



AGENDA
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION –
REGULAR MEETING
March 5, 2025 7:00 PM

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
2. ROLL CALL
3. PRESENTATION
4. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS
5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
6. NEW BUSINESS
 - A. Financial Overview of Green Grants, 2021-2024
 - B. 2025 Green Grants
 - C. Resolution in Support of Meridian Township's FY26 CDS Grant Application
7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
8. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS
 - A. Staff (Update on Climate Sustainability Fund expenditures)
 - B. Liaisons:
 - Planning Commission
 - Land Preservation Advisory Board
 - Brownfield Redevelopment Authority
 - Parks Commission
 - C. Teams:
 - Energy Team
 - Green Team
 - Food & Composting Team
 - Green Burial Team
 - D. Haslett/Okemos High School
9. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC
10. OTHER MATTERS AND COMMISSIONER COMMENTS
11. ADJOURNMENT

Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Meridian Township Board by contacting: Township Manager Tim Dempsey, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 or 517.853.4258 - Ten Day Notice is Required.

Meeting Location: 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 Township Hall

Providing a safe and welcoming, sustainable, prime community.



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CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
REGULAR MEETING ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION -**DRAFT**-
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos MI 48864-1198
517.853.4000, Township Hall Room
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2025, 7:00PM

PRESENT: Bill McConnell, Cynthia Peterson, Tom Frazier, Yu Man Lee, Richard Miksicek,
Harrison Batten, and Nickolas Lentz

ABSENT: Laura Belisle, John Sarver

STAFF: LeRoy Harvey, Environmental Program Coordinator

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair McConnell called the February 5, 2025, Township Environmental Commission meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

2. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

No public comment.

3. CHANGES TO/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Without objection, the agenda was approved unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

McConnell requested that the minutes be amended, under the Energy Team report, in order to clarify that the Aldi solar array and the movement in the city of East Lansing to consider banning gas combustion leaf blowers are two separate issues.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Without objection, the minutes of the January 8, 2025 meeting, as amended, were approved unanimously.

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. Presentation by Harrison Batten: Student Earth Club Report

Commissioner Batten gave a presentation regarding the Haslett Elementary Earth Clubs. The Ralya Elementary Earth Club started in 2022. The Murphy Elementary Earth Club started in 2023. Commissioner Batten has been attending their meetings. Both clubs are seeing increases in applicants each year. Membership is currently being capped at 25-30 students per club. There are activities that are planned to accompany each lesson plan, which helps the students better understand the subject matter being discussed. Some examples of lesson plans that have been used thus far include: recycling versus upcycling, layers of the earth, and types of soils. Student leaders are chosen through the Haslett High School Sustainability Club.

Trustee Lentz asked how many applications are typically received. Commissioner Batten stated that there are more applicants than there are available spaces in the clubs. Commissioner Batten reported that there were approximately 40 applicants this year for Murphy Elementary.

Commissioner Sarver asked about the age range of participating students. Commissioner Batten stated that Murphy Elementary is grades 2-5.

Commissioner Miksicek asked how many high school students are participating. Commissioner Batten reported that it was three students in prior years, but this year there are four high school students participating in total.

Chair McConnell asked what resources are used to develop the lesson plans. Commissioner Batten reported that the AP Environmental Science class and that some of the student leaders have taken lessons and ideas from that class and simplified the lesson plans for the Elementary Earth Clubs. The high school leaders have also used online resources for ideas and lesson plans.

Chair McConnell asked how the program is being funded. Commissioner Batten stated that the school district does provide funding for the Elementary Earth Clubs. Their annual budget is about \$200 per club. Chair McConnell stated that Green Grants might be able to help support the efforts of the Elementary Earth Clubs.

Chair McConnell asked if field trips have been planned for the Elementary Earth Clubs. Commissioner Batten stated that this has been discussed, but no field trips have been scheduled yet. Chair McConnell suggested that land preserves and the Harris Nature Center could be Township resources that are used to help support the Elementary Earth Clubs.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Greenspace Plan

Chair McConnell provided an update that the Commission is still waiting on information from Township staff to continue their review of the Greenspace Plan.

B. Climate Sustainability Planning

Commissioner Lee gave an overview of the spreadsheet that was developed to organize and assign various areas to track implementation of the Climate Sustainability Plan.

Chair McConnell expressed a desire to assign one Commissioner as the lead on each of the tasks. Chair McConnell stated he would speak to Commissioner Sarver about being responsible for the energy efficiency and renewable energy sections and invited Commissioner Frazier to take responsibility for the recycling and waste reduction sections.

