

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
TOWNSHIP BOARD REGULAR MEETING - **APPROVED** -
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198
853-4000, Town Hall Room
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2015 **6:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Clerk Dreyfus, Treasurer Brixie, Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Wilson
ABSENT: Supervisor LeGoff
STAFF: Township Manager Frank Walsh, Assistant Township Manager/Director of Public Works Derek Perry, Director of Community Planning & Development Mark Kieselbach, Police Chief David Hall, Director of Information and Technology Stephen Gebes, Finance Director Gretchen Gomolka, Director of Parks and Recreation LuAnn Maisner, Human Resources Director Joyce Marx, Associate Planner Menser

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Clerk Dreyfus called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

Trustee Veenstra moved to appoint Trustee Styka as Supervisor Pro Tem for tonight's meeting. Seconded by Clerk Dreyfus.

Trustee Styka declined the appointment of Supervisor Pro Tem for tonight's meeting.

Trustee Scales moved to appoint Treasurer Brixie as Supervisor Pro Tem for tonight's meeting. Seconded by Trustee Wilson.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 6-0.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS

Supervisor Pro Tem Brixie led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

The secretary called the roll of the Board.

4. SPECIAL PRESENTATION

A. Introduction of Police Officer Doug Strouse

Chief Hall introduced new police officer Doug Strouse and outlined his qualifications and experience.

B. Resolution of Recognition – Haslett Beautification Association

Trustee Wilson read and presented the resolution of recognition passed at the September 1st Board meeting to Sheri Middlewood, Vice President, Haslett Beautification Association (HBA) and other attending members for HBA's 10th Anniversary.

Ms. Middlewood expressed appreciation for the recognition and restated the commitment of the HBA to continue its efforts to beautify the Haslett area.

C. Welcoming Michigan

Associate Planner Menser summarized the Welcoming Michigan program as outlined in staff memorandum dated August 10, 2015.

Treasurer Brixie moved [and read into the record] NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN hereby declares Meridian Township to be a Welcoming City and proud member of the National Welcoming Cities and Counties Initiative. Further, the Township Board commits to promote and celebrate the diversity of Meridian Township through policies, services and practices. Seconded by Trustee Styka.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Wilson, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
NAYS: None
Motion carried 6-0.

5. PUBLIC REMARKS

Supervisor Pro Tem Brixie opened Public Remarks.

Brant Johnson, 4515 Oakwood, Okemos, representing El Oasis, LLC, thanked the Board for bringing the mobile food unit issue before the Township for discussion. He supported Board action to implement a policy in the near future on this issue.

Paul Menchik, 4414 Cherry Hill Drive, Okemos, spoke in support of expansion of Redi-Ride services. He addressed option value and option demand of the services provided by Redi-Ride. He believed if services provided to disabled or limited mobility residents were expanded, it would increase the likelihood these individuals would choose to remain in the Township.

Richard Williams, 1703 S. Crystal Cove, Haslett, President, Rental Property Owners Association of Mid-Michigan, offered several comments in opposition to any proposed increase to initial registration fees. He suggested the Township create a roundtable committee to address concerns within the Wardcliff area.

Betty Landouer-Menchik, 4414 Cherry Hill Drive, Okemos, noted her expectation to “age in place” in her residence in Meridian Township, and expressed support for the expansion of Redi-Ride services.

Anna Pegler-Gordon, 3831 Pine Hill Drive, Okemos, spoke in support of expansion of the Redi-Ride program as she believed it attracts residents to the community.

Monica Gamboa, 1121 Larned, Lansing, owner of El Oasis, Food, LLC, expressed appreciation for Board discussion on the food truck issue. She expressed support for creation of a mobile food unit policy.

Paula Bladen, 1738 N. Crystal Cove, Haslett, spoke in support of expansion of hours for the Redi-Ride program in Meridian Township. She indicated the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) will be hosting a meeting in the Lansing area in the near future to discuss transportation services for the elderly and disabled within Michigan.

Mark Dickens, Vice President of Policy Operations, Greater Lansing Association of Realtors, 4039 Legacy Parkway, Lansing, requested an exemption for the open house signs used to assist in the sale of homes in Meridian Township.

Dr. Saroj Kapoor, 2356 Sapphire Lane, East Lansing, spoke in support of an alternative service to Redi-Ride.

Ody Norkin, 3803 Sandlewood, Okemos, has had discussion with many users who cannot attend tonight’s meeting as Redi-Ride service ends at 5:00 P.M. He suggested a meeting be held between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM with these users and non-choice riders to adhere to the spirit of the American Disabilities Act (ADA).

Donna Rose, 6207 Cobblers Drive, East Lansing, addressed the ability of not only the disabled, but also the elderly and those residents who cannot drive to have access to the Redi-Ride program. She addressed the use of the Redi-Ride program by school aged children.

Fred Wertzell, 1212 Foster, Lansing, spokesperson for the National Federation of the Blind in Michigan, expressed interest in reducing the fragmentation of public transportation services around the state. He addressed the transportation borders drawn and the deprivation of jobs afforded to blind people because of public transit limitations. He urged alternatives be explored for better service.

Tom Klunzinger, 1747 Maple Ridge, Haslett, offered historical information on the creation of the Redi-Ride program and the original understanding of its use by households without access to other transportation. He spoke to the lack of a current contract with CATA on the operation of the Redi-Ride Program. Mr. Klunzinger believed it is the Board's responsibility to determine who merits first choice service and relay to CATA what kind of service it would like to see provided by possibly creating a document with parameters and policies. He suggested a senior citizen card or very important person (VIP) card may be a way to prioritize riders.

JL Quainton, 1643 Balog Court, Haslett, spoke in support of the expansion of the Redi-Ride program as it is his main form of transportation. He believes the program provides dignity and independence for disabled individuals.

Elizabeth Seagull, 1236 Jolly Road, Okemos, expressed support for full transportation services of disabled individuals in need. She urged the Redi-Ride program hours be expanded to provide quality of life for those individuals who need transportation after 5:00 P.M.

