

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
TOWNSHIP BOARD VIRTUAL REGULAR MEETING **-APPROVED-**
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos MI 48864-1198
517.349.1232, Virtual Meeting via Zoom
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2021 **6:00 pm.**

PRESENT: Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Jackson, Opsommer, Sundland, Wisinski

ABSENT: Supervisor Styka

STAFF: Township Manager Walsh, Director of Public Works Perry, Fire Chief Hamel, Community Planning and Development Director Kieselbach, Information Technology Director Gebes, Parks and Recreation Director Maisner, Finance Director Mattison, Human Resources Director Tithof, Economic Development and Neighborhoods Director Clark, Communications Manager Yates, Principal Planner Menser, Human Services Specialist Jackson

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Clerk Guthrie called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Trustee Wisinski moved to appoint Trustee Opsommer as Supervisor Pro-Tem in Supervisor Styka's absence. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Treasurer Deschaine Trustees Jackson, Opsommer, Sundland, Wisinski, Clerk Guthrie

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 6-0

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS

Supervisor Pro-Tem Opsommer led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Clerk Guthrie called the roll of the Board. Supervisor Styka was absent.

4. PRESENTATIONS

A. 2020 Township Annual Report

Township Manager Walsh offered an overview of the 2020 Township Annual Report.

5. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Supervisor Pro-Tem Opsommer opened public remarks at 6:04 pm

None

Supervisor Pro-Tem Opsommer closed public remarks at 6:05 pm.

6. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

Manager Walsh reported

- Deer Management Program – Cull Deer Phase: to date 214 deer have been culled and the program maximum is 326. This phase is conducted with DNR oversight and approval
- LEAP Art Grant – the Township will be applying for the \$10,000 Public Art Grant and the proposed installation location is in front of the Marketplace on the Green. The grant was recommended by Trustee Jackson and the Township received previous grant funding in 2013
- Okemos Road Bridge Construction – There is a rumor that the Green Pedestrian Bridge would also be taken down during construction on the Okemos Road Bridge. This is not true. The Green Bridge will NOT be taken down or disturbed during this construction. Construction will occur in 2022 and anticipate the construction will take 6-8 months
- He reported that Mary Rhodes, a recognized resident and community contributor, recently passed away. She is the mother of Matt Rhodes who owns Dusty Cellar and Martha Bashore who serves on the Board of Review
- Supervisor Pro-Tem Opsommer stated the Andev Group has withdrawn from the Hannah Boulevard Project. He asked the status of the conditions that were verbally agreed to on the northern parcel. Manager Walsh stated there was an agreement on the buffer, public easement and road closure. He referred to his comments during the September 15, 2020 Township Board meeting outlining the parties agreement and stated he will be meeting on Friday with the property owners to discuss the property issues and the withdrawal of the Andev project.
- Road Program – It is in its second year of the ten program and the plan is to have completed 44 miles this year which is ahead of the projected 30 miles by the end of 2021

7. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Treasurer Deschaine:

- Taxes are due on February 16 at 5 pm. Although most residents are not having a difficulty paying their taxes, others may be unable to and asked that those residents contact the Treasurer’s Office to discuss payment options
- Attended the DDA meeting on February 1 with Supervisor Styka and reported the demolition goals have been met and the buildings are down
- On January 20th:
 - Attended the Lansing Regional Chamber Meridian East Lansing Roundtable
 - Thanks to Director Gebes, Meridian Township was able to host the virtual Capital Area Treasurer’s Association meeting where they received a report from the Ingham County Equalization Director,
 - With appointee Robin Lewis, he attended his first Capital Area Transit Authority meeting

Clerk Guthrie:

- Last week, presented at the East Lansing Kiwanis meeting and members asked about the status of the former Walnut Hills site
- Received information on a May Election from the Okemos School District for the operating and sinking fund millage. Staff is preparing for the event
- Received the results from the County on their audit on Precinct 6 in December and submitted tabulating results from the Risk Limiting Audit. The Precinct 6 Audit did illustrate several discrepancies in the administration of the election and will be meeting with County Clerk Byrum to resolve the issues in order to move forward with the next election.
- Working on organizing and retaining the board packets, minutes, and other necessary documentation for the office

