



**AGENDA**  
MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP  
COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
March 27, 2024 6:00 PM

---

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
2. ROLL CALL
3. PUBLIC REMARKS
4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
  - A. December 13, 2023 Regular Meeting DRAFT Minutes
6. COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER REPORT
  - A. 2024 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Report
7. COMMISSION MEMBERS REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS
  - A. Chair's Report
  - B. Township Board Liaison's Report
  - C. Commissioner Reports
8. ACTION ITEMS
  - A. DAS and Small Cell Policy
9. DISCUSSION ITEMS
  - A. General Fund Allocation for Communications Commission Grants
  - B. Communications Commission Member Recruitment
10. COMMUNICATIONS
  - A. Compliments/Complaints
  - B. Correspondences
11. REPORTS
  - A. Video Service Provider(s)
  - B. Programming
    - i. Program Totals and Video On-Demand Analytics
  - C. Website & Social Media
    - i. Website Analytics
    - ii. Social Media Analytics
  - D. Promotions/Publications
    - i. 2024 Prime Meridian Magazine
  - E. Finance
    - i. PEG/Franchise Fees
  - F. HOMTV Internship/Alumni
  - G. Broadband
    - i. Merit BEAD Mapping Challenge
12. PUBLIC REMARKS
13. ADJOURNMENT

---

All comments limited to 3 minutes, unless prior approval for additional time for good cause is obtained from the Commission Chair.

Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Meridian Township Communications Department; Communications Manager, Brandie Yates, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 or 517.853.4208 - Ten Day Notice is Required.  
Meeting Location: 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 Administrative Conference Room



CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
Communications Commission Regular Meeting **APPROVED** minutes  
Wednesday, December 13, 2023 | 6:00 pm

PRESENT: Chair, Brian Seipel; Commissioner, Leslie Charles; Commissioner, Lisa Whiting-Dobson  
ABSENT: Alternate Commissioner, Mike Nevells  
STAFF: Samantha Diehl, Communications Manager; Rachael Stohlin, Marketing and Public Relations Specialist  
TOWNSHIP: Clerk Deborah Guthrie  
COUNSEL: None  
COMCAST/AT&T: None

**1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Chair Seipel called the meeting to order at **6:05 pm**.

**3. PUBLIC REMARKS**

Wayne Beyea, a resident of Meridian Township and a faculty member at Michigan State University, does not have adequate internet service at his home. Since he lives in a rural location, Comcast has not laid fiber in his area yet. To have Comcast fiber installed to his house, Mr. Beyea would need to pay over six thousand dollars out-of-pocket. He asked the Commission to think of solutions to assist him and other residents who may have this issue.

**4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Commissioner Charles moved **TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS SUBMITTED**. Seconded by Commissioner Whiting-Dobson.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chair Seipel moved **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22, 2023 REGULAR MEETING**. Seconded by Commission Whiting-Dobson.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

**6. COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER REPORT**

Manager Diehl went over the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter Communications Manager Report:

HOMTV and CAMTV channel encoders were replaced in order to fix the audio/video issues on both channels. After those were fixed, the CAMTV video server failed due to old age. Money was requested for an emergency purchase and staff is selecting what company to go with.

Presented the 2023 Communications Department Goals and provided details about the 2024 Township budget.

Manager Frank Walsh and Communications Department released first episode of Good Morning, Meridian, a new monthly show hosted by Manager Walsh to provide updates about projects, events, and activities in the Township.

Highlighted the 2024 budget for the Communications Department.

7. **COMMISSION MEMBERS REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Communications Chair: None.

Township Board Liaison: Clerk Guthrie discussed the Redevelopment Ready Certification, LuAnn Maisner's retirement, Robin Faust's retirement, Courtney Wisinski being named the new Parks and Recreation Director, the Board is looking at the Master Plan. Clerk Guthrie had a meeting with officials to discuss franchise and PEG fee legislation that would slash PEG fees.

Commissioners Report: None.

8. **ACTION ITEMS**

**A. Set 2024 Meeting Schedule**

At the last meeting of the year, the Communications Commission must set their 2024 meeting schedule. Commissioner Whiting-Dobson requested that the December 11 meeting be scheduled for a different day due to Michigan State University holding finals that week. The new December meeting date proposed was for December 18, 2024.