Commissioner Lee stated she would be willing to take the water and green infrastructure sections.

Commissioner Peterson was assigned healthy food systems.

Trustee Lentz expressed a desire to take the transportation and electric vehicle sections.

Commissioner Miksicek expressed a desire to take the decreasing organic waste and organic waste conversion sections.

Commissioners discussed various approaches that could be utilized to track and monitor the various objectives and Commissioner Le stated she would work on making these changes in the spreadsheet.

C. Other

No discussion.

7. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Staff

LeRoy Harvey and Commissioner Frazier highlighted the 2025 Green Events Guide, which includes one event each month from February to September.

Harvey highlighted that he would be contacting prospective sponsors for 2025.

Commissioner Lentz was recently appointed to the Mid-Michigan Environmental Action Council Board of Directors.

Harvey gave a recap of an earlier presentation of the 2024 Green Grant awardees.

Chair McConnell requested a list and accounting of the Green Grants from 2021-2024.

B. Liaisons

Chair McConnell gave an update on relevant issues that are currently coming before the Planning Commission, including a request to rezone a property on Dobie Road and a proposed day care in the Old English Estates neighborhood.

Trustee Lentz encouraged everyone to take some time to review the Township's 2024 Annual Report and noted that he was appointed as the Township Board's new liaison to the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission.

Chair McConnell encouraged all commissioners to attend the Joint Township Board & Commission meeting on February 11, 2025 at 6:00 pm.

Chair McConnell stated that he has had conversations with the chair of the Township Park Commission about establishing liaisons between the two bodies and asked any interested Commissioners to let him know if they would like to serve as a liaison to the Park Commission.

C. Teams

Harvey stated that Commissioner Sarver stated that 25 solar systems were installed in the Township in 2024. There are currently 182 solar systems in the Township.

Commissioner Lee asked about the possibility of graphing quantities at the Township's recycling events. Harvey responded that he believes we have data for the previous 10

years.

Commissioner Frazier stated that the Green Burial Team recently met with a sexton from a cemetery to obtain additional information and that the Green Burial Team is working to finalize a presentation to provide to the Township Board.

D. Haslett/Okemos High School

Commissioner Batten stated that there has been a lot of interest in the Haslett School District Sustainability Team, which includes representation from staff, the administration, and students. There was also a recent meeting with DeWitt's Sustainability Team to explore ways that the two districts could collaborate.

E. Other

No reports.

8. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

No public comment.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 pm.



To: Environmental Commission

**From: Dan Opsommer, Deputy Township Manager
Director of Public Works and Engineering**

Date: February 24, 2025

Re: Financial Overview of Green Grants, 2021-2024

Attached to this cover memorandum, Commissioners will find a spreadsheet that lists all of the Green Grant awards since the inception of this program in 2021.

As of the date of this cover memo, the attached spreadsheet details the grant recipient, the year the grant was awarded, the award amount, the amount paid out to the recipient, remaining funds, and if the project has been completed or is still in progress.

We look forward to giving the Commission a financial overview of the Green Grants from 2021-2024.

Attachments:

- 1. Financial Overview of Green Grants, 2021-2024**

Green Grant Awards						Cumulative Data By Year			
Recipient	Year	Award Amount	Amount Paid	Remaining Funds	Project Status	Year	Award Amount	Amount Paid	Remaining Funds
Haslett Beautification Association	2024	\$300.00	\$150.00	\$150.00	In-Progress	2024	\$19,980.00	\$11,102.50	\$8,877.50
Haslett Child Development Center	2024	\$1,660.00	\$830.00	\$830.00	In-Progress	2023	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$0.00
Haslett Commnity Church	2024	\$4,325.00	\$2,172.50	\$2,152.50	In-Progress	2022	\$9,500.00	\$9,500.00	\$0.00
Mid-Michigan Environmental Action Council	2024	\$2,750.00	\$1,375.00	\$1,375.00	In-Progress	2021	\$9,956.00	\$9,952.36	\$3.64
Mid-Michigan Land Conservancy	2024	\$700.00	\$350.00	\$350.00	In-Progress				
Montessori Radmoor School	2024	\$7,745.00	\$3,725.00	\$4,020.00	In-Progress	Totals:	\$49,436.00	\$40,554.86	\$8,881.14
Environmental Law Institute	2024	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	Complete				
Pine Creek Condo Association/Reclaimed by Design	2024	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	Complete				
Cornell Woods Association Inc	2023	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	Complete				
Environmental Law Institute	2023	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	Complete				
Meridian Garden Club/Ralya Elementary School	2023	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$0.00	Complete				
Montessori Radmoor School	2023	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	Complete				
Presbyterian Church of Okemos	2023	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	Complete				
Capital Area District Library	2022	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	Complete				
Haslett Commnity Church	2022	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$0.00	Complete				
Montessori Radmoor School	2022	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	Complete				
Okemos Public Schools Montessori	2022	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	Complete				
Haslett Middle School	2021	\$3,960.00	\$3,960.00	\$0.00	Complete				
Montessori Radmoor School	2021	\$5,996.00	\$5,992.36	\$3.64	Complete				
		Totals: \$49,436.00	\$40,554.86	\$8,881.14					