Trustee Jackson:

- On January 26, board members participated in a joint meeting with the other boards and commissions sharing information on the accomplishments for 2020 and goals for 2021
- On January 27, attended the annual meeting of the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission and will hold a delegate's position on the CARTS committee
- Attended DDA meeting on February 1
- Parks and Recreation Department received the design recognition award from MParks for the Marketplace on the Green

Manager Walsh:

- Announced Deputy Manager Perry received the State of Michigan Outstanding Assistant Manager Award

Supervisor Pro-Tem Opsommer

- Attended the Lansing Regional Chamber Meridian East Lansing Roundtable. The Township's Small Business Grants Program was one of the main topics of discussion
- Attended Meridian Transportation Commission meeting outlining the 2021 road projects, Okemos Road Bridge and Township's Pathway Master Plan

8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Trustee Sundland moved to approve the agenda as amended with the additions of Action items #12F Resolution Affirming Local State of Emergency in Charter Township of Meridian and #12G Resolution Affirming Emergency Regulation 2021-01. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski

VOICE/HAND VOTE: Motion carried 6-0.

9. CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor Pro-Tem Opsommer reviewed the consent agenda.

Trustee Wisinski moved to adopt the Consent Agenda as presented. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Pro-Tem Opsommer, Trustees Sundland, Wisinski, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Jackson, Clerk Guthrie

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 6-0

A. Communications

Trustee Wisinski the communications not already assigned for disposition be referred to the Township Manager or Supervisor for follow-up. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Pro-Tem Opsommer, Trustees Sundland, Wisinski,

Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Jackson, Clerk Guthrie

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 6-0

B. Approval of Minutes – January 19, 2021 Virtual Regular Meeting and January 26, 2021 Virtual Joint Meeting of Boards and Commissions

Trustee Wisinski moved to approve and ratify the minutes of the January 19, 2021 Virtual Regular Meeting and January 26, 2021 Virtual Joint Meeting of Boards and Commissions, as submitted. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Pro-Tem Opsommer, Trustees Sundland, Wisinski, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Jackson, Clerk Guthrie

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 6-0

C. Bills

Trustee Wisinski moved to approve that the Township Board approve the Manager’s Bills as follows: Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine

Common Cash	\$	940,905.98
Public Works	\$	362,817.19
Trust & Agency	\$	<u>3,324.64</u>
Total Checks	\$	1,307,047.81
Credit Card Transactions 12/24/2020-01/13/2021	\$	18,291.16
Total Purchases	\$	<u>1,325,338.97</u>
ACH Payments	\$	<u>616,527.19</u>

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Pro-Tem Opsommer, Trustees Sundland, Wisinski, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Jackson, Clerk Guthrie

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 6-0

10. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY – NONE

11. HEARINGS - NONE

12. ACTION ITEMS

- A. Rezoning #20050 (DTN 2013 LLC) rezone 31.63 acres east of Central Park Drive and north of Grand River Avenue from RA (Single Family-Medium Density) to RD (Multiple Family-maximum eight units per acre)-**FINAL ADOPTION**

Treasurer Deschaine moved to adopt the resolution approving the final adoption Rezoning #20050 to rezone approximately 31.63 acres located east of Central Park Drive and north of Grand River Avenue from RA (Single Family-Medium Density) to RD (Multiple Family-maximum eight units per acre) with conditions. Seconded by Trustee Jackson

Discussion:

- Inquired about including a more diverse economic culture to include affordable housing
- Concerns were expressed on the number of housing units being developed and protecting the wetlands on the site
- Would like to see a definition on what “missing middle” housing is meant to be

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Pro-Tem Opsommer, Trustees Sundland, Wisinski, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Jackson

NAYS: Clerk Guthrie

Motion carried: 5-1

- B. Economic Development Corporation Appointment

Clerk Guthrie move to approve the appointment of Henry Kwok to the Economic Development Corporation for a term ending 12/31/2026. Seconded by Trustee Jackson

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Sundland, Wisinski, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Jackson, Supervisor Pro-Tem Opsommer