Commissioner Whiting-Dobson **MOVED TO APPROVE THE 2024 COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULE AS AMENDED.** Seconded by Chair Seipel.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

**B. Chair and Vice Chair Appointments**

According to Rule 4 of the Communications Commission Rules and Procedures, a new Chair and Vice Chair must be selected at the last or first regular meeting in a calendar year.

Commissioner Whiting-Dobson **MOVES TO APPROVE LESLIE CHARLIES AS THE COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION CHAIR FOR THE 2024 CALENDAR YEAR.** Seconded by Chair Seipel.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Charles **MOVES TO APPROVE LISA WHITING-DOBSON AS THE COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION VICE CHAIR FOR THE 2024 CALENDAR YEAR.** Seconded by Chair Seipel.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

9. **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**A. General Fund Allocation for Communications Commission Grants**

At the September 6, 2023 Communications Commission regular meeting, Manager Diehl informed the Commission of a resident on Meridian Road who is unable to receive Comcast service without paying out of pocket for the fiber to be installed. The reason they have to pay out of pocket is because they live in an area that Comcast fiber has not been installed yet.

The resident reached out to Manager Diehl to ask if there was any way the Township can intervene. At the same September 6, 2023 Communications Commission meeting, Clerk Deborah Guthrie informed the Commission that money from the General Fund can be allocated to the Commission in the form of grants to be awarded to residents who applied.

Clerk Guthrie informed the Commission that both the Meridian Township Environmental Commission (EC) and the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) utilize grants that are awarded to community members in the Township.

Clerk Guthrie suggested that staff or the Commission meet with the chair or staff from the EC and EDC to hear about their grant processes and procedures and the Commission agreed.

**B. Communications Commission Member Recruitment**

Chair Seipel, Commissioner Charles, and Commissioner Whiting-Dobson have expressed interest in reaching out to individuals who may want to serve on the Communications Commission.

Commissioner Charles suggested they make a short list of criteria for what they're looking for in members. Commissioner Whiting-Dobson agreed with Commissioner Charles and stated they should decide what areas of expertise they're looking for when considering applicants.

10. **COMMUNICATIONS**

**A. Compliments/Complaints**

None.

**C. Correspondences**

A resident is concerned about the small cell tower ordinance in Meridian Township and would like it amended.

11. **REPORTS**

**A. Video Service Provider(s)**

None.

## **B. Programming**

Program totals and video on-demand analytics were shared in the packet.

## **C. Website & Social Media**

Website and social media analytics were shared by Marketing and Public Relations Specialist Rachael Stohlin. Google Analytics for the Meridian Township was fixed and is now properly collecting information. HOMTV is still having Google Analytics issues.

Specialist Stohlin stated that the Township email newsletters are performing at a 50-60% open rate where other government email newsletters perform at around a 30% open rate. Specialist Stohlin also stated that Nextdoor has the largest following of all Township social media accounts.

## **D. Promotions/Publications**

The Prime Meridian Magazine will be released early 2024.

## **E. Finance**

None.

## **F. HOMTV Internship/Alumni**

Manager Diehl stated that there were no new applicants for the fall 2023 semester, but that there was one returning HOMTV intern who worked on two documentaries. Staff conducted 10 interviews for the spring 2024 HOMTV internship and will be making their decisions shortly. The spring 2024 semester will be paid and is estimated to begin the week of January 15.

## **12. PUBLIC REMARKS**

Wayne Beyea thanked the Commission and staff for trying to look into his issue. He would also like further information on what it would take to get another service provider in their area.

## **13. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Whiting-Dobson moved **TO ADJOURN THE MEETING**. Seconded by Commissioner Charles.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously

Chair Seipel adjourned the meeting at 7:59 pm.



Communications  
Commission

# COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER REPORT



**Communications Department  
1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Report  
January-March 2024**

---

### **CAMTV Channel Issues**

The CAMTV channel video server failed and needs to be replaced. Since the HOMTV channel video server is also aging, Staff decided to upgrade that equipment as well. After many demos and calls with representatives from three companies, Cablecast was chosen to replace the old equipment.