6.B

To: Environmental Commission

**From: Dan Opsommer, Deputy Township Manager
Director of Public Works and Engineering**

Date: February 28, 2025

Re: 2025 Green Grants

Staff would like to start the 2025 Green Grant process by review the current draft materials for the Green Grants program and work with the Environmental Commission to make our processes more structured in 2025.

My intention is that this will be a brainstorming session where we all come together to discuss ideas related to how we want to administer the Green Grants program in 2025.

Given the recent change in staffing of the Environmental Commission, Township staff are still in the process of developing recommendations. Township staff will have more content, examples and specifics prepare prior to the meeting on March 5.

We look forward to discussing this in greater detail with the Environmental Commission.

Attachments:

1. Green Grant Application Materials from previous years
2. Green Grant Press Release from previous years



Green Grants

Background

The Green Grant Program was launched in 2021, inspired by local interest in wetland protection, flooding prevention, outdoor education, climate action, native planting, and local action. Proposals are encouraged from schools, businesses, congregations, neighborhood organizations, clubs, and others.

Project Examples

- Native Plants, Shrubs, and Trees
- Buffer Zones/Natural Vegetative Buffers
- Rain Gardens/Bioswales
- Green Roofs/Living Walls
- Outdoor Classrooms or Gathering Spaces
- Natural Shorelines
- Energy-Related Projects
- Educational projects that involve birds, bats, trees, native plants, pollinators, art, signage, stormwater management, alternative energy, food, composting, gardens, nature, and more!

Proposals

Proposals are evaluated by the Green Grant Committee based on educational value, ecological impact, and clarity. The Committee recommends projects to the Environmental Commission for final approval. Please provide information requested on the Green Grant Request for Proposal Form.

Timetable

Any Time	Discuss ideas with your organization, business, association, school, and other.
Mar 15	Submit proposal Green Grants Team (c/o harvey@meridian.mi.us) Deadline may be extended if dollars remain uncommitted. Green Grant Committee begins review. z
Apr 1	Grantee signs Green Grant Agreement and provides W-9. Township provides 50% payment in May. Balance processed after receipts are submitted and site inspection.
Ongoing	Share pictures, questions, and progress reports. Presentations invited to Environmental Commission and/or Township Board.
Dec 30	Project completion deadline (unless extension granted)

More information

- <https://news.jrn.msu.edu/2023/10/meridian-townships-environmental-grants-impact-local-communities/>
- www.epa.gov/green-infrastructure/what-green-infrastructure
- www.greenschoolyards.org
- bit.ly/meridiangreenmap

If you have questions, please contact the Meridian Township Environmental Programs Coordinator at 517.853.4466 or Harvey@meridian.mi.us. The Environmental Commission may make changes to this project as needed.



GREEN GRANT AGREEMENT
(completed by Meridian Twp pending project award)

THIS GRANT AGREEMENT (this "Agreement"), effective as of _____ (the "Effective Date"), is between Meridian Township (the "Grantor"), 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864, and _____, (the "Grantee"), whose address is _____. As used in this Agreement, the Grantor and the Grantee are, individually, a "Party" and, collectively, the "Parties".

Meridian Environmental Commission and Board of Trustees established the Green Grant Program to provide funding for green infrastructure projects including rain gardens, pollinator gardens, and related ecological and educational landscaping initiatives. The Grantee has applied to Grantor to receive a grant award from Grantor from the Grant Program, and Grantor has approved a grant award in the amount of _____ "Grant Funds").

The Parties agree:

1. **Grant.** Subject to the terms and conditions of this Agreement, and in reliance upon the Grantee affirmations set forth below, the Grantor agrees to make available, and the Grantee agrees to accept, the Grant Funds. Assuming successful progress, project completion, and submission of an invoice from the Grantee, Grant Funds will be reimbursed as soon as institutionally possible.