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 6-0

- C. Resolution Commemorating Black History Month

Trustee Wisinski move to approve the Resolution Commemorating Black History Month. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustee Wisinski, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Jackson, Supervisor Pro-Tem Opsommer, Trustee Sundland

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 6-0

- D. Extension of Poverty Exemption to Qualified Households

Treasurer Deschaine move that the Township Board approve the Resolution Extending the Property Exemption to Qualified Households. Seconded by Trustee Jackson

Discussion:

- Human Services Specialist Jackson outlined the Property Exemption Program for qualified households
- If the resolution is passed before February 19, an applicant's request can be carried for three (3) years without the requirement for annual certification
- The asset total does not include the value of the residence

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Jackson, Supervisor Pro-Tem Opsommer, Trustees Sundland, Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 6-0

E. Pension Board Appointment

Trustee Jackson move to approve the appointment of Amy Holda to the Pension Board for a term ending 12/31/2022. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Jackson, Supervisor Pro-Tem Opsommer, Trustees Sundland, Wisinski, Clerk Guthrie

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 6-0

F. Resolution Affirming Local State of Emergency in Charter Township of Meridian

Trustee Wisinski move that the Township Board approve the Resolution Affirming Local State of Emergency Regulation in the Charter Township of Meridian. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine

Discussion:

- Director Kieselbach stated food pantries are currently not an allowed use in the Township. In order to facilitate the process, a State of Emergency is required to be declared first and then regulations can be developed for the temporary micro-food pantries.
- There could be a second need for a State of Emergency Declaration for virtual meetings in the future.
- First step is to validate the Supervisor's State of Emergency and the second step is to enable the temporary food pantries.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustee Jackson, Supervisor Pro-Tem Opsommer, Trustees Sundland, Wisinski, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine,

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 6-0

G. Resolution Affirming Emergency Regulation 2021-01

Clerk Guthrie move that the Township Board approve the Resolution Affirming Emergency Regulation 2021-01. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski

Discussion:

- Clerk Guthrie outlined the development of a food pantry program in the Township. A local company is donating and building three pantry structures and she is working on facilitating their installation locations
- Director Kieselbach summarized the temporary regulations and standards for micro-food pantries
- Suggested promoting Meridian Cares on the food pantry structures

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Pro-Tem Opsommer, Trustees Sundland, Wisinski, Clerk Guthrie Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Jackson

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 6-0

13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. 2021 Citizen Survey

Manager Walsh outlined the Citizen Survey project which is performed every three (3) years and suggested the Board may want to consider creating a more question specific survey this year instead of the standard national survey used in previous years. Deputy Director Perry summarized the costs and the option of conducting it online.

Discussion:

- Suggested partnering with the schools or other communities and the costs could be shared
- Specific questions could include areas such as the deer management program
- Staff suggested they research the development of a custom survey including costs and share the survey that was performed in St. Joseph
- If national survey comparative questions are necessary, the Township will need to work with the previous company and only a few specific questions can be included
- The national citizen survey sample size is too small when looking at the actual results
- Manager Walsh reported one community had incorporated their adopted goals into a survey and allowed the residents to rank them

Board consensus to place this item on the next Board meeting agenda.

14. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Supervisor Pro-Tem Opsommer Opened Public Remarks at 8:19 pm.

Phyllis Vaughn, 6100 Balog Court, Haslett, stated she believes there is a need for food pantries and supplies she highly recommended are soup, baby items such as pull-ups and personal hygiene products.

Supervisor Pro-Tem Opsommer Closed Public Remarks at 8:22 pm.

15. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Treasurer Deschaine thanked the Clerk for the packet, concise minutes and including meeting notices under communications.

Clerk Guthrie thanked Administrative Assistant II Faust for packet and minute preparation. She also thanked the Fire Department personnel for responding to her son's call for assistance with an older gentleman who fainted in the Meridian Mall parking lot.

16. ADJOURNMENT

Treasurer Deschaine moved to adjourn. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski

VOICE/HAND VOTE: Motion carried 6-0.

Supervisor Pro-Tem Opsommer adjourned the meeting at 8:25 pm.

RONALD J. STYKA,
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

DEBORAH GUTHRIE,
TOWNSHIP CLERK