The equipment is expected to arrive in three weeks and will be installed by Manager Diehl and Brian Kusch from MSU.

### **Prime Meridian Magazine**

The 2024 Prime Meridian Magazine was sent out to all Township residents in March. Physical copies will also be available at both the Meridian Township Municipal Building and the Meridian Township Service Center. A digital copy has also been made available on the Meridian Township website. More about the magazine will be included in agenda item 12D.

### **Good Morning, Meridian**

Staff continue to film monthly episodes of Good Morning, Meridian. The fourth episode will air on March 26.

### **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – Meridian Township Farmers’ Market and the Friends of Historic Meridian.**

In 2024, the Meridian Township Farmers’ Market and the Friends of Historic Meridian celebrate their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversaries. The Communications Department is working with both groups to assist with 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary event planning and promotion.

For the Farmers’ Market, a new logo is being created by freelancer Courtland Jenkins and should be finished in April. Input for the logo was provided by the Farmers’ Market Advisory Committee and the Farmers’ Market 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee. The Farmers’ Market will hold their main 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary event on Saturday, May 4, which is the opening day of the outdoor market, but they will also be celebrating through the remainder of the outdoor season (May-October).

The Friends of Historic Meridian will hold their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary event on Sunday, May 5 at the Meridian Historical Village. Planning is still underway and more details will be provided at a later date.

### **Marketing & Communications**

#### **Chinese New Year Celebration**

The Greater Lansing Chinese Association hosted their annual Chinese New Year Celebration on Sunday, February 11 at the Meridian Mall. Every year, the Communications Department assists with marketing this event and provides video and photo coverage.

#### **Baby Bottle Boomerang Fundraiser for Meridian Cares**

Throughout the month of February, Meridian Cares hosted a Baby Bottle Boomerang fundraiser, organized by Human Services Specialist Katie Love. The goal of the fundraiser was to raise money for the Meridian Cares Emergency Needs Fund.



**Communications Department  
1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Report  
January-March 2024**

Empty baby bottles were available at Court One Athletic Clubs, the Meridian Township Municipal Building, Playmakers, and Tom's Food Center. The empty bottles included a piece of paper explaining how the fundraiser worked. Participants were encouraged to fill the empty bottle with spare change, bills, or a check, and to return it to the Meridian Township Municipal Building by March 1.

A total of \$2,238 dollars was raised for the Meridian Cares Emergency Needs Fund.

**Meridian Historical Village Speaker Series**

Communications Staff has been assisting the Friends of Historic Meridian with marketing their Speaker Series. For each event, a guest presents a historical topic relating to the era of the Meridian Historical Village. Staff promote the events on social media, however, the use of the digital signs on Marsh Road and Central Park Drive have also been incorporated into promoting the events.

Holly Cordill, the Executive Director of the Friends of Historic Meridian, informed Communications Staff that they had new attendees thanks to the digital signs.

**Sustainable Fashion Show**

A Sustainable Fashion Show was hosted at the Meridian Mall on Saturday, March 16. The event features a variety of vendors who offered upcycled and thrifted clothing available for purchase.

**Celebrate Meridian Festival**

Communications Staff began meeting with the Parks and Recreation Department in January to discuss the 2024 Celebrate Meridian Festival. This year will once again be a two-day event.

The first event of the weekend will be Teen Night on Friday, June 28 from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm at the Marketplace on the Green Pavilion. This event will feature music, food, a variety of games, and more.

The second event is Saturday, June 29 and is the Celebrate Meridian Block Party. This will take place at Central Park and the Marketplace on the Green Pavilion, with Central Park Drive being closed for the duration of the day. The time has not been announced yet, but planning is currently underway.

There will be art vendors, a children's activity area, two beer tents, demonstrations from the Nokomis Cultural Heritage Center, activities at the Meridian Historical Village, food vendors on Central Park Drive, live music at the Marketplace on the Green Pavilion, fireworks show, and more. The next Celebrate Meridian planning meeting will be on Monday, April 8.



**Communications Department  
1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Report  
January-March 2024**

**Juneteenth Over Lake Lansing Event**

This year's Juneteenth celebration is titled "Juneteenth Over Lake Lansing" and will take place on Saturday, June 15 from 1:00 pm to 7:00 pm at Lake Lansing Park South. A new name and logo were created for the event. In previous years, the event was called the Meridian Freedom Fest and included multiple days of events.