Dr. Greg Holzman, 4206 Wabaningo Drive, Okemos, addressed the effects of social isolation for disabled or members of the community who do not drive. He spoke in support of expansion of hours of the Redi-Ride program.

Stan Kaplowitz, 629 Marshall, East Lansing, believed it a safety factor to offer Redi-Ride services to those who should no longer drive, but have need for transportation.

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, requested the Board reinstate Board comments at the beginning of its agenda. He offered a graph he prepared in response to a Board member statement about the length of Board comments in the beginning of Board meetings, stating the overall average for 2015 was less than 15 minutes. Mr. Bowlby believed it important to have Board comments at the beginning of the meeting in that it allows the public to make comments on a Board member comment during final public remarks. He believed the overall environmental impact of solar panels is less than use of coal or natural gas, citing information from www.envimpact.org. He reiterated the Township's return on investment for solar panels is five (5) or six (6) times what is currently being experienced through traditional Township investments.

Karla Hudson, 6009 Skyline Drive, East Lansing, stated that she and her husband both rely on public transportation as disabled individuals. She requested working together to create a Township workgroup to find innovative approaches to the current Redi-Ride service.

Mindy Rudolph, 2060 Shagbark Lane, Okemos, expressed support for CATA's paratransit services (Redi-Ride, SpecTran) and urged improvement in its hours of operation.

Supervisor Pro Tem Brixie closed Public Remarks.

6. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Trustee Wilson moved to approve the revised agenda as submitted. Seconded by Clerk Dreyfus.

Trustee Veenstra moved to amend the agenda to restore Board comment at the beginning of the meeting after first public remarks.

The motion died for lack of a second.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 5-1 (Veenstra).

7. CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor Pro Tem Brixie reviewed the consent agenda.

Clerk Dreyfus moved to adopt the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Trustee Wilson.

Trustee Veenstra moved to amend the consent agenda by removing Agenda Item #7A (Communications) and relettering it as Agenda Item #10A.

The motion died for lack of a second.

Trustee Veenstra moved to amend the agenda by deleting Agenda Item #7A (Communications).

Board discussion:

- Board member belief the consent agenda must pass unanimously and removal of a consent agenda item does not need support
- Board member belief any Board member has the right to remove any and all items off the consent agenda

Trustee Veenstra moved to amend the consent agenda by removing Agenda Items #7A, #7B and #7C and relettering them as Action Items #10A, #10B and #10C consecutively.

Continued Board discussion:

- Board member belief any Board member has the ability to remove something off the consent agenda, but a single Board member does not have the authority to place it where he chooses on the agenda
- Board has the authority to place items on the agenda

It was the ruling of the Chair that Agenda Items #7A, #7B and #7C will be relettered as Action Items #10D, #10E and #10F consecutively.

D. Department of Natural Resources Declaration and Notice – Wonch Park Pathway Project

Clerk Dreyfus moved [and read into the record] NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, INGHAM COUNTY, MICHIGAN, hereby declares that the portion of the property identified as the project area is and shall be held, transferred, sold, conveyed, leased, occupied and used subject to the obligation hereinafter set forth, all of which shall run with the land.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the lands included in this deed developed by Meridian Township with funding assistance from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund pursuant to project agreement TG-12-024, Wonch Park Pathway Development, between the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Meridian Township, executed on July 2, 2013. the project agreement describes certain requirements to ensure the long-term conservation of the property and its use for public outdoor recreation. Meridian Township is placing this notice on record as confirmation of its obligations as set forth in the project agreement, including the requirement that the consent of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Board of Trustees is required prior to the conveyance of any rights or interest in the property to another entity, or for the use of the property for purposes other than conservation or public outdoor recreation.

Seconded by Trustee Wilson.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Styka, Scales, Veenstra, Wilson, Supervisor LeGoff,
Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

E. Ratification of Police Officer Appointment

Clerk Dreyfus moved to ratify the appointment of Aaron McConaughy to the position of Police Officer contingent upon successful completion of those items stipulated in the conditional offer of employment.

Seconded by Trustee Wilson.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Styka, Scales, Veenstra, Wilson, Supervisor LeGoff,
Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

- F. Authorization to Sell 4675 Okemos Road and 2150 Clinton Street (MARC/Fire Station)
Clerk Dreyfus moved [and read into the record] NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Board of the Charter Township of Meridian, Ingham County, Michigan, as follows:

1. **The Township Board approves the sale of the Premises upon the terms set forth in the Buy and Sell Agreement, as amended.**
2. **The Township Board authorizes and directs the Township Supervisor and the Township Clerk to execute such documents as are necessary to effect the sale of the Premises upon the terms as agreed between the Buyer and the Township, including but not limited to the quit claim deed transferring the Premises to the Buyer.**

Seconded by Trustee Wilson.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Styka, Scales, Veenstra, Wilson, Supervisor LeGoff,
Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

8. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY (None)

9. HEARINGS (None)

10. ACTION ITEMS

Supervisor Pro Tem Brixie opened and closed Public Remarks.

- A. 2016 Recommended Budget

Finance Director Gomolka addressed the minor changes to the 2016 Recommended Budget as outlined in staff memorandum dated September 10, 2015.

Trustee Wilson moved that the Township Board approve the 2016 Recommended Budget resolution. Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.

Board discussion:

- Cable Commission request for two part-time positions within the Communications Department be made full time for a cost of \$45,000
- Increase in the amount of work as new responsibilities are placed within the Communications Department

Trustee Styka moved to increase the Cable Fund line item for salaries by approximately \$22,500 to fund one of the two part-time positions to full-time. Seconded by Trustee Veenstra.