2. **Grantee Affirmations:**

- a) Grantee affirms all of its representations in the application for assistance and request for Grant Funds submitted to Grantor.
- b) Grantee affirms that the Grant Funds shall be used by the Grantee only.
- c) Grantees are encouraged to promote their projects and provide status reports, pictures, tracking of expenditures, and a final report and presentation to the Environmental Commission and/or Township Board.

3. **Repayment/Remedies.** Grantee is subject to repayment to the Grantor of an amount equal to the Grant Funds received by Grantee in the event Grantee has made material misrepresentations to the Grantor in its Application, or the Grantee fails to otherwise comply with the requirements of this Agreement. Grantor further retains all rights and remedies allowed in law or equity, including seeking payment of its reasonable costs and expenses incurred enforcing its rights and remedies. A suggested payment schedule is 50% upon acceptance and 50% upon completion. Grantees may make changes to their budgets as long as the original intent is maintained. Projects should be completed in 2025.

4. **Assignment.** Grantee may not assign any of its rights or obligations this Agreement to any person or entity.

5. **Counterparts/Facsimile/Pdf signatures.** This Agreement may be signed in counterparts and delivered by fax or other electronic formats and shall be considered one document and an original for all purposes.

The undersigned have the authority to sign this on behalf of their respective Party effective on the Effective Date.

GRANTOR: Meridian Township Board/Environmental Commission (signed if grant is approved)

By: LeRoy Harvey

Its: Environmental Programs Coordinator

GRANTEE:

By: _____

Its: _____

Date: _____





FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 14, 2025

CONTACT: LeRoy Harvey, Environmental Programs Coordinator
517.853.4466 | harvey@meridian.mi.us

DRAFT

Meridian Township Announces 'Green Grants' for Local Schools and the Community
Grants Offered to Support Green Projects

Meridian Township, MI – Meridian Township continues to support green projects throughout the community. Township officials have allocated \$20,000 for the Green Grant Program in 2025 to be administered by the Meridian Township Environmental Commission.

Green projects can include tree planting, native plant gardens, energy projects, school gardens, green infrastructure, butterfly/pollinator gardens, and more. The Environmental Commission is prioritizing projects with educational impact in the Okemos and Haslett school districts. Congregations, businesses and neighborhood organizations are also encouraged to apply.

Additional examples are listed below:

- Buffer zones/natural vegetation buffers
- Rain gardens/bioswales
- Green roofs/living walls
- Outdoor classrooms/gathering spaces
- Natural shorelines
- Wetland preservation
- Signage
- Stormwater management
- Alternative energy
- Composting facilities
- Habitat protection and restoration
- See more ideas at www.greenschoolyards.org

Inquiries are welcome at any time at the email below or by calling 517.853.4466 and projects will be considered until all funds are committed. Interested organizations are encouraged to apply by March 15. Project proposals can be emailed to harvey@meridian.mi.us. Grants expected to be awarded in April 2025. For additional details and fillable grant application form, visit www.meridian.mi.us/GreenMeridian.

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The community of Meridian Township is in close proximity to the Michigan State Capitol and Michigan State University. The Township serves the community through exceptional services, beneficial amenities and an outstanding quality of life. It is a welcoming community that celebrates quality education, recreation and lifestyles.





To: Environmental Commissioners

**From: Dan Opsommer, Deputy Township Manager
Director of Public Works and Engineering**

Date: February 28, 2025

Re: Resolution in Support of Meridian Township's FY26 CDS Grant Application

The Office of Senator Gary Peters released their Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) account list for fiscal year (FY) 2026 on February 18. Applications are due by March 17. Therefore, this will be the only regular meeting of the Environmental Commission prior to the application deadline.

At the request of the Township Supervisor, staff have reviewed the guidelines and worked with Sen. Peters' office to determine if any of the following projects would qualify:

1. Central Fire Station Dormitory Addition
2. Construction of new recycling centers
3. Solar projects
4. Railroad Quiet Zone projects
5. County primary road projects (specifically raising Okemos Rd between Central Park Dr and Gaylord C Smith Ct to prevent the road from flooding)
6. Construction of new Senior & Community Centers
7. Construction of new Senior Centers
8. Water and sanitary sewer projects
9. Installation of new technologies for collecting water meter reads

The only project that may be eligible would be solar projects. We are not certain that a solar project will meet all eligibility requirements, but based on initial research and conversations with Senator Peters' Office, we believe we might be eligible for a solar project through the Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development. The other projects listed above are not eligible.