Juneteenth Over Lake Lansing will have live music from 2:00 pm to 7:00 pm and will feature three groups (Deacon Earl and Kidd Cincinnati, Mixed Flavors, and Global Village). There will also be yard games, small business vendors, dancing, and more. Planning is currently underway.

**Meridian Pride Event**

Meridian Township will one again hold a Pride event in 2024. This year's event will take place on Saturday, August 10 from 5:00 pm to 10:00 pm at the Marketplace on the Green Pavilion.

Planning for this event has just started, so no other details are known at this time.

**Internship**

Communications Staff took on four new interns for the spring 2024 semester. Three of the interns are HOMTV interns who work primarily with Specialist McDole. The fourth intern is a communications intern working with Specialist Stohlin and Diehl to manage the website and social media accounts.

Staff is currently hiring interns for the summer semester, which will begin May 13 and run until August 9. There were 11 applicants for the HOMTV Intern posting and 26 applicants for the Marketing and Public Relations Intern posting. A final decision for summer 2024 interns will be made on March 25.

**\*Examples of promotional materials will be provided at the end of this report.**

**MERIDIAN**  
*Cares* Making a Difference



# Baby Bottle Boomerang

Your spare change can  
bring valuable change to the lives of  
Meridian Township residents in need.

Participate now through March 1





The Friends of Historic Meridian Present:

# Meridian Historical Village Speaker Series

Feat: Dr. Sally Gray, Retired MSU Professor

October 4, 2023 at 10:00 am

Meridian Historical Village Chapel  
(5151 Marsh Road, Okemos)



# Sustainable Fashion Show

Saturday, March 16 at the Meridian Mall

Vendors on-site from  
10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Fashion Show from  
11:30 am to 12:30 pm

- Vendors offering sustainable clothing
- Cristo Ray Community Center accepting donations for their clothing bank
- Info on environmentally friendly living







Communications  
Commission

# **Commission Members Reports & Announcements**



Communications  
Commission

# Action Items



**To: Communications Commission**  
**From: Samantha Diehl, Communications Manager**  
**Date: March 20, 2024**  
**Re: DAS and Small Cell Policy**

---

On May 17, 2023, Manager Diehl, Clerk Guthrie, Supervisor Patricia Herring Jackson, and Deputy Township Manager Dan Opsommer met with a resident who had concerns over Meridian Township's ordinance regarding small cell towers.

The current DAS and Small Cell Policy for the Township was approved by the Township Board on June 20, 2017.

After the meeting, the resident sent Meridian Township's small cell policy to Doug Wood, founder and director of Americans for Responsible Technology (ART). The resident received a response from Doug Wood on November 30, 2023. Email correspondence with the resident, as well as the small cell ordinance, is attached to this memo.

Staff is recommending that the Communications Commission make a recommendation to the Township Board to have Township attorneys and Staff review and update the DAS and Small Cell Policy.

The Communications Commission **MOVES TO MAKE A RECOMMENDATION TO THE TOWNSHIP BOARD TO HAVE TOWNSHIP ATTORNEYS AND STAFF REVIEW AND UPDATE THE WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS ORDINANCES FOR THE TOWNSHIP.**

**RE: Meridian Township Small Cell Tower ordinance Upgrade**

Deborah Guthrie &lt;guthrie@meridian.mi.us&gt;

Thu 11/30/2023 5:37 PM

To: john diehl &lt;jdiehlc@gmail.com&gt;; Patricia Herring Jackson &lt;pjackson@meridian.mi.us&gt;

John,

Thank you for sending this to us. I will forward to the Communications Commission for review at their upcoming meeting. I think that would be the best place to start. They can review the ordinance and make a recommendation to the board if they agree to do so.