Continued Board and staff discussion:

- Cost may not be half as it would depend upon which part-time person was promoted to full-time
- Additional revenue from the Comcast & AT&T contract negotiations of a net \$31,000 for 2015 were from franchise and PEG fees
- 1% annual PEG fee revenues of \$100,000 from Comcast stay within the Cable Revenue Fund and will incrementally increase each year
- Franchise fee revenues provide for an administrative fee which goes into the General Fund, currently at approximately \$120,000 and will incrementally increase each year as franchise fees increase
- Proposed full time position includes all associated health premiums and pension obligations
- Proposal of a full-time position at this point in the budget deliberations is “outside” of the realm of the budget process
- Effect of additional full time position on the Township’s unfunded pension liability
- Staffing changes are an internal question
- Fairness to all other Township departments who have staffing needs
- Concern with additional requests by other departments
- Township Manager is in charge of staffing needs and is the proper individual to vet additional staff
- If the Township Manager determines there is a need to increase staffing positions within the Communications Department, a quarterly budget amendment can be brought before the Board for approval
- Board member request for an explanation by the Communications Director as to the need to increase a part-time position to full-time
- Position would be funded from additional revenues generated through cable contract negotiations
- Concern with politicizing employment opportunities in the Township
- Concern with ramifications of this action throughout the entire budget

Trustee Styka withdrew his motion.

Continued Board discussion:

- Board member assertion once a motion is made and seconded, it becomes the property of the body and the maker does not have the authority to withdraw the motion
- Board member belief the proper course of action would be for the Board to vote the motion “down”
- Reminder that the first motion of this meeting to appoint a Supervisor Pro Tem was made and seconded, the named Board member declined, and that motion was not voted on
- Board member belief increasing the position from 29 hours to 40 hours is a minor increase in light of the significant expansion of duties assigned to the Communications Department
- Board member belief HOMTV is the best cable “operation” in Michigan
- Board member request for management to look into this staffing issue and bring back to the Board if justified
- Inquiry if there has been inclusion in the budget of a streetlight at Tihart and Marsh Roads as requested by a Board member at the last budget meeting
- Assurance by management that if the county is in agreement with adding the streetlight at Tihart and Marsh Roads, it would not impact the budget as the cost is “miniscule”

Trustee Scales moved to raise the rental inspection fee to \$1,200. Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.

Trustee Veenstra offered the following friendly amendment:

- **Amend the motion to read: Trustee Scales moved to raise the initial rental registration fee from \$800 to \$1,200.**

The friendly amendment was accepted by the maker of the motion.

Continued Board discussion:

- 8,000 rental units in Meridian Township

- Majority of rental units are within apartment complexes
- Significant amount of absent landlords who rent single and multiple dwelling homes
- Board member belief concerning the difficulty with code enforcement for homes owned by absent landlords
- Board member belief there is a “need” for the hours of the part-time code enforcement officer position to be increased, but there needs to be a funding source to expand the hours
- Hours for the part-time code enforcement officer were raised last week from 25 to 29 hours
- Volume of code enforcement issues point to the need for the code enforcement position to be considered as a full-time position in the future
- Board member statement Meridian Township’s initial rental registration fee is several times higher than most of its surrounding communities
- Board member belief this initial registration fee increase will “siphon off” money landlords would use for maintenance
- Board member belief a fee should have a reasonable relationship to the cost of providing a service and this proposed increase would not
- Board member belief apartment complexes and multi-unit apartment buildings pay a disproportionate lower cost and need the most inspections and oversight, not individual residential homes
- When the Board lowered the initial rental registration fee from \$1,200 to \$800, the program did not fall apart
- Board member belief the solution is to raise the rate on apartment complexes and multi-family units, similar to our neighboring communities
- Primary area of concern in the Township relative to rental units is the Wardcliff area, which borders East Lansing and rentals to Michigan State University (MSU) students “bleed over” into this neighborhood
- Suggestion for legal counsel to review the possibility of creating rental districts with commensurate initial rental registration fees
- Concern with affordable housing options for families
- Concern that Wardcliff, which was once a very strong family neighborhood, is becoming a student housing area and increasing the initial rental registration fee does not fix that problem
- Need to address the issue of stricter enforcement in the “problem” areas
- Rental registration ordinance was created to address rentals within the Township’s older neighborhoods, the location of affordable housing
- Rentals often tend to become student housing because of the Township’s proximity to MSU
- When Meridian Township’s rental registration ordinance was created, East Lansing had strict inspection and registration fee requirements (which accelerated the costs due to the large amount of required information) to deal with student rentals
- Meridian Township mimicked East Lansing’s program and received a positive response from residents in the affected neighborhoods
- Board member belief that certain individuals with home ownership in Meridian Township took advantage of the proximity of their rentals to the East Lansing market with lower associated fees by renting to students
- Meridian Township is now sharing inspections, etc. with East Lansing
- Disappointment when the fees were reduced because the reduction was not based on the amount of work “put in”
- Increase in fees would provide funds for the required increase in code enforcement
- Meridian Township does not have a significant amount of rental houses scattered throughout the Township
- Cost of the homes in several neighborhoods throughout the Township would preclude rental of those single family homes
- The number one issue with rentals is the need for enforcement of Township ordinances and a corresponding need for money to provide staffing to enforce the ordinances
- Inquiry if the proposed increase in the initial rental registration fee is sufficient to create the revenue needed for enforcement for the new rental applications
- Failure to pass the proposed increase does not preclude adequate enforcement as community standards are a high priority
- Money for an increase in code enforcement will come from restructuring the fees for apartment complexes and multi-family units

- Board can amend the fee schedule at any time it so desires
- Rental of single family homes is not just an issue for the Wardcliff area, but all rentals throughout the Township
- Suggestion to create an overlay district specific to the Wardcliff area
- East Lansing created an overlay district which restricted any new rental licenses within the district
- Board member belief the concept of a rental overlay district was brought to the Board for discussion in 2009
- During the discussion in 2009, concern was expressed over creating different rental fees dependent upon its location within a specific neighborhood
- One reason for increased rentals was people lost their jobs during the downturn in the economy and necessitated the need to rent their home so it wasn't foreclosed and increasing the initial rental registration fee would not have helped that situation
- Board has the option to pro rate the initial rental registration fee, which allows individuals at risk of losing their home to pay the fee quarterly

Clerk Dreyfus called the question. Seconded by Trustee Scales.

