



**AGENDA**  
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING  
Wednesday March 12, 2025 6:00 pm  
Township Service Center  
2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court, Okemos MI

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1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
2. PUBLIC COMMENT
3. APPROVE AGENDA
  - A. March 12, 2025
4. APPROVE MINUTES
  - A. January 8, 2025
5. COMMUNICATIONS
  - A. Review of Board Member Expectations
  - B. New Parks and Recreation Department Administrative Assistant, Hannah Pachucki
6. DISCUSSION ITEMS
  - A. Parcels for Acquisition Consideration
    - A. Parcel A
    - B. Parcel B
    - C. Parcel C
  - B. Acquisition Prioritization
    - A. Part 1: Current Land Preservation inventory & management efforts
7. REPORTS
  - A. STAFF REPORT: Stewardship Coordinator, Emma Campbell
    - a. MCC 2024 Annual Corps Rapport
    - b. MCC February & March Stewardship Calendar
  - B. ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION REPORT: Commissioner Yu Man Lee
  - C. PARK COMMISSION REPORT: Commissioner Mark Stephens
8. PUBLIC COMMENT
9. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS
10. ANNOUNCEMENTS
  - A. Next Land Preservation Advisory Board Meeting: Wednesday, April 9, 2025 at 6 pm at The Township Service Center, 2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court, Okemos, Michigan 48864.
11. ADJOURNMENT

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Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Meridian Township Land Preservation Advisory Board by contacting: Director Courtney Wisinski, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 or 517.853.4600 - Ten Day Notice is Required.

Meeting Location: 2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court, Haslett, MI 48840

Providing a safe and welcoming, sustainable prime community.





CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Township Service Center  
2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court | Haslett, MI  
Wednesday, January 8, 2025, 6 PM

PRESENT: Board Members: Jamie Hiller, Steve Thomas, Kris Parnell, Kathy Fay, Yu Man Lee.  
ABSENT: Mark Stephens.  
STAFF: Emma Campbell, Stewardship Coordinator  
TOWNSHIP: Township Clerk, Angela Demas

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Hiller called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. Nicholas Holzwart
  - i. A local community member who is interested in hearing what the Land Preservation Advisory Board does and how they operate.
- b. Wayne Beyeau
  - i. 5273 Meridian Rd., Okemos MI
  - ii. A Township resident who is recommending their currently owned parcel to the Land Preservation Advisory Board for acquisition. Mr. Beyeau has provided documents with information about the parcel and will stay for Discussion Item 7A to answer any questions board members may have.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

- a. January 8, 2025

Board member Lee moved to approve the January 8, 2025 Agenda to place on file. Board member Parnell seconded.

Voice vote: Unanimous

4. APPROVE MINUTES

- a. November 13, 2024

Board Member Parnell makes a motion to place the November 13, 2024 minutes on file. Board Member Stephens seconded.

Voice vote: Unanimous

5. COMMUNICATIONS

- a. None.

6. ACTION ITEMS

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January 8, 2025

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- a. 2025 Meeting Resolution
  - i. see Exhibit A

Board member Stephens moved to amend the Meeting Resolution to adjust June 11 to June 12, 2025. Kathy Fay seconded.

Roll call:

Ayes: Jamie Hiller, Steve Thomas, Yu Man Lee, Kathy Fay, Kris Parnell, Angela Demas.

Nays: None.

Board member Parnell moved to approve the amended Meeting Resolution and place on file. Fay seconded.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Jamie Hiller, Steve Thomas, Yu Man Lee, Kathy Fay, Kris Parnell, Angela Demas.

Nays: None.

- b. 2025 Election of Officers
  - i. See Exhibit B

### 7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

#### a. Parcels for Acquisition Consideration

##### i. Parcel A

1. Board advises staff to do a site visit prior to the March 12 meeting to get an initial sense of the ecological value of the recommended parcel.
2. Mr. Beyeau gave a brief summary of the property, during public comment. The board and staff have written permission from Mr. Beyeau to enter the property for a site visit. He wishes this land to be preserved and views it as a beneficial addition to our Land Preservation Program.

##### ii. Parcel B

1. Vacant parcel currently for sale directly adjacent and adjoining Mandenberg Woods Preserve. Parcel B is 1.94 acres and is listed for \$94,000 on Zillow.
2. Board advises staff will check out the property as much as possible and get back to the board before a letter of interest is sent.

##### iii. Parcel C

1. Letter of interest and acquisition application was sent to landowners.

#### b. Acquisition Prioritization

- i. All board members will be participating in a discussion throughout 2025, which will outline the prioritization process for any future land preserve acquisitions as we move forward with a land management focus for all current and future preserves.
- ii. Staff will bring more information to the March meeting.

