

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
TOWNSHIP BOARD BUDGET DELIBERATIONS MEETING - **APPROVED** -
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198
853-4000, Town Hall Room
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2014 **6:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Supervisor LeGoff, Clerk Dreyfus, Treasurer Brixie, Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra (6:01 P.M.), Wilson
ABSENT: None
STAFF: Township Manager Frank Walsh, Director of Community Planning & Development Mark Kieselbach, Director of Public Works and Engineering Ray Severy, Police Chief David Hall, Fire Chief Fred Cowper, Director of Finance Gretchen Gomolka, Director of Communications Deborah Guthrie, Director of Information and Technology Stephen Gebes, Director of Parks and Recreation LuAnn Maisner

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
Supervisor LeGoff called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS
Supervisor LeGoff led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. ROLL CALL
The secretary called the roll of the Board.
4. PUBLIC REMARKS
Supervisor LeGoff opened Public Remarks.

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, expressed appreciation for placement of the budget online. He questioned the seemingly large increase in base wetland fees for three (3) areas. Mr. Bowlby expressed appreciation the Greenwood Subdivision sewer system is no longer in the Capital Improvements Program (CIP). He suggested a correction to the wording contained in the explanation of the Capital Items for the Police Department. Mr. Bowlby inquired why the Georgetown Phases 3 and 4 public water and sewer mains do not appear under Capital Contributions in the Water Fund Summary and Sewer Fund Summary, respectively. He voiced appreciation for money budgeted to hire a Master Plan consultant for the Planning Commission. Mr. Bowlby inquired as to funding for the National Citizen Survey, performed every three (3) years and last conducted in 2012.

Supervisor LeGoff closed Public Remarks.

5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
Treasurer Brixie moved to approve the agenda as submitted. Seconded by Trustee Styka.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

6. PRESENTATION OF THE 2015 RECOMMENDED BUDGET
Township Manager provided a Powerpoint presentation on the 2015 Recommended Budget. The presentation included the fund balance of the General Fund, capital expenditure projects, police and fire expenditures, local roads fund budget, motor pool purchases, millage rates and property tax revenue, increases in pension legacy costs, water and sewer rate comparisons and Capital Improvement Projects (CIP).

Board and staff discussion:

- Appreciation for the collaborative effort and high attention to detail within the budget
- Future handling of changes to deal with the unfunded liabilities for pensions and mandated reporting requirements
- Looming legacy costs as the number one issue facing local governments throughout the country
- Possible creation of a committee in 2015 to consider implementing a hybrid system where new employees come under a defined contribution plan
- Board consideration of the unfunded pension liability issue later this year during its policy and goal setting session
- Meridian Township is experiencing an aging workforce among its employees
- Meridian Township has the lowest combined water and sewer billing rates in the Tri-County region
- Water and Sewer Funds are enterprise funds and must be self-sustaining
- New construction fees have remained the same for the last three (3) years
- Cost of upgrades to AR 15 rifles approximate \$800 of the \$14,000 budgeted in Capital Outlay for the Police Department
- Request for breakdown of the Police Department's Capital Outlay items
- Upgrades are for four (4) AR 15 rifles used by Meridian officers as part of the Special Response Team (SRT)
- Glock as the Township's basic police sidearm
- Use of AR 15 rifles afford accuracy and reliability to officers
- Inquiry if the Township Police and Fire Departments store surplus homeland security equipment and the associated cost
- The Township Police Department does not store surplus homeland security equipment
- Rationale for a \$300,000-\$500,000 Motor Pool Fund Balance
- Vehicles are purchased through the Motor Pool Fund
- General Fund contributes to the Motor Pool Fund through a rental charge for each vehicle
- Rainy day fund for the General Fund is earmarked for major issues which arise
- Necessity of maintaining a strong Fund Balance
- Equipment should be properly planned for and paid out of the Motor Pool Fund
- Possible discussion during the policy setting session regarding a change in the way cars are used by directors
- Preference to reduce the vehicle fleet by offering a monthly stipend to individual directors in lieu of providing a vehicle
- Any new policy should not affect current employees who have a vehicle provided as part of their contract with the Township
- Motor Pool Fund is a standard accounting procedure used by all governmental entities
- Purpose of the Motor Pool Fund is to have a long range plan for vehicle purchases
- Use of a portion of the General Fund Reserve for capital improvement projects as a possible discussion item by the Board during the 2015 goal setting session next month
- Appropriateness of including \$1,000 within the Clerk's budget for lobby improvements
- Normal replacement schedule for employee computers is on a five (5) year cycle
- Estimate of a four year workstation replacement plan would be approximately \$50,000
- Savings through the use of on-demand water heaters in the Municipal Building as there is currently one boiler in the building and the hot water must travel a long way
- List of requested capital projects should be discussed during the Board's goal setting session
- Possible movement of money budgeted for Township Board and Planning Commission clerical support into the budget for the Clerk's Office
- Updated budget pages will be supplied to the Board prior to the October 7th public hearing for agreed upon changes
- Consideration of the vehicle lease program offered through the State of Michigan vs. purchase of vehicles
- Board member preference to provide a monthly stipend to Department Directors who use their personal vehicles for Township business
- Board member preference to purchase the new fire pumper earlier than projected in 2016 if the existing 1993 model needs significant repair in 2015

7. PUBLIC REMARKS

Supervisor LeGoff opened Public Remarks.

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, spoke to the need for repair/reconstruction of the entrance road to the recycling station being placed as an item on the requested capital projects. He inquired if funding for the National Citizen Survey will be included in the 2015 Recommended Budget.

Manager Walsh responded that it is time and the Township will be “getting to that” in 2015.

Supervisor LeGoff closed Public Remarks.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Supervisor LeGoff adjourned the meeting at 7:10 P.M.

ELIZABETH LEGOFF
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

BRETT DREYFUS
TOWNSHIP CLERK

Sandra K. Otto, Secretary