Clerk Dreyfus withdrew his motion to call the question.

Trustee Scales withdrew his motion.

Continued Board discussion:

- Commitment of a one-time lump sum payment for Township employees in 2016 if the tax base increased by one (1) to two (2) percent
- Preference of the Township Manager for this issue to be discussed during the Board's goal setting discussion
- If Board members agree to provide employees with a one-time lump sum payment in 2016, it would be handled through a first quarter budget amendment

Trustee Veenstra moved to delete Chamber of Commerce dues of \$400. Seconded by Clerk Dreyfus.

Board discussion:

- Board member concern the Chamber of Commerce is a partisan organization which makes political endorsements and should not receive tax payer funds
- Board member preference for the Board to distance itself from an "overtly political organization"
- Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce does not contribute funds to candidates, as endorsements and contributions are made through the Chamber's Political Action Committee
- Value received by the Township from being a member of the chamber

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustee Veenstra, Clerk Dreyfus
NAYS: Trustees Styka, Scales, Wilson, Treasurer Brixie
Motion failed 2-4.

Trustee Veenstra moved to amend LEAP dues from 15,000 to \$5,000.

The motion died from lack of a second.

Continued Board discussion:

- On page 23 of the budget, the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) lists \$20,000 for a storage unit at the Service Center which is not being funded in 2016
- On page 22 of the budget, the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) lists \$162,000 for the federal Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) floodplain mitigation which is not being funded in 2016
- Explanation of the HMGP which was being researched by staff

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Styka, Scales, Wilson, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
NAYS: Trustee Veenstra
Motion carried 5-1.

B. Budget Amendments

Trustee Styka moved to approve the September, 2015 Budget Amendments with a decrease in budgeted fund balance for the General Fund in the amount of \$192,058 which projects a use of fund balance of \$1,119,911. Based on audited 2014 results, the projected Fund Balance at December 31, 2015 will be \$5,993,119. Seconded by Trustee Veenstra.

Finance Director Gomolka offered rationale for the numbers presented and reminded Board members a large portion of the projected savings is within the department salary budgets due to vacancies and attrition.

Board discussion:

- Place where funds would be captured (i.e., lower gas prices within the Township's vehicle fleet) would be in the Motor Pool, which is not reflected in the General Fund

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Styka, Scales, Veenstra, Wilson, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
NAYS: None
Motion carried 6-0.

C. 2015 Township Citizen Survey

Assistant Township Manager/Director of Public Works and Engineering Perry summarized the changes made to the Citizen Survey as outlined in staff memorandum dated September 15, 2015.

Trustee Styka moved to approve the 2015 Meridian Township Citizen Survey as has been distributed to the Board, attached to the motion and authorize staff to proceed with the project. Seconded by Trustee Scales.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Styka, Scales, Veenstra, Wilson, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
NAYS: None
Motion carried 6-0.

D. Communications

Trustees Wilson moved that the Board accept the Clerk's Office for communications from September 15, 2015. Seconded by Clerk Dreyfus.

Board discussion:

- Three (3) letters contained in the Board packet were written in support of the McCurdy goats
- One letter sent directly to Manager Walsh was written in support of the McCurdy goats

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Styka, Scales, Veenstra, Wilson, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
NAYS: None
Motion carried 6-0.

E. Minutes

Clerk Dreyfus moved to approve and ratify the minutes of the September 1, 2015 Regular Meeting. Seconded by Trustee Scales.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Styka, Scales, Veenstra, Wilson, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
NAYS: None
Motion carried 6-0.

F. Bills

Trustee Styka moved that the Township Board approve the Manager's Bills as follows:

Common Cash	\$ 824,651.44
Public Works	\$ 877,983.05
Total Checks	\$1,702,634.49
Credit Card Transactions	\$ 11,977.39
Total Purchases	<u>\$1,714,611.88</u>
ACH Payments	<u>\$ 451,167.51</u>

Seconded by Seconded by Trustee Scales.

Board discussion:

- Inquiry regarding nature of payment to the Ingham County Treasurer for \$21, 307
- \$571,000 payment to the City of East Lansing for sewer operations adjustments is the difference between the estimated quarterly payments to the wastewater treatment and the final water usage numbers at the end of the year
- \$22,000 wetland consultant fee is a demonstration of how much money the Township pays for this service
- Board member belief the Township needs to use the wetland consultant less or pay a lower rate for the services
- The \$22,000 fee was mislabeled and is for the SAW grant to pay a consultant to clean and televisive Township sewers

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Styka, Scales, Veenstra, Wilson, Treasurer Brixie,
Clerk Dreyfus

NAYS: None

Motion carried 6-0.

(Bill list in Official Minute Book)

11. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

Supervisor Pro Tem Brixie opened Public Remarks.

Ann Chaffee, Maurer's Sanitary Cleaners, 1620 Haslett Road, Haslett, spoke in support of El Oasis and its mobile food truck. She requested the Board create a structured policy which allows mobile food units to operate their small business in Meridian Township.

Adelaide Pintor, 216 Williams Street, Lansing, employee of El Oasis, stated her appreciation for this community and the ability of El Oasis to attract individuals to Meridian Township by locating their mobile food unit here.

Brant Johnson, 4515 Oakwood, Okemos, representing El Oasis, LLC, expressed concern with the issues presented to the mobile food truck company through the application process in Meridian Township. He believed that mobile food units will deal with two vending ordinances which, he believes, operate in opposition to one another. Mr. Johnson stated neither ordinance incorporates by reference or specific language the other applicable ordinance. He believed the current vending ordinances does not delineate whether a vendor may come back to the same location for which the vendor applied after 14 days. Mr. Johnson addressed the supplemental use ordinance which restricts vendors to 30 days. He maintained the zoning ordinance is "up to" the discretion of the Director of Community Planning and Development and inquired as to the standards used. Mr. Johnson requested the Board create a policy which allows food vendors to properly vend for one year, a similar time frame used by other municipalities.