The proposed project for which we are seeking funding is the addition of solar arrays to the roof of the Public Safety Building and the parking lot to the north of this building. This project would include a 204.22 kilowatt system, producing 244,677 kilowatt-hours annually. Upon completion of this project, we estimate that we would be able to produce just over 100% of the annual energy consumption of the Public Safety Building. This project would tie into the existing Public Safety Building solar infrastructure, which is connected to the electrical grid, so we can supply the grid when we produce more energy than we consume.

Staff considered recommending the Municipal Building or the Public Safety Building solar plan for this grant request as they are the two largest solar concept plans that we have developed. These two plans are nearly equal in cost and will help us secure as much federal funding as possible.

Memo to Environmental Commission

February 28, 2025

Re: Resolution in Support of Meridian Township's FY26 CDS Grant Application

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From there, staff ultimately decided recommend the Public Safety Building solar concept plan as it includes fewer carports and we want to ease into the carports as there can be very strong public opinion regarding the aesthetics of carports. Additionally, while Sen. Peters' office couldn't assure us that this project would meet all eligibility requirements, they did share a list of similar solar projects funded through the Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development. This list included a solar project for a police department building. For these reasons, we felt this was the most appropriate project among all of the solar concept plans we have developed for Township facilities.

This would help move us toward our goal in the 2023 Climate Sustainability Plan of obtaining 50% of electricity used for Township operations from renewable energy sources by 2025 and 100% by 2035.

We are looking to apply for \$400,000 in funding for this project. We are still waiting for clarification from Sen. Peters' staff, but we currently believe the Township would have to provide a 50% local match for this project.

We look forward to answering any questions the Commission may have.

The following motion has been prepared for the Commission's consideration:

**MOVE TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP'S
FISCAL YEAR 2026 CONGRESSIONALLY DIRECTED SPENDING GRANT APPLICATION.**

Attachments:

1. Resolution in Support of Meridian Township's FY26 CDS Grant Application
2. Solar Concept Plan for Meridian Township Public Safety Building

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP'S FISCAL YEAR 2026
CONGRESSIONALLY DIRECTED SPENDING GRANT APPLICATION**

At a regular meeting of the Environmental Commission of the Charter Township of Meridian, Ingham County, Michigan, held at the Meridian Township Municipal Building, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, Michigan 48864-1198, (517) 853-4000, on Wednesday, March 5, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: _____

ABSENT: _____

The following resolution was offered by _____ and supported by _____.

WHEREAS, Meridian Township has a long history of striving to be at the forefront of environmental sustainability; and

WHEREAS, In 2007, Meridian Township joined over 1,000 communities across the United States in signing the U.S. Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement; and

WHEREAS, Ten years later, Meridian resolved to achieve the goals of the Paris Climate Accord and adopted a Climate Sustainability Plan; and

WHEREAS, Meridian Township's Climate Sustainability Plan established a goal for the Township to obtain 50% of electricity used for Township operations from renewable energy sources by 2025 and 100% by 2035; and

WHEREAS, To work toward this goal, the Township has established plans to construct grid-interconnected solar photovoltaic arrays for all Township facilities; and

WHEREAS, The Township has established a plan to construct a 204.22 kilowatt system, producing 244,677 kilowatt-hours annually to supply 100 percent of the energy use of the Township's Public Safety Building;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, INGHAM COUNTY, MICHIGAN, MOVES TO ADOPT A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP'S FISCAL YEAR 2026 CONGRESSIONALLY DIRECTED SPENDING GRANT APPLICATION TO HELP FUND THE TOWNSHIP'S SOLAR PROJECT AT THE PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING.

ADOPTED:

YEAS: _____

NAYS: _____

Resolution declared adopted.

STATE OF MICHIGAN)

)ss.

COUNTY OF INGHAM)

I, the undersigned, the duly qualified and acting Chair of the Environmental Commission of the Charter Township of Meridian, Ingham County, **DO HEREBY CERTIFY**, that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of proceedings taken by the Environmental Commission at a regular meeting held on Wednesday, March 5, 2025.

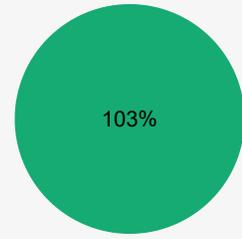
Bill McConnell, Chair
Environmental Commission
Charter Township of Meridian



Site Assessment

Customer: Public Safety Building
Address: 5147 Marsh Rd
Okemos, MI 48864

System size: 204.22 kW
Yr 1 Production: 244,677 kWh
Total Price: \$549,352
Designer: Absolute Solar
Date: June 8th, 2023



■ Solar ■ Utility