I will also review the materials and will be in attendance at the upcoming Communications Commission meeting. Thank you, Deborah

**Deborah Guthrie**

Clerk, Meridian Township

guthrie@meridian.mi.us

W 517.853.4324 | F 517.853.4251

5151 Marsh Road | Okemos, MI 48864

[meridian.mi.us](http://meridian.mi.us)

To check your voter registration status, request an absent voter ballot or to track your ballot, please visit [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote)

---

**From:** john diehl <jdiehlc@gmail.com>**Sent:** Thursday, November 30, 2023 5:28 PM**To:** Patricia Herring Jackson <pjackson@meridian.mi.us>; Deborah Guthrie <guthrie@meridian.mi.us>**Subject:** Meridian Township Small Cell Tower ordinance Upgrade

Hello Ms. Jackson,

I met with you and your staff this past May 17th with regard to the erection of small cell towers in Meridian Township. Again, I want to thank you for giving me time to meet with you.

Since then I emailed [Doug Woods of Americans for Responsible Technology](#) to ask Doug to take a look at Meridian Township's local ordinance for small cell tower erection, which is something he does for any local establishment. At that point Doug was extremely busy with local governments, and it took a while for him to get back to me. But recently Doug did review the Meridian Township ordinance and sent me his thoughts on current upgrades to keep ahead of FCC changes. Please see the attachment below.

Doug is happy to meet with you or your staff (no charge). He wrote me saying: "we can arrange a Zoom call at the convenience of the Supervisor or any members of her staff or other Board members. I'm pretty free in the evenings, which is when most Boards tend to meet. But I can arrange my schedule at other times to be available with enough notice."

I do hope Doug's letter (below attachment) will be of great help to you to keep your small cell tower ordinance freshly updated.

Thanks,



# Americans for Responsible Technology

184 Main Street • Port Washington • New York • 516.883.0887 • [www.AmericansForResponsibleTech.org](http://www.AmericansForResponsibleTech.org)

November 6, 2023

John Diehl  
6312 Porter Ave.  
East Lansing,  
Michigan 48823

Dear Mr. Diehl,

At your request I have reviewed the existing code for the Township of Meriden (*§ 86-438 Wireless Communications Facilities Overlay District. [Code 1974, § 82-19; amended by Ord. No. 2016-03, 1-5-2016]*). This code is similar to the codes of many other municipalities that have not been recently updated to comply with FCC Orders, accommodate recent changes in telecommunications infrastructure, or take full advantage of the powers granted to local municipalities by the 1996 Telecommunications Law.

Please note this letter is not intended to, and should not be construed as offering or providing, legal advice. I strongly recommend that you and the Township Board members seek appropriate independent legal counsel regarding the applicability of the code suggestions contained herein.

As you are aware, the wireless industry is rapidly expanding its national network of antennas to meet demand and to build additional capacity for what it hopes will be expanded use of wireless broadband and the new generation of devices using 5G. They have pulled back on the larger "cell towers" of the last decade, and are now increasingly turning to small, less obtrusive antennas that can be mounted on buildings, utility poles or monopoles in close proximity to customers. The new code needs to recognize this change and incorporate language to protect the Township and its residents from reckless or haphazard placement of antennas.

It's important to keep in mind as you consider changes to the code that the wireless purveyors are interested in placing their antennas in the most convenient, least expensive place they can, with as little trouble as possible. Their interest is not necessarily with protecting the rights or interests of local citizens. That's what the Board is there to do.

I mentioned the rights granted to local municipalities by Congress. Those rights do not automatically flow to local officials; they must be articulated and reserved by local officials in the local zoning code. Here are some examples of things I would suggest:

1. The code should require applicants to document the specific personal wireless communication problem being addressed by the proposed antenna installation and explain why the selected location is the least intrusive means of solving the problem. The code should clearly define "adequate coverage" as occurring when a wireless carrier's coverage is such that most customers can successfully use the carrier's service for talk and text most the time in most locations within the municipality.

2. The Township is within its rights to require the submission of certified "drive test" results (for inadequate coverage) and "dropped call reports" (for lack of capacity) that clearly identify gaps in coverage that will be remedied by the proposed antenna(s), and evidence that the proposed location is the least intrusive means to ensure adequate coverage. I will note that it's not unusual for the carrier to submit test results that don't match the actual data. That's why we suggest the reports be certified and provided under penalty of perjury.

3. The code should clearly specify the Township's preferred areas for installation of antennas (industrial, then commercial, and then - as a last resort - residential). The applicant should have to provide written documentation of significant effort to place antennas in non-residential areas, away from schools and daycare centers (due to fire or pole failure), and proof that such alternate sites will not result in adequate coverage before a permit is issued.