Diana Paiz Engle, 2164 Quarry, East Lansing, Capital Area Transportation Authority (CATA) Local Advisory Committee member, spoke in support of Redi-Ride as a user and an expansion of its program. She indicated Redi-Ride is a service for everyone, not just residents with disabilities. Ms. Engle believed Redi-Ride is not only an amenity, but an economic driver which encourages individuals to retain their residency and business within Meridian Township.

[Supervisor Pro Tem Brixie recessed the meeting at 8:42 P.M.]

[Supervisor Pro Tem Brixie reconvened the meeting at 8:58 P.M.]

Sandra Dragoo, 6154 Columbia Street, Haslett, Chief Executive Officer, CATA, availed herself for Board questions during the discussion of the Redi-Ride Program.

Michael “Kevin” Cronan, 5926 Buttonwood Drive, Haslett, requested the Board simplify the process for mobile food units. He requested there be a streamlined licensing process so the concept of food trucks can move forward in Meridian Township.

Fred Wertz, 1212 Foster, Lansing believed CATA’s services to be of excellent quality. He spoke to needed transformation of transportation services in the Lansing region. He addressed the \$20 cost of a Redi-Ride trip as expensive. Mr. Wertz requested the issue of borders be addressed for a comprehensive transportation system within the greater Lansing region. He suggested there be more than one bidder allowed, and offered to have the National Federation of the Blind in Michigan participate in any workgroup formed.

Nina Santucci, 4583 Nakoma Drive, Okemos, owner and operator of the Purple Carrot food truck and Red Haven Restaurant. She stated her mobile food truck has been in operation for five (5) seasons at Saturday’s Farmers Market and has seen great success. She voiced support for streamlining the licensing process for food trucks in Meridian Township.

Donna Rose, 6207 Cobblers Drive, East Lansing, believed something is “broken” with the Redi-Ride system. She suggested a workgroup be formed which includes residents who use the service. Ms. Rose requested the Redi-Ride service be extended to 9:00 P.M. or later in Meridian Township. She requested the next time there is a ballot initiative for this type of serve, the language be modified to not identify any sole source. Ms. Rose alleged most of the trips during the day are reserved for school aged children.

Ody Norkin, 3803 Sandlewood, Okemos, believed a Board meeting is not the appropriate forum to address the complex issue of Redi-Ride, stating the proper forum would be a workgroup. He noted his work history as a purchasing officer for the Michigan Department of Management of Budget. Mr. Norkin stated the Township’s code of conduct booklet specifically prohibits sole source contracts for anything over \$5,000, with a three (3) year review. He stated he can provide the Board with data which proves the open market rate on a taxi ride (a superior product to Redi-Ride’s shared ride) is approximately \$10.00, one-half the cost of a Redi-Ride trip.

Karla Hudson, 6009 Skyline Drive, East Lansing, stated the four (4) hour lead time request promised when Redi-Ride was first implemented has not worked. She requested Board members utilize the Redi-Ride service in an effort to understand the challenges. In the interim, Ms. Hudson requested the hours of service be expanded.

Supervisor Pro Tem Brixie closed Public Remarks.

A. Redi-Ride – Capital Area Transportation Authority

Township Manager Walsh provided information when the issue of Redi-Ride was first brought to him by Mr. Norkin approximately six (6) months ago. He indicated exhaustive material has been provided by CATA on the history of Redi-Ride, both to Mr. Norkin and the Board.

Board and CATA representatives discussion:

- Township is operating under a voter approved millage for expanded CATA service to increase frequency of current routes and to provide Redi-Ride service

- Township Treasurer collects taxes for the transportation program and disperses the funds to CATA
- The Township has the ability to change the parameters through ballot language in 2018
- Township has not had a dialogue with CATA regarding the service needed by its residents
- Board member belief the Township should revisit this issue commencing with creation of an operating agreement which outlines expectations by the Township
- Board member belief having a contract with CATA would provide information on an annual basis which would include the cost per passenger
- Board member concern that ballot language was written to name a sole source provider
- Board member suggestion that the ballot language be “corrected” by placing the issue on the 2016 ballot
- Board member preference for the hours to be expanded to the same as Delta Township hours which is 6:00 AM until 9:00 PM
- Board member preference for the sole source provider language to be worked out so the ballot renewal language does not specifically name CATA as the provider
- Board member belief Meridian Township taxpayers are paying far more than any other community for Redi-Ride and receives the “worst” service
- Board member suggestion to add Sunday Redi-Ride service
- Board member belief the territory should be expanded to at least two (2) miles outside of Meridian Township
- Chart with history contained in the Board packet raised questions regarding annual balances and bus purchases
- CATA took advantage of federal grants for bus purchase/replacement and capital costs did not need to be absorbed and the hourly rate correspondingly changed
- History of the Redi-Ride service since 2000 offered by the CATA representative
- CATA has been giving Meridian Township a subsidy for Redi-Ride since 2008
- Auditors required a change in how CATA was accounting for Meridian Township’s service
- Statement by the CATA representative that both CATA and Meridian Township officials had an understanding since the beginning of the service as to how the Township wanted the service to run
- Periodic meetings between CATA and the Township to discuss the “arrangements” to outline the service hours
- Statement by CATA representative that neither CATA nor the Township felt it necessary to draw up a new agreement
- CATA willing to consider expanded Redi-Ride service when millage is up for a vote in 2018
- CATA’s trained union employees provide caring service to Meridian’s residents
- Costs includes on-street management services, scheduling and telephone services
- 2015 ridership breakdown figures through July:
 - 52% of rides were taken by persons with disabilities and seniors
 - 28% of rides were taken by youth
 - 14% of rides were taken by the general public
 - 6% of rides were taken by helpers for persons with disabilities and children under 42” tall
- Total ridership through July for FY 2015 is 16,803
- Total ridership for FY 2014 was 19,813
- Service cost to Meridian Township was \$38.55 per hour in FY 2014 based on total tax collected (\$298,000)
- Two-tenths of a mill equates to \$298,000 which is then divided by the total vehicle hours of service (7,731 hours)
- CATA receives the total amount of Redi-Ride tax, but millage revenue does not cover CATA’s expenses
- The CATA Board made a decision to cover the difference between taxes collected through the millage and the cost of Redi-Ride services in Meridian Township
- In FY 2014, CATA paid \$141,000 out of its operating funds to supplement the Redi-Ride program
- CATA’s \$141,000 supplement must be part of the decision made regarding expansion of Meridian Township’s service and hours
- Delta Township service began October 1, 2014