### 8. REPORTS

## Minutes – Land Preservation Advisory Board

January 8, 2025

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- a. STAFF REPORT: Stewardship Coordinator, Emma Campbell
  - i. Update on current preservation projects and issues
    1. Financial Statement
      - a. Reserve fund (218) is not accessible to the board
      - b. Land Acquisition Fund (217) is accessible to the board for acquisition
      - c. Land Preservation Millage (217) is accessible to staff for management activities and staff salaries
    - ii. 2025 Land Preservation Program Goals
      1. See Exhibit C
    - iii. MCC January Stewardship Calendar
  - b. ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION REPORT: Commissioner Yu Man Lee
    - i. The EC is currently working on updating the Greenspace Plan for the Township
    - ii. Commissioner Lee suggests that the Land Preservation Advisory Board plan to assist EC on developing the updates and recommendations for the plan.
  - c. PARK COMMISSION REPORT: Commissioner Mark Stephens
    - i. Commissioner Stephens provides an update from the meeting of the Lake Lansing Advisory Board; the drain office did widen and open up the culverts at Pike Crossing and Lake Lansing to allow for easier navigation for fish like pike.

### 9. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. None.

### 10. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS

- a. Township Clerk Angela Demas would like to announce that Timothy Dempsey will be starting on January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025 as the new Township Manager.
- b. Clerk Demas communicates to the board that the Ingham County Drain Office will be utilizing the Inter Urban Wetland Preserve as one of the options that was discussed at the November 2024 meeting.

### 11. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. Next Land Preservation Advisory Board Meeting: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 at 6 pm at the Township Service Center, 2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court, Okemos, Michigan 48864.

### 12. ADJOURNMENT

Board member Fay moves to adjourn the meeting. Board member Parnell seconded.

Chair Hiller adjourned the meeting at 8:28 pm.



## CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN LAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM

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LAND PRESERVATION ACQUISITION & STEWARDSHIP RECORD  
UPDATED JULY 2024

**Land Preserves: 25**

**Acquisitions: 45**

**Acres of Current Land Preserves: 980 acres**

- The original goal of the program set in 2000 was to acquire 600 acres, or 10% of identified available land; the Land Preservation Program is currently at 17%

**Total acquisition costs = \$9,559,708**

**\*Please see in Preserve Bios Document for full descriptions of parcels**

### Land Preserves

#### **1. Davis-Foster Preserve**

- Location: East and west sides of Van Atta Road approximately ¼ mile south of Tihart Road
- Area: 108.90 acres (2 parcels)
- Year Acquired: 2006
- Purchase Price: \$1,650,000
- Description: Former farm; riparian and lowland hardwoods, shrub-scrub and emergent wetlands, and savannah grasslands and woodlands (active management areas)
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
  - Restoration of grasslands funded in part by U.S. Department of Agriculture Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)
  - Regular maintenance of the grassland through prescribed ecological burns and targeted invasive species treatments
    - Staff management of invasive phragmites in remnant wetland along Van Atta Road 2021
    - Contractual management of invasive phragmites in the same area since 2022
    - Contractual management of invasive black locust will commence in fall of 2024-2025 season
  - Native seed collection from remnant seedbank locations as well as seeded areas
  - Seed Sowing and transplanting native species in remnant wetlands as well as seeded grassland area
    - Seeds and transplants are all collected from remnant native seedbank areas. Transplants are grown from seed collected by MCC staff and volunteers and given to local native nurseries to grow for planting back into preserves.
  - Prescribed Burn Program (Burn Unit maps are outlined in the Davis Foster Preserve management Plan)
    - April 2012, 14 acres on East side of Van Atta Rd, Unit 3 on Burn Map
    - Spring 2014, 14 acres on East side of Van Atta Rd, Burn Unit 3, and 5.5 acres on West side of Van Atta Rd., Burn Unit 4
    - March 2016, 17 acres on East side of Van Atta Rd., Burn Unit 2
    - October 2016, 17 acres on East side of Van Atta Rd., Burn Unit 1
    - March 2019, 14 acres on East side of Van Atta Rd., Burn Unit 3. The burn jumped a fire break and also burned almost all of Burn Unit 2.