4. The current insurance section of the code is not adequate to protect the Township. The new code should require wireless purveyors to possess liability insurance which **does not** exclude coverage for health claims due to radiofrequency (RF) radiation exposure (in insurance parlance, a "pollution exclusion"). This insurance is very difficult to obtain, since most major insurance companies will not insure against claims for harm from RF radiation exposure. So if the applicant can't get that insurance, self insurance may be acceptable, but be careful: the insurance must be issued in the name of the parent company (e.g., Verizon), not the contractor, agent or a company subdivision. One carrier in particular is fond of setting up tiny LLCs to be legally responsible, but which have no assets.

5. The code should specify that it applies to all types of RF antennas, including freestanding, pole mounted, structure-mounted and stealth- and strand-mounted antennas.

6. The code should require that a certified engineer attest, under penalty of perjury, that the completed and operational antenna meets current all government radiation exposure limits for the general public, not the FCC's occupational limits, which are substantially higher. Also, the code should mandate that FCC safety limits apply to the *aggregate* emissions of all co-located equipment, not just emissions of single antennas. In the event such aggregate emissions exceed FCC guidelines, all antennas must be turned off until the emissions are lowered to acceptable limits.

7. The Township is within its legal rights to hire an independent RF engineer to conduct random, unannounced RFR emission testing of any or all antenna installation(s) at the expense of the operator and provide for substantial penalties for violations of FCC safety limits.

8. Finally the code should require applicants to certify that the operating company, its parent companies and all subsidiaries and contractors are subject to all local state and federal laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act, and that the operation of the antennas will not jeopardize the health and well-being of any citizens. The Town should certainly be held harmless from any judgment in that regard.

I hope the foregoing is helpful to you as you consider changes to the Township code. I would be happy to meet with town officials in an informal meeting at no charge to discuss any or all of these suggestions and answer any questions they may have.

Sincerely,

Douglas A. Wood  
National Director  
Phone – 516-883-0887  
Email – [daw@grassrootsinfo.org](mailto:daw@grassrootsinfo.org)

**MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP**  
**DAS AND SMALL CELL POLICY**  
**As approved by the Meridian Township Board**  
**June 20, 2017**

The administration of this Policy shall be governed by the following DAS and Small Cell Policy:

- 1.1. The Township supports efforts to establish an open, competitive marketplace for needed communication services that also serves the Township's Constitutional and statutory mandates to promote safety and convenience in the use of public right-of-ways under its jurisdiction and to maintain the integrity of the Township Zoning and Master Plan, promote property values and preserve the character of the Township as desired by Township residents. The Township promotes and encourages competition for communication services that make the latest and best technology available and keep service prices affordable for all Township residents and businesses. An integral component of this open marketplace is the consistent application of regulations to all communications providers and the preservation of local authority over matters of local impact.
- 1.2. The Township recognizes that to balance the needs and interests of the public in the management of the right-of-ways together with the desire of the communications service industry to access such rights of way where there is a demonstrated need for new facilities, facilities supporting communication services may be integrated into the right-of-ways in conformity principally with community standards, also taking into account industry standards and best practices identifying community standards together with an understanding of industry standards and best practices all of which may be incorporated into the terms and conditions of the Township's franchise and right-of-way permit and permit process and may change from time to time, in the Township's sole judgment and discretion.
- 1.3. The Township's primary goal is to make and maintain the right-of-ways under its jurisdiction safe and convenient for public travel, maintain the integrity of the Township Zoning and Master Plan as guidance only at the Township's sole discretion, promote property values and preserve the character of the Township as desired by Township residents. To further this goal, the Township recites the following siting priority preferences, which shall be enforced wherever possible in the Township's discretion.

**1.4. Use/Installation Priority Preference Considerations**

- 1.4.1. A Communications Service Provider shall first demonstrate a need for new communication facilities by providing proof of customer demand exceeding available supply.