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, SEPTEMBER 15, 2015 REGULAR MEETING *APPROVED*

- CATA was able to procure transportation grants for Delta Township as it was new service
- Delta Township pays \$420,000 out of its General Fund for Redi-Ride service over the next three (3) years
- State and federal grants for Delta Township totaled \$1.26 million
- CATA is not putting any funds into Delta Township as Delta Township is not part of CATA due to its location in Eaton County
- Meridian Township is a charter member of CATA and CATA partners with Meridian
- Delta Township's hours of service per year is 10,400 hours v. Meridian Township at 7,731 hours
- A requirement in one grant for Delta Township had to focus on work trips so hours had to be created to address working hours
- Cost of a Spec-Tran ride is \$2.50
- Regular Redi-Ride fare is \$1.25
- Cost of a fixed route fare is \$1.25
- Hourly cost for CATA to provide Redi-Ride transportation is \$22.16
- Hourly cost for CATA to provide Spec-Trans transportation is more than Redi-Ride
- Spec-Tran is for a person with a disability who must be certified by an outside agency (e.g., doctor)
- Spec-Tran hours mirror the same time as a specific fixed route
- As an example, Route 1 hours run from 4:55 AM until 2:00 AM
- No grants currently available for which Meridian Township would qualify
- Delta Township was able to obtain monies through a Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) grant as its focus was on new service within the region which provided service from the urban area to a suburban area to allow additional access for urban based employees
- Delta Township was able to obtain monies through New Freedom Funding as its focus was on service to persons with disabilities who do not currently have access to an area
- Meridian Township is not eligible for New Freedom Funding as Spec-Tran service is already available
- Each grant will expire within the next three (3) years with varying terms of "life"
- Resident desiring a Spec-Tran ride must call the day before by 5:00 PM
- Originally, Meridian Township and CATA had a signed contract dated May 19, 2000 with a ten (10) year time period
- CATA press release dated June 9, 2000 stated it will expand hours in the future which has not happened
- Board member belief the only authority is the November, 2009 ballot proposal which specifically mentions CATA
- Township Board cannot elect to have a different provider until 2018, when the ballot proposal expires
- Four vehicles are used Monday through Friday and two vehicles used on Saturday
- Suggestion to have the Township attorney review the existing "agreement"
- Suggestion to create a small workgroup to begin talks on the issues highlighted this evening
- Excerpt read from a letter written by the Superintendent of Okemos Public Schools regarding the economically disadvantaged students who utilize Redi-Ride
- Suggestion to have a representative from the school district as a member of the workgroup
- Meridian Township initially purchased its buses out of the millage money

It was the consensus of the Board to create a workgroup to begin vetting this issue.

Trustee Scales moved to continue the meeting beyond 10:00 P.M. to complete the Board's agenda. Seconded by Trustee Styka.

Board and staff discussion:

- Out of respect for staff and their need to attend early morning meetings, some employees have already been sent home

Without objection, Supervisor Pro Tem Brixie deleted Agenda Item #11E (Township Branding and Website Project).

Continued Board discussion:

- Preference to eliminate the Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA) from tonight's agenda
- CATA was recently awarded a grant to study form based code along the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Corridor and the CIA is a nice segue way into that grant and should be briefly introduced

Trustee Veenstra moved to delete Agenda Item #11C as it is a new item and there is not sufficient time to address it this late in the evening. Seconded by Clerk Dreyfus.

VOICE VOTE: Motion failed 2-4 (Trustees Scales, Styka, Wilson, Supervisor Pro Tem Brixie).

VOICE VOTE ON THE MAIN MOTION: Motion carried 4-2 (Trustee Veenstra, Clerk Dreyfus).

B. Mobile Food Units

Associate Planner Menser summarized the mobile food unit issue as outlined in staff memorandum dated September 9, 2015.

Board and staff discussion:

- Staff preference to draft new non-zoning regulations in Chapter 38 of the Code of Ordinances
- Adding a new article to Chapter 38's non zoning regulations is the cleanest way to address mobile food units
- New ordinance would allow staff to revise the existing two sections (vendor's license and temporary outdoor use permit) to exempt mobile food units
- Chapter 38 is titled Miscellaneous Licenses
- Board member announcement the new online ordinance program through General Code has key word search capability
- Board member support for making it easy for food trucks to obtain a license
- Temporary use permit within the zoning ordinance allows for granting one 30-day permit at the same location
- If a vendor wishes to go beyond 30 days of operation, a special use permit must be requested
- Suggestion that the Planning Director and the Township Manager consult with the Township Attorney to provide a temporary solution which can be brought back to the Board for approval which would allow El Oasis to commence operation in the interim

It was the consensus of the Board for staff to draft new non-zoning regulations in Chapter 38 of the Code of Ordinances for mobile food units.

C. Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA)

Associate Planner Menser outlined the proposed creation of a Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA) as outlined in staff memorandum dated September 9, 2015.