## Land Preservation Advisory Board Agenda Item 6.B.A.

- April 2021, 4.5 acres of remnant wetland on East side of Van Atta Rd.
- April 2023, 4.5 acres on of remnant wetland on East side Van Atta Rd.
- April 2024, 17 acres on East side of Van Atta Road, Burn Unit 1

### 2. Foster-Crouse Preserve

- Location: North side of Newman Road approximately 1 mile north of Grand River Avenue and ¼ mile west of Meridian Road
- Area: 18.08 acres
- Year Acquired: 2002
- Purchase Price: Donation
- Description: Mixed deciduous upland and lowland forest and emergent wetlands
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
  - Trail maintenance to widen trails and manage invasive species trailside.
  - Priority invasive species removal; black swallow-wort, Asiatic bittersweet
  - Black swallow-wort was identified at the site in fall of 2024

### 3. Hubbel Preserve

- Location: Okemos Road approximately ½ mile north of Grand River Avenue and north of railroad crossing
- Area: 57.66 acres
- Year Acquired: 2003
- Purchase Price: Donation
- Description: Mixed deciduous lowland forest and shrub-scrub upland

### 4. Kuzma Preserve

- Location: East side of Carleton Street north of Haslett Road and south of railroad crossing
- Area: 0.32 acres
- Year Acquired: 2003
- Purchase Price: Donation
- Description: Pond

### 5. Lake Lansing North Preserve

- Location: Southern additions to Ingham County Lake Lansing North Park
- Area: 120 acres (3 parcels)
- Year Acquired: 2010
- Purchase Price: \$675,000 (Township contribution toward DNRE Grant Purchase, approx. \$1.2 million)
- Description: Mixed deciduous upland and lowland forest and forested wetlands
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
  - Prescribed burn on forest floor to encourage spring ephemerals and oaks and discourage invasive species from growing; recent burns in fall of 2021 & 2023
  - Installation of 4 deer exclosures to monitor seedling survival
  - Invasive species removal of autumn olive, Japanese barberry and other invasive shrubs
  - Native seed collection from remnant seedbank locations
  - Seed Sowing and transplanting native species throughout preserve
    - Seeds and transplants are all collected from remnant native seedbank areas. Transplants are grown from seed collected by MCC staff and volunteers and given to local native nurseries to grow for planting back into preserves.

## Land Preservation Advisory Board Agenda Item 6.B.A.

### 6. Newman Equities Preserve

- Location: Central Park Drive adjacent to the MSU Credit Union
- Area: 13.41 acres
- Year Acquired: 2004
- Purchase Price: Donation
- Description: Shrub-scrub wetland and mixed deciduous upland
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
  - Trash pickup since 2021; a large volume of trash blows into this area from surrounding businesses

### 7. Towar Woods

- Location: Northwest corner of Meridian Township along the northern boundary of the Tower Neighborhood and the western boundary of Walnut Hills Country Club
- Area: 124.8 acres (10 parcels)
- Year Acquired: 2004 through 2008
- Purchase Price: TOTAL \$2,351,561:
  - Ranes 11.26 ac. \$300,000 (2006)
  - Ranes 15 ac. \$300,000 (2006)
  - Van Acker 9.2 ac. \$180,000 (2004)
  - Van Acker 9.42 ac. \$180,000 (2004)
  - DNR 3.16 ac. \$4,261 (2002)
  - Whitcomb 3.91 ac. \$19,000 (2008)
  - DNR 8.06 ac. \$300 (2004)
  - East Lansing Schools 24 ac. \$118,000 (2007)
  - Walnut Hills 14.72 ac. \$625,000 (2005)
  - Walnut Hills 25 ac. \$625,000 (2005)
  - Mitroka Addition 1 ac. Donation (2017)
- Description: Mixed deciduous forested wetlands
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
  - Goal is to reforest the eastern part of the preserve with native hardwood species and contain spread of invasive Buckthorn
  - Planted 2,000 red pines and 1,000 white pines in the preserve
  - Planted hundreds of native hardwood trees protected with Blue-X tubes & fencing enclosures
    - 300 planted in 2019
    - 200 planted in 2020
    - 200 planted in 2022
  - Installed a deer exclosure and planted 20-30 native hardwood trees within it
  - Invasive management:
    - 6 total acres of professional shrub clearing (mostly invasive shrubs)
    - Regular herbicide treatments of Buckthorn, Honeysuckle, and Autumn Olive for past 9 years throughout the entire preserve focusing on the eastern portion
    - Contractual brush hogging of common buckthorn on 12 acres of native tree plantation area
      - 2022 & 2024

### 8. Pike Crossing Preserve

- Location: West side of Carleton Street north of Haslett Road and south of railroad crossing
- Area: 5.5 acres (2 parcels)
- Year Acquired: 2010
- Purchase Price: \$25,000 + \$2,507 (winter tax bill) = \$27,507

