

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
TOWNSHIP BOARD JOINT MEETING - **APPROVED** -  
PARK COMMISSION  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS  
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION  
LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD  
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198  
349-1200, Town Hall Room  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 4, 2005, **6:00 P.M.**

**TOWNSHIP BOARD**

PRESENT: Supervisor McGillicuddy, Clerk Helmbrecht, Treasurer Hunting, Trustees Brixie, Such,  
Veenstra, Woiwode  
ABSENT: None

**PARK COMMISSION**

PRESENT: Chair Dersch, Commissioners Banas, Jaramillo, Smith  
ABSENT: None

**PLANNING COMMISSION**

PRESENT: Chair Ochberg, Commissioners Clark, Deits, Jackson, Krupiarz, Savage, Wilcox, Wolfe  
ABSENT: Commissioner Reddy

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORP**

PRESENT: Members Hunting (ex-officio), Keith, Richards, Thiel, White  
ABSENT: Members Rowlee, Tons, Vine

**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**

PRESENT: Members Shoup, Stier, Such, Wolfe  
ABSENT: Chair Hershiser

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

PRESENT: Chair Clos, Commissioners Black, Gregory, Thomas, Kielbaso  
ABSENT: Commissioners Eberhardt, Lederle

**LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD**

PRESENT: Members Dersch, Helmbrecht, Thomas  
ABSENT: Members Caszatt, Haines, Kindel, Rosenman, Woiwode

STAFF: Township Manager Gerald Richards, Director of Community Planning & Development  
Mark Kieselbach, Director of Parks & Recreation LuAnn Maisner

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER  
Supervisor McGillicuddy called the Township Board meeting to order at 6:02 P.M.
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE  
Supervisor McGillicuddy led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. ROLL CALL  
Supervisor McGillicuddy called the roll of the Board.
4. PUBLIC REMARKS  
Supervisor McGillicuddy opened Public Remarks.

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, JOINT MEETING, JANUARY 4, 2005 \*APPROVED\*

Vance Kincaid, 4530 Nakoma Drive, Okemos, expressed concerns regarding the widening of Okemos Road as it may impact the loss of sports field(s) along that road, sidewalk placement and location of high tension power lines..

Supervisor McGillicuddy closed Public Remarks.

5. REPORTS/BOARD COMMENT/NEW WORRIES

Trustee Veenstra felt it would be useful to hold an informational meeting with the public on the widening of Okemos Road.

Trustee Such pointed out that the Ingham County Road Commission would be the appropriate party to hold the informational meeting as the Township does not have jurisdiction over Okemos Road.

6. APPROVAL OF AGENDA - OR CHANGES

**Trustee Such moved to approve the agenda as submitted. Seconded by Trustee Brixie.**

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

7. CONSENT AGENDA (GREEN)

Supervisor McGillicuddy reviewed the consent agenda.

**Trustee Brixie moved to adopt the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Treasurer Hunting.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Brixie, Such, Veenstra, Woiwode, Supervisor McGillicuddy, Clerk Helmbrecht, Treasurer Hunting

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

The adopted Consent Agenda items are as follow:

A. Communications

(1). Board Information (BI)

Shelley Lowe, 1860 Yosemite, Okemos; RE: Opposition to Zoning Amendment #04080 (Township Board)

Barbara Schmidt, 3980 E. Sunwind Drive, Okemos; RE: Opposition to Zoning Amendment #04080 (Township Board)

(2) Regional Linkage (RL)

Julie A. Wendt, Director, Licensing Division, State of Michigan, Department of Labor & Economic Growth, Liquor Control Commission; RE: SDM license request from East Lansing Food Co-operative

(3). Staff Communication/Referral (SC)

SC-1 Michigan Townships Association Legislative Fax December 17, 2004 Edition

(4). On File in the Clerk's Office (OF)

Materials received at the December 21, 2004 Meeting

Barbara A. Burke & John P. Leininger, 3895 Roxbury, Okemos; RE: Opposition to Zoning Amendment #04080 (Township Board)

Eleanor Luecke, President, LINC, PO Box 40, Okemos; RE: Zoning Amendment #04080 (Township Board)

John T. Anderson, 215 W. Newman Road, Okemos; RE: Opposition to Zoning Amendment #04080 (Township Board).