Board and staff discussion:

- CATA has just received a planning grant to implement form based codes along the Grand River Corridor relative to BRT
- CIA would allow Meridian Township to implement different rules and regulations along the corridor which would be different than those for the rest of the Township
- Lansing Township, City of Lansing and the City of East Lansing already have CIAs and establishing a CIA here would allow Meridian Township to join the other municipalities in planning the BRT along the Michigan Avenue/Grand River Avenue corridor
- Opportunity for the Township to establish form based code through use of an overlay district
- Concern with creation of the CIA given the opportunity to capture incremental taxes
- Board member belief a CIA is very similar to a Downtown Development Authority (DDA) which has the ability to "siphon" off taxes
- Economic Development Corporation (EDC) recommendation to create a CIA without a tax increment financing district
- Establishment of a CIA will open up local and regional grant opportunities for the Township
- Board member preference that something be placed in writing which prevents a TIF district within the CIA
- Concern with zoning requirements by the state which allows for high density residential

- Board member belief high density combats urban sprawl when greenspace, habitats and other land is preserved in exchange for providing that density
- Concern with protection for greenspace and habitats if the state is requiring “carte blanche” for high density residential
- Concern with the logistics for the requirement of expediting the local permitting and inspection process and modifying the Master Plan
- Concern with rushing through the CIA process based on CATA receiving a grant as the Board has a fiduciary responsibility to protect its citizens
- Boundary suggested by the EDC must be thoroughly vetted by the Board
- Board member concern with the distance along Marsh Road given the recommended parameter to be within 500 feet of the main road (Grand River Avenue)
- Board must go through a very specific TIFA process if it chooses to create a TIF
- CIA process is long and there is sufficient time for the Board to thoroughly vet the issue

It was the consensus of the Board to move forward with the creation of a Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA) and place this item on for action at the October 6, 2015 Board meeting.

D. Personnel Policy Manual Draft

Human Resources Director Marx announced she received comments and suggestions from the Clerk and Treasurer. She requested all remaining Board members provide input and pose questions on the draft Township of Meridian Personnel Policy as provided in staff memorandum dated September 11, 2015. She stated the Township attorney is reviewing the draft in anticipation that all Board input will be received to have Board discussion at the October 6th meeting with Board action slated for action at the October 20, 2015 Board meeting.

Board and staff discussion:

- Suggestion for union groups to provide input on the personnel policy manual
- Inquiry if the Township has a labor management council
- One of the two members in the Teamsters Union retired and the remaining member elected to become a non-union employee with a written agreement to retain all benefits previously provided as a member of the Teamsters Union
- Collective bargaining agreements supersede the differences in the Personnel Policy manual
- Board must offer input on the draft document prior to soliciting review from the various union groups
- Personnel Policy is a living document and the Board has the right to make changes when it sees fit

It was the consensus of the Board to have this item return for further discussion at the October 6, 2015 Board meeting.

~~E. Township Branding and Website Project~~

F. Smith Drain Study Results

Deputy Ingham County Drain Commissioner (ICDC) Carla Clos provided a brief synopsis of discussions on the Smith Drain study and report.

James Ensign and Larry Protasiewicz, Spicer Group, 333 West Fort Street, Unit 1405, Detroit, offered a Powerpoint presentation on the results of the Smith Drain Study. Mr. Ensign noted the purpose and scope of the study was to document and inventory the main channel portion of the Smith Drain, and open drain of approximately 3.4 miles which extends from the Red Cedar River through Meridian Township to Sandhill Road in Alaeidon Township. Spicer Group also analyzed the hydrology and the hydraulics of the system, evaluated the effectiveness of the four existing in-line detention basins and determined the necessary maintenance and improvements on the open and enclosed portions of the main channel.

Board, staff and ICDC deputy’s discussion:

- Statement by the Deputy Ingham County Drain Commissioner that the main channel is in “pretty good” shape
- Main problem is the pipe under Jolly Road, which is failing
- Petition must be filed in order to move forward to fix the pipe
- Question is whether to replace the pipe in kind or improve the hydraulics of the system because of the significant flooding which occurs and affects both commercial and residential property in the area
- ICDC Office looked at the 33 sub watersheds relative to the timing of water hitting the main channel
- ICDC did not look up into the 33 sub watersheds
- August, 2015 storm event placed University Park underwater
- Conventional process would be through a Board of Determination after a petition is filed
- All municipal, road authorities, commercial and residential stakeholders should be involved in the process to determine the specific resolution to existing problems
- Specifics won’t be known until all engineering is completed per the Drain Code
- Drain Code provides for a fairly “rigid” process
- Board member belief the Township paid for the study in order to have a better estimate than normal of the cost involved
- Study revealed the scope of the problems
- How the problems would be fixed will determine the cost (e.g., increased size of pipe, building detention downstream (with accompanying easement costs for land to hold the detention) etc.)
- Ingham County Road Department (ICRD) is interested in replacing a portion of Jolly Road
- Timing would be critical to leverage ICRD work being performed on Jolly Road with this potential problem
- ICDC conversation with the ICRD indicated their work would take place in front of Value Tire on Jolly Road and would not extend east to the Okemos/Jolly Road intersection
- Pipe cannot be replaced without opening up Jolly Road which would necessitate a detour
- Work should take place during the summer to avoid football season and student traffic
- Installation of a larger pipe would push the water which is flooding over and on the south side of Jolly Road further downstream onto other properties
- Installation of a larger pipe would require detention storage downstream
- One option would be to store the water before it reaches the pipe under Jolly Road and replace the failed pipe with one which is the same size
- One potential alternative would be to modify the Forsberg Pond which would provide additional capacity to store storm water which travels downstream under Jolly Road
- Pipe at Value Tire which goes into Alaiedon Township is a current restriction in the system which is causing flooding
- “Acceptable” pipe sizes are dependent upon sufficient detention upstream
- Prorated share of the benefit is calculated by the ICDC office according to the Drain Code
- Maintenance only allows a drain to be maintained to its approved design when constructed
- Improvements must go through the petition process
- Difficulty for the Board to budget for unknown drain improvement costs
- Condition of the Smith Drain does not prohibit the Okemos Pointe development from meeting ICDC published standards, either on or off site
- Limitations exist on the regional detention area due to water from the south flowing into the area
- Some municipality must petition the Drain Commissioner’s office for the project to proceed
- Board member preference to have the ICDC outline options for discussion at a future Board meeting
- Most options to create detention are dependent upon the acquisition of land which has an unknown cost at this point in time
- ICDC office is limited each year to maintenance costs of \$5,000 per mile
- Smith Drain is a 14 mile drain system and the cost of pipe replacement would exceed \$70,000

It was the consensus of the Board to have the Ingham County Drain Commissioner’s Office prepare options and cost estimates for the Board to review and bring this item back for discussion in the near future.

