and thousands of in-person voters. 84% of Meridian Township voters participated in the November General election. She gave an overview of how she and Clerk-elect Demas will manage the transition of leadership.

Trustee Trezise thanked Clerk Guthrie for her work on elections, highlighting the work done to set up and operate a satellite office at MSU.

Supervisor Hendrickson noted that the contract with Harkness Law Firm will be up for review soon and noted the positive momentum of Senior/Community Center project. He thanked Chair Mansour and Chair McConnell for their respective services to the community.

8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve the Agenda. Supported by Trustee McCurtis.

VOICE VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Hendrickson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee McCurtis, Trustee Sundland Trustee Wilson, Trustee Trezise

NAYS: NONE

Motion carried: 7-0

9. CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor Hendrickson listed the items on the agenda.

Treasurer Deschaine requested that the old format of the Investment Report be added to the packet alongside the new format that he included in the packet. He asked for feedback for the new format so he can work with the investment firm to refine the information.

Trustee Trezise asked for clarification for the location of the Board retreat.

Trustee Trezise moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Supported by Trustee McCurtis.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Hendrickson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee McCurtis, Trustee Sundland Trustee Wilson, Trustee Trezise

NAYS: NONE

Motion carried: 7-0

10. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY

NONE

11. HEARINGS

NONE

12. ACTION ITEMS

A. Williamstown Township Police Agreement

Chief Grillo gave an overview of the contract. This contract has negotiated additional staffing hours to reflect the additional capacity of the Meridian Township Police Department.

Trustee Wilson asked if Chief Grillo has spoken with the new Williamstown Township Supervisor and if he anticipated any changes because of their change in leadership. Chief Grillo indicated that he expected no changes.

Trustee Trezise moved to approve the agreement to continue providing law enforcement services to Williamstown Township beginning January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2027 for emergency and non-emergency responses outside the 60 hours of weekly patrol and to authorize the Supervisor and Clerk to sign the agreement. Supported by Trustee Wilson.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Hendrickson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee McCurtis, Trustee Sundland Trustee Wilson, Trustee Trezise

NAYS: NONE

Motion carried: 7-0

B. PA 152 Health Care Costs

Interim Manager Schmitt gave an overview of the discussion that has occurred to date. He reminded the Board that the discussion can be brought back annually if the financial situation changes.

Treasurer Deschaine asked to abstain from the vote because, as a Township employee, he is directly affected by the vote.

Trustee Trezise voiced his support because this appears to be a one-time commitment and it helps to protect the employees. Supervisor Hendrickson concurred.

Trustee Wilson moved to approve the resolution to adopt the annual exemption option (Section 8) set forth in 2011 Public Act 152, the publicly funded Health Insurance Contribution Act. Supported by Trustee Sundland.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Hendrickson, Clerk Guthrie, Trustee McCurtis, Trustee Sundland Trustee Wilson, Trustee Trezise

NAYS: NONE

ABSTAIN: Treasurer Deschaine

Motion carried: 6-0

C. Township Manager Performance Review Process

Supervisor Hendrickson outlined the discussion that has occurred to date. He noted that the collective bargaining units have been presented with the process document and have voiced no concerns.

Trustee Trezise thanked Supervisor Hendrickson and Director Tithof for the work they have done, noting that no review processes are perfect but that this process appears to be very good. Trustee McCurtis concurred.

Clerk Guthrie commended the document and process, and commented that she would like the other work that has been done on the personnel policy be presented similarly to the board.

Trustee McCurtis moved to approve the manager review process as presented and adopt the Township Manager review form as presented. Supported by Trustee Trezise.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Hendrickson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee McCurtis, Trustee Sundland Trustee Wilson, Trustee Trezise

NAYS: NONE

Motion carried: 7-0

D. CATA Redi-Ride Millage

Treasurer Deschaine gave an overview of the discussion that has occurred with CATA leadership and detailed the information in the documents he's asked to be added to the packet. CATA leadership has indicated that they no longer need to assess the Redi-Ride millage, can still provide the same services to Meridian Township residents without the millage, and has offered legal documentation to support their decision.

Trustee Wilson asked if there would be a formal letter. She expressed her concern that this is not a formal agreement. Treasurer Deschaine explained that legal council does not require a letter, the information provided is sufficient.

Trustee Trezise moved to suspend rules to take action tonight. Supported by Treasurer Deschaine.

VOICE VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Hendrickson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee McCurtis, Trustee Sundland Trustee Wilson, Trustee Trezise

NAYS: NONE

Motion carried: 7-0

Trustee Trezise moved that the Meridian Township Board removes the CATA Redi-Ride millage of approximately 0.1971 mills from the Winter 2024 Tax Roll. Supported by Treasurer Deschaine.

VOICE VOTE YEAS: Supervisor Hendrickson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee McCurtis, Trustee Sundland Trustee Wilson, Trustee Trezise

NAYS: NONE

Motion carried: 7-0

13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

NONE

14. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Supervisor Hendrickson opened comments from the public at 7:46 pm

Supervisor Hendrickson closed comments from the public at 7:46 pm

15. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Supervisor Hendrickson asked the Board if they had any objections to the Township Manager interviews being televised. There were no objections, however Trustee Trezise requested that interviewees be instructed to avoid watching interviews of other interviewees. Trustee Wilson asked if televising the meeting would violate confidentiality; Supervisor Hendrickson indicated that it would not.

16. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee McCurtis moved to adjourn. Seconded by Clerk Guthrie.

VOICE VOTE YEAS: Supervisor Hendrickson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee McCurtis, Trustee Sundland, Trustee Wilson, Trustee Trezise

NAYS: NONE

Motion carried: 7-0

The meeting adjourned at 7:49 pm.



Scott Hendrickson
Township Supervisor



Deborah Guthrie
Township Clerk