## Land Preservation Advisory Board Agenda Item 6.B.A.

- Description: Old field
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
  - Chemical and mechanical management of Japanese knotweed and teasel

### 9. Okemos Road Preserve

- Location: Okemos Road approximately ½ mile north of Grand River Avenue and south of railroad crossing
- Area: 60.22 acres (2 parcels)
- Year Acquired: 2005
- Purchase Price: Partial Donation, \$80,000
- Description: Mixed shrub-scrub and deciduous woodlands, old field, and forested wetlands
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
  - Removal of common buckthorn, amur honeysuckle, Asiatic bittersweet and autumn olive from wetland mitigation area, and in higher quality woodland areas
  - Vernal Pool monitoring by volunteers
  - Trash removal from College Apartments entrance with boy scout group in 2022 (20 tires removed, and over 3,000 pounds of trash)

### 10. Sower Woods Preserve

- Location: North and south of Sower Boulevard west of Okemos Road
- Area: 17.97 (5 parcels)
- Year Acquired: 2005 through 2008
- Purchase Price: TOTAL \$240,242:
  - 5.43 ac. \$231,000 (2005)
  - 1.36 ac. \$4,261 (2002)
  - 5.166 ac. \$4,261 (2002)
  - 4.038 ac. \$720 (2008)
  - 1.77 ac. \$4,261 (2002)
- Description: Moist upland hardwood forest and lowland mixed hardwoods
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
  - Neighborhood volunteers routinely remove small invasive species by hand and plant native species in their place
  - Once a year since 2021 the Meridian Conservation Corps removes herbaceous invasive plants in the spring, and sows native seeds in the fall

### 11. Cornell Wetland Preserve

- Location: Southwest corner of Tihart Road and Cornell Road
- Area: 21.26 acres
- Year Acquired: 2006
- Purchase Price: \$206,000
- Description: Mixed shrub-scrub and forested wetlands
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
  - Large trash removal from wetland; 27 tires, over 4,000 pounds of trash
  - Native seed collection from remnant seed collection sites
  - Shrubby invasive removal from upland area on Cornell Road
  - Management of purple loosestrife and phragmites in ditch along Tihart Road

### 12. Heron Creek & Serafine Preserve

- Location: North of Bennett Road at the eastern boundaries of Champion Woods and Heron Creek neighborhoods and eastern boundary of College Fields Country Club
- Area: 91 acres (4 parcels)



## Land Preservation Advisory Board Agenda Item 6.B.A.

- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
  - 2024-25 season will include:
    - Removing large dumping piles of yard waste from preserve entrance at the end of Wilder Court
    - Installing a boundary fence and rule signage at the same entrance
    - Letters to go out to neighbors notifying them of planned stewardship work and reminder of preserve ordinances
    - Managing purple loosestrife in wetland area

### 16. Inter-Urban Wetland Preserve

- Location: Haslett Road, ¼ mile west of Marsh Road
- Area: 24.78 acres (2 parcels)
- Year Acquired: 2003-2004
- Purchase Price: TOTAL= \$93,000 [13.36 ac. (\$50,000); 11.38 ac. (\$43,000)]
- Description: Scrub-shrub, emergent, and forested wetlands
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
  - Native seed collection from middle wetland area
  - Removal of trash from middle wetland area
  - 2024-25 removal of common and glossy buckthorn from bridge over wetland – increase visibility in that area, and begin restoring area around remnant native wetland plants
  - Contractual management of invasive phragmites since 2023 off the Inter-Urban trail

### 17. Red Cedar River East Preserve

- HOWE (original preserve area)
  - Location: Southwest corner of Grand River Avenue – Meridian Road junction
  - Area: 9.14 acres (2 parcels)
  - Year Acquired: 2010
  - Purchase Price: \$92,000
  - Description: Riparian hardwood forest
- **Wangler addition**
  - Location: Southwest of Grand River Avenue – Meridian Road junction
  - Area: 13.30 acres
  - Year Acquired: 2011
  - Purchase Price: \$13,106.89 (tax- reverted property from Ingham County Land Bank)
  - Description: Adjacent to Red Cedar River, wooded, wetland, floodplains

### 18. Glacial Ridge (Whitehills) Preserve

- Location: Adjacent to Whitehills Lake subdivision at Whitehills Lake Drive and Fenwick Court
- Area: 25 acres
- Year Acquired: 2010
- Purchase Price: \$400,000
- Description: Mixed hardwood forest and shrub-scrub
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
  - Planting of White Oak trees
  - Contractual management of invasive phragmites from wetland located off Mereford Court since 2021
    - Cutting of invasive phragmites thatch in fall/winter of 2023-24 for neighborhood visibility