**Trustee Brixie moved that the communications be received and placed on file, and any communications not already assigned for disposition be referred to the Township Manager**

**or Supervisor for follow-up. Seconded by Treasurer Hunting.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Brixie, Such, Veenstra, Woiwode, Supervisor  
McGillicuddy, Clerk Helmbrecht, Treasurer Hunting  
NAYS: None  
Motion carried unanimously.

B. Bills

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

Common Cash	\$ 112,525.96
Public Works	\$ 12,117.37
Total Checks	\$ 124,643.33
Credit Card Transactions	\$ 17,809.14
Total Purchases	<u>\$ 142,452.47</u>
ACH Payments	<u>\$ 265,692.41</u>

**Seconded by Treasurer Hunting.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Brixie, Such, Veenstra, Woiwode, Supervisor  
McGillicuddy, Clerk Helmbrecht, Treasurer Hunting  
NAYS: None  
Motion carried unanimously.

[Bill list in Official Minute Book]

C. Department Director Employment Agreement

**Trustee Brixie moved approval of the employment agreement with Stephen D. Gebes as the Director of Information Technology and authorize the Supervisor and Clerk to sign the same. Seconded by Treasurer Hunting.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Brixie, Stier, Such, Woiwode,  
Supervisor McGillicuddy, Clerk Helmbrecht, Treasurer Hunting  
NAYS: None  
Motion carried unanimously.

8. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY (None)

9. HEARINGS (CANARY) (None)

10. ACTION ITEMS/ENDS (PINK) (None)

11. DISCUSSION ITEMS/ENDS (ORCHID) (None)

12. VISION SESSION/ENDS: Joint Meeting with Township Boards and Commissions

Clerk Helmbrecht swore in new and returning members of the various boards and commissions.

Supervisor McGillicuddy explained the purpose of the joint meeting was to discuss future goals and accomplishments of each body. She requested the Boards' and Commissions' input in areas of problems, frustration, improvement and communication.

Supervisor McGillicuddy summarized the following Board accomplishments:

- Formal adoption of the Greenspace Plan
- Mixed Use Zoning Ordinance
- Current and future work on the Lake Lansing Zoning District

Supervisor McGillicuddy asked participants to discuss current projects and goals of their respective bodies.

Meeting participants discussed the following:

Planning Commission:

- Public hearing scheduled in February on the Master Plan

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, JOINT MEETING, JANUARY 4, 2005 \*APPROVED\*

- Initiative to give the Director of Community Planning & Development authority to approve handicap accessibility to homes without going through the variance process at the Zoning Board of Appeals

Zoning Board of Appeals:

- Overview of the ZBA and its functions
- Basic function is to grant relief to the misapplication or unreasonable restriction(s) of the ordinance in unique circumstances
- Ongoing goal to build a record of findings of fact to support the decision when granting or denying a variance
- ZBA decision are only appealable or overturned in a court of law
- Request that the Board continue to move forward on dealing with the issues unique to the Lake Lansing area

Economic Development Corporation:

- Three Design Meridian models
- Two Mixed Use PUD projects
- Attempt to procure Economic Development grants
- [www.meridiantownshipedc.com](http://www.meridiantownshipedc.com) website
- Creation of the Meridian Area Business Association (MABA) Directory

Park Commission:

- Introduction of new Park Commissioners
- Parks as a defining characteristic of the community
- Parks show residents that governments cares about its citizens' health, teaches sportsmanship, promotes volunteerism and protects natural amenities
- Eight hundred seventy seven (877) acres within 27 parks
- Park Commission responsible by state statute for providing parks and recreation facilities
- Director Maisner responsible for pulling together the organized recreational component
- Majority of Parks operation from the 1/3 mill
- Current millage level difficult to stretch for land acquisition
- Completion of Phase I of Hartrick Park
- Completion of Cedar Bend Heights Neighborhood Park
- Paving of parking lot at Nancy Moore Park
- Annual Meridian Heritage Festival
- Sunsets with Shakespeare Program
- Drum Run
- Park Ranger Program
- Red Cedar River Float
- Five Eagle Scout projects completed last year
- Increase in number of vendors at the Farmer's Market
- Five year Park & Recreation Plan with accompanying grant funds
- Development of site plan for future expansion of the Harris Nature Center
- Installation of pavilion and restrooms at Meridian Road North Park
- Trail improvement and installation of parking lot at Brattin Woods Park
- Rain gardens within the park around the Towar Garden Recreation Center
- Summer renovation of Wonch Park
- Replacement of Legg Park foot bridge
- Work with the Planning Commission and Planning staff to encourage developers to set aside land for neighborhood parks
- Change in state law which will require girls athletic season playing time to occur at the same time as boys athletic season playing time

Environmental Commission:

- Introduction of new members
- Serve at the request of the Board or Planning Commission for review and advice on environmental matters
- Impact assessment and site inventories to offer advice on environmental features

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, JOINT MEETING, JANUARY 4, 2005 \*APPROVED\*

- Proposed guidelines for Natural Features Assessment
- Provide environmental reviews and support to the Land Preservation Advisory Board
- Preservation of forest resources
- Heritage Tree Program
- Innovative strategies within the Township for open space preservation
- Prohibition of site access by owners/developers
- Function and role of the Environmental Commission
- Opportunity to meet with land owners to consider low impact design
- Overview of Environmental Stewardship Awards

Land Preservation Advisory Board

- Report produced which lists the amount of property reviewed, amount of property acquired and pending actions of the Land Preservation Advisory Board (LPAB)
- Acquisition of several pieces of important property
- Fiscally responsible on purchases
- LPAB process as a model for other communities around the country

Planning Commission Chair Ochberg responded to an earlier request for set asides for neighborhood parks in plats. Current Michigan law prohibits a requirement for set aside land for parks in a platted subdivision. The Planning Commission has submitted two (2) amendments to the Board on planned unit developments and mixed use planned unit developments which would facilitate negotiation for a neighborhood park by streamlining the processes.

William White requested the various Boards and Commissions send letters to the Ingham County Road Commission to urge underground utilities for the Okemos Road Widening Project

Environmental Commission Chair Clos expressed thanks for the assistance, support and guidance of the Planning Staff as well as other Township staff.

Trustee Veenstra asked the other ZBA members their thoughts on the initiative mentioned by Member Wolfe to give the Director of Community Planning & Development authority to approve handicap accessibility to homes without going through the variance process at the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Member Shoup indicated it was his understanding the Director of Community Planning & Development does have leeway on what type of ramp can be placed at a residence or commercial building. The ZBA would like the Director to have more leeway as he felt there are some unreasonable restrictions.

Treasurer Hunting noted the ideas and suggestions from this evening have been recorded and the Supervisor will take these under advisement and would be considered when Township goals are developed for the upcoming year.

Treasurer Hunting also expressed appreciation to the new and returning appointees for their willingness to participate in this group effort.

Trustee Woiwode inquired if there was a formal process to request the various Boards and Commissions to look at pieces of the Master Plan, as she felt the expert input from each Board/Commission critical at this point in setting the course of the Township over the next twenty (20) years.

Planning Commission Chair Ochberg noted the Master Plan is available on the Township's website at [www.twp.meridian.mi.us](http://www.twp.meridian.mi.us)

Supervisor McGillicuddy thanked the participants for their attendance.

13. PUBLIC REMARKS\*

Supervisor McGillicuddy opened Public Remarks.

Vance Kincaid, 4530 Nakoma Drive, Okemos, spoke again to the potential negative impact the widening of Okemos Road will have on the sports playing fields and to the placement of the high

tension lines. He felt the Township was the appropriate forum for a public meeting on these issues.

Supervisor McGillicuddy closed Public Remarks.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Supervisor McGillicuddy adjourned the meeting at 7:25 P.M.

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SUSAN MCGILLICUDDY  
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

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MARY M. G. HELMBRECHT  
TOWNSHIP CLERK

Sandra K. Otto, Secretary