G. Daniels Drain Neighborhood Meeting

Assistant Township Manager/Director of Public Works & Engineering Perry requested the Board set a date, time and location for a neighborhood meeting in order to address the proposed project as described and outlined by representatives of the Walden Pond Condominiums.

Board and staff discussion:

- Staff recommendation for the Board to schedule a special meeting for September 29, 2015 at 6:00 P.M. in the Town Hall
- Waiting to start the meeting at 7:00 would result in residents who have small children needing to leave to put their children to bed

Trustee Wilson moved to set a neighborhood meeting to discuss the Daniels Drain Project on September 29, 2015 at 6:00 P.M. to be held at the main meeting room of the Township Hall and direct staff to notify the potentially impacted residents and the general public.

Seconded by Trustee Styka.

Continued Board and staff discussion:

- Inquiry if background material would be available for the Board and the public
- Staff will provide background information and the notice which will be sent to the public concerning this meeting
- Board member belief all Board members can attend the neighborhood meeting as long as there is no Board discussion and no action is taken
- Meeting should be noticed as a special Board meeting in order for Board members to discuss the item to be placed on the agenda

Trustee Veenstra offered the following friendly amendment:

- **Amend the motion to read: Trustee Wilson moved to set a Special Board Meeting to discuss the Daniels Drain project for September 29, 2015 at 6:00 P.M. to be held at the Meridian Municipal Building in the Town Hall Room and direct staff to notify the potentially impacted residents and the general public of its date, time and location.**

The friendly amendment was accepted by the maker of the motion.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 6-0.

12. FINAL PUBLIC REMARKS

Supervisor Pro Tem Brixie opened Public Remarks.

Brant Johnson, 4515 Oakwood, Okemos, representing El Oasis, LLC, requested Board members pursue possible options to reopen El Oasis after consultation with the Township Manager and the Township Attorney. Food trucks were not anticipated in the zoning ordinance and is a “new animal”. He believed it not prudent for mobile food units to negotiate a lease every 14 days as currently interpreted using the existing vendor ordinance. Mr. Johnson believed Option 4 mentioned earlier is the cleanest and most direct approach to achieve resolution to this issue.

Supervisor Pro Tem Brixie closed Public Remarks.

13. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT (None)

14. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS & REPORTS

Clerk Dreyfus reported discussions at the September 3, 2015 Economic Development Corporation (EDC) meeting included mobile food units, Welcome Week, sale of the Meridian Area Resource Center (MARC) building, demolition of the former central fire station, status of MARC tenants after the sale of the building, possible storefront at Meridian Mall, and discussion with subsequent approval of a \$1,000 sponsorship for an event. He also reported meeting with a representative from Tri-County Regional Planning Commission to discuss the Urban Sustainability Accelerator (renamed Imagine Mid-Michigan), which involves the Urban Services Management Area (USMA) and development of sustainable growth in the area. Clerk Dreyfus announced a session will be held on October 1, 2015 at Forsberg Development, 2398 Jolly Road, from 5:00 PM until 7:00 P.M. to discuss key areas of involvement. He announced the Michigan Chapter of Stewardship Network will be hosting a session September 16th at Fenner Nature Center from 7:00 P.M. until 9:00 P.M. titled, "Wetland Restoration in Ingham, Clinton and Eaton County through Multi Layered Partnerships."

Trustee Scales reported his attendance at the September 10, 2015 presentation of the Community Partnership Conservation Award to Meridian Township by representatives from the Department of Natural Resources for response to the Chronic Wasting Disease issue. He reported his attendance, along with Trustee Styka, at this morning's code enforcement meeting where the 1,020 complaints from January through August in 2015 were reviewed and discussed. Trustee Scales listed the breakdown of the top three categories as follows:

- Nuisance complaints: 214
- Tall grass and vegetation: 206
- Missing address numbers: 196

Trustee Scales announced he was again asked to mentor students in the Black Student Union at Haslett High School for the current school year.

Trustee Styka reported Senator Hertel was one of two sponsors of legislation today which would affect our school districts as it would require a new emphasis in sex education that no means no where sexuality is concerned. He stated this legislation deals with the topic of silence is not consent. He announced the Heritage Festival will be held Saturday, September 19th, at the Meridian Historical Village and reminded residents of the semi-annual recycling event on October 3, 2015 at Chippewa Middle School.

Trustee Veenstra requested the Township ensure due process is afforded to Vance Kincaid regarding repairs to his residence. He voiced appreciation for the letter written by Donna Rose regarding Redi-Ride and the BRT. Trustee Veenstra reported his attendance at the regular meeting of the Transportation Review Committee of Tri County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC) on September 9, 2015, where a recommendation was made to fund Phase 2 of the RAM Trail.

Treasurer Brixie reported the use of a tax tent and "tax taxi" for last Thursday, Friday and Monday, to accommodate residents needing to pay their property taxes by September 14th due to the delay in repaving the parking lot. She expressed appreciation to the management team for their combined customer service excellence and the owner of Meridian Sun Golf Course for use of a golf cart to provide residents with rides.

Trustee Wilson expressed sympathy to the family of Firefighter Dennis Rodeman and all firefighters in the Lansing region for their loss.

16. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Veenstra moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Clerk Dreyfus.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 6-0.

Supervisor Pro Tem Brixie adjourned the meeting at 12:08 A.M.

JULIE BRIXIE
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR PRO TEM

BRETT DREYFUS, CMMC
TOWNSHIP CLERK

Sandra K. Otto, Secretary