**19. Forest Grove (White M-78) Preserve**

- Location: on the east side of Old M-78 (Saginaw Street), and the west side of Newton Road, north of Lake Lansing Road, and south of Towner Road.
- Area: 20.4 acres
- Year Acquired: 2011
- Purchase Price: \$425,000
- Description: Heavily wooded and much of the property is wetland
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
  - Remnant native plant inventory as a native seed collection site for Planting a Native Meridian program

**20. Tank Wetland Preserve**

- Location: near Carlton and Lake Drive
- Area: 2.51 acres
- Year Acquired: 2016
- Purchase Price: Donation
- Description: 100% wetland

**21. Tihart Preserve (Linn)**

- Location: Tihart Rd.
- Area: 90 acres
- Year Acquired: 2018
- Purchase Price: \$600,000
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
  - Mechanical & chemical management of invasive species such as autumn olive, invasive honeysuckle species, Asiatic bittersweet, reed canary grass, field thistle and bull thistle
  - Chemical management of purple loosestrife and invasive phragmites in the ditch along Tihart Road since 2022
  - Native seed sowing and transplanting in front 'farm field' area since 2021.
    - Seeds and transplants are all collected from remnant native seedbank areas. Transplants are grown from seed collected by MCC staff and volunteers and given to local native nurseries to grow for planting back into preserves.
  - Contractual brush hogging in front 5 acres of 'farm field' planting area in spring of 2024. Goal was to open up more sunlight for seeded areas.

**22. Mandenberg Woods**

- Location: Hamilton Rd. Okemos
- Area: 4 acres
- Year Acquired: 2018
- Purchase Price: \$63,000
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
  - Native plant inventory and preliminary survey of trash sites completed in spring of 2024
    - Planned trash removal and invasive management will begin in 2025

**23. Ponderosa**

- 92 acres

## Land Preservation Advisory Board Agenda Item 6.B.A.

- Purchase Price: \$485,100 (because we received a \$514,900 MNRTF grant) – Total land value was 1.2 million
- Year Acquired: 2018
- **Major Stewardship Activities:**
  - Management of Japanese Knotweed stand
    - Staff has chemically managed the stand since 2022
  - Trail maintenance has been completed since 2021 by MSU students and MCC volunteers, removing invasives such as autumn olive that are crowding the trail
  - Invasive species management in the oak/hickory woodlands
  - 2 vernal pools were identified in 2024 and will be monitored in the 2025 season

### 24. Nemoke Preserve

- 12 acres
- Year Acquired: 2018
- Purchase price: \$3,547

### 25. Cornell-Sweetwood Preserve

- 2.97 acres (mostly wetland)
- Year Acquired: 2023
- Purchase Price: \$62,000
- Still implementing boundary markers and preserve signage

## Item 7.A.a.b



**To: Land Preservation Advisory Board Members**  
**From: Emma Campbell, Stewardship Coordinator**  
**Date: March 12, 2025**  
**Re: March 2025 Stewardship Staff Report**

Staff provides a brief summary of land preserve updates:

1. The 2024 Annual Corps Report was released in mid-February, and is included in the March 12<sup>th</sup> meeting packet. This annual publication from the Stewardship Coordinator is created to highlight the accomplishments of the Meridian Conservation Corps (MCC) and Land Preservation Program.
2. Meridian Township's Deer Management Program concluded on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025 with a total harvest of 300 white-tailed deer and the donation of over 7,400 pounds of venison locally.
3. Two prescribed burns are planned for the spring 2025 season. Two burn units making up about 15 acres at Davis Foster Preserve will be burned by David Borneman LLC. One burn unit made up of about 5 acres at Red Cedar Glen Preserve will be burned by Stantec Consulting Michigan, Inc.
  - a. Letters of notification were sent this week to neighboring residents to alert them and provide information (letters are included in the meeting packet).
4. Staff will be presenting at the Ohio River Valley Invasive Species Conference hosted by the Midwest Invasive Plant Network, from March 19<sup>th</sup> through March 20<sup>th</sup> in Burlington, KY.
  - a. The presentation is called, *Community Conservation: Turning Intention into Action with the Meridian Conservation Corps*. This talk will focus on the creation of the MCC and its many efforts.
5. The March 2025 Stewardship Calendar is included in the meeting packet. Work will focus around native seeding, the last of invasive shrub cutting, litter cleanup, and vernal pool monitoring.
  - a. Management of Lesser Celandine (*Ficaria verna*) will most likely begin the week of March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025. This invasive plant is a high priority and is currently being managed at Ted Black Woods Park and Ottawa Hills Park.