1.4.1.1. Details of Proof TBD. (Coverage Gap/Deficiency Map).

1.4.1.2. The Township requires that future DAS/Small Cell Wireless Infrastructure be located in safe areas of the rights of way. The Township's reasoning includes: Reduced aesthetic impact, fewer land use restrictions, diminished visual impact of telecommunication facilities, improved buffering from adjacent residential uses, potential to join publicly managed communication systems with commercial wireless service antennas, greater continuity of telecommunications facilities, enhanced cell phone service in more remote parts of the Township, motorist safety as approved by the township and Ingham County Road Department, and quicker application approval process as valid reasons for such preference.

**MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP  
DAS AND SMALL CELL POLICY  
As approved by the Meridian Township Board  
June 20, 2017**

- 1.4.1.3. Collocation on an existing facility within the right-of-way subject to a franchise agreement shall be preferred to locating a new DAS and Small Cell Facility within the right-of-way.
- 1.4.1.4. Locating a new DAS and Small Cell Facility in the right-of-way shall only be permitted when the applicant demonstrates, in the Township's judgment, that collocating on any existing facility, is not possible or practical.
- 1.4.1.5. Where possible and practical, facilities will be required to be located below ground where other existing facilities or structures are located below ground.

**1.4.2. Collocation**

- 1.4.2.1. All DAS collocation applications shall be subject to collocation within existing DAS structures. Mandatory future collocation of all subsequent DAS and Small Cell Facilities shall be required where possible and practical for any newly authorized structure under this Policy.
- 1.4.2.2. Any DAS application that is not for a collocated DAS structure must contain a statement justifying why collocation is not possible or practical. Such statement shall include:
  - 1.4.2.2.1. Such structure and technical information and other justifications as are necessary to document the reasons why collocation is not possible or practical, including all communication of denials of collocation requests from 3<sup>rd</sup> party entities; and
  - 1.4.2.2.2. A list of all eligible support structures and alternative structures considered as alternatives to the proposed location.
  - 1.4.2.2.3. A written explanation why the alternatives considered were not possible or practical due to technical or physical constraints.
- 1.4.3. Stealth installations or otherwise aesthetically consistent designs shall be required at the discretion of the Township, with all facilities located **within** the pole, and will generally be similar to the existing infrastructure in the area. See Ordinance Sections #86-438.
- 1.4.4. New structures shall be limited and not higher than other existing poles in all areas, and in all events, no higher than thirty five (35') and no more than 2 feet in diameter, or as determined by zone unless otherwise shown to be needed by the Applicant based upon the technical characteristics of the area or other considerations, including collocation. The dimensions of new facilities will generally not be permitted to exceed existing infrastructure in the same vicinity.
- 1.4.5. Use of new or existing light poles is an acceptable support structure subject to all other criteria herein.

**MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP**  
**DAS AND SMALL CELL POLICY**  
**As approved by the Meridian Township Board**  
**June 20, 2017**

- 1.4.6. Attachments to a support structure including any and all power sources and back-ups shall be placed inside the pole absent specific exception granted at the sole discretion of the Township.
- 1.4.7. New structures shall be customized to match the norms of the area. By way of examples: A new pole if otherwise approved, must match the RGB scale of the green LED lights in Downtown Okemos and - A new pole in a commercial district must be a metal type structure - either steel or aluminum or a combination of the two.
- 1.4.8. No new DAS and Small Cell Facility support structure may be erected in the public right-of-way within five hundred feet (500') of an existing Communication structure including DAS and Small Cell Facility support structures, unless shown, as determined by the Township in its discretion, that it is required for technical feasibility or that all existing infrastructure is already exhausted or not available for use.
- 1.4.9. New DAS and Small Cell Facility support structures shall occur in a consistent and conforming manner in or in bordering right-of-way areas zoned c-2 and c-3 commercial and designated districts as shown on the maps attached to this policy.
  - 1.4.9.1. Carriage Hills Retail PICA Zone as defined in the 2017 Master Plan
  - 1.4.9.2. Downtown Okemos PICA Retail Zone as defined in the 2017 Master Plan
  - 1.4.9.3. Downtown Haslett PICA Retail Zone as defined in the 2017 Master Plan
  - 1.4.9.4. The Corridor Improvement Authority Area
  - 1.4.9.5. Commercial Zoning Map
- 1.4.10. The Township will manage access to the public right-of-ways for DAS and Small Cell purposes in a nondiscriminatory, competitively neutral and nonexclusive way to the extent required under applicable law and, to the extent allowed under applicable law, to receive fair compensation based upon market rates. The public interest will be protected by a franchise agreement reflecting such fees and collecting all associated administrative costs for use of the public right-of-ways under the jurisdiction of the Township. In Kind Services may be substituted for some portion of or all such fees where the Township determines that the value of such services approximates fair and reasonable market rates.
- 1.4.11. Right-of-way permits for location of DAS and Small Cell Facilities and all supporting equipment and structures will be managed to preserve the integrity of the road system's infrastructure, ensure efficient use of the property under the jurisdiction of the Township, and ensure compliance with all state, federal and local law and regulation as well as all applicable and commonly recognized building, electrical, safety and other road right of way standards, regulations and permitting processes and requirements.

**MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP  
DAS AND SMALL CELL POLICY  
As approved by the Meridian Township Board  
June 20, 2017**

1.4.12. In order to effectively manage and regulate the use of public right-of-ways under the Township's jurisdiction in the best interests of the public, it is necessary for the Township to reserve and exercise all franchise, proprietary, legislative, administrative and discretionary authority it may have to the full extent allowed or not prohibited by law. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to diminish or in any way to limit the franchise, proprietary, discretionary, administrative or legislative authority of the Township and its officials as respects the management and use of the Township's public right-of-ways or other property interests in respect to the granting, delaying, or denying any right-of-way permit or use of other Township property.

**1.4 Township DAS and Small Cell Facility Proposal Review Process**

1.4.1 Routing of Application - TBD

1.4.2 Timing and Deadlines - TBD

1.4.3 Franchise Fees, Permit Fees and Cost Recovery -TBD

1.5 Compliance with all existing Township Ordinances as guidelines only at the discretion of the Township.



Communications  
Commission

# Discussion Items



**To: Communications Commission**  
**From: Samantha Diehl, Communications Manager**  
**Date: March 20, 2024**  
**Re: General Fund Allocation for Communications Commission Grants**

---

At the September 6, 2023 Communications Commission regular meeting, Manager Diehl informed the Commission of a resident on Meridian Road who is unable to receive Comcast service without paying out of pocket for the fiber to be installed.

The reason they have to pay out of pocket is because they live in an area that Comcast fiber has not been installed yet. The resident reached out to Manager Diehl to ask if there was any way the Township can intervene.

At the same September 6, 2023 Communications Commission meeting, Clerk Deborah Guthrie informed the Commission that money from the General Fund can be allocated to the Commission in the form of grants to be awarded to residents who applied.

This item was placed on discussion for the December 13, 2023 regular meeting, but more information needs to be gathered. Staff recommends setting a meeting with Environmental Programs Coordinator LeRoy Harvey and Neighborhoods and Economic Development Director Amber Clark to discuss how their grants work for the Environmental Commission and the Economic Development Corporation.



9.B

**To: Communications Commission**  
**From: Samantha Diehl, Communications Manager**  
**Date: March 20, 2024**  
**Re: Communications Commission Member Recruitment**

---

The Communications Commission consists of five members and two alternates who are appointed by the Township Supervisor. All members/alternates serve a three-year term. Presently, there are two members, one alternate, and the Board Liaison, however the Board Liaison does not vote.

At the December 13, 2023 regular meeting, then Commissioner Charles and Commissioner Whiting-Dobson recommended they make a list of criteria they're looking for in applicants before reaching out to potential applicants.



Communications  
Commission

# **Communications/ Announcements**



Communications  
Commission

# Compliments/ Complaints



Communications  
Commission

# Video Service Provider



Communications  
Commission

# Programming



**To: Communications Commission**  
**From: Danneisha McDole, Multimedia Production and Operations Specialist**  
**Date: March 22, 2024**  
**Re: Program Totals and Video On-Demand Totals**

---

**Program Totals (Year to Date):**

- Meridian Live: 14
  - Township Board: 6
  - Planning Commission: 4
  - Environmental Commission: 2
  - Zoning Board of Appeals: 1
  - Park Commission: 1
- HOM Entertainment: 3
- Event Coverage: 2

**Video On-Demand Analytics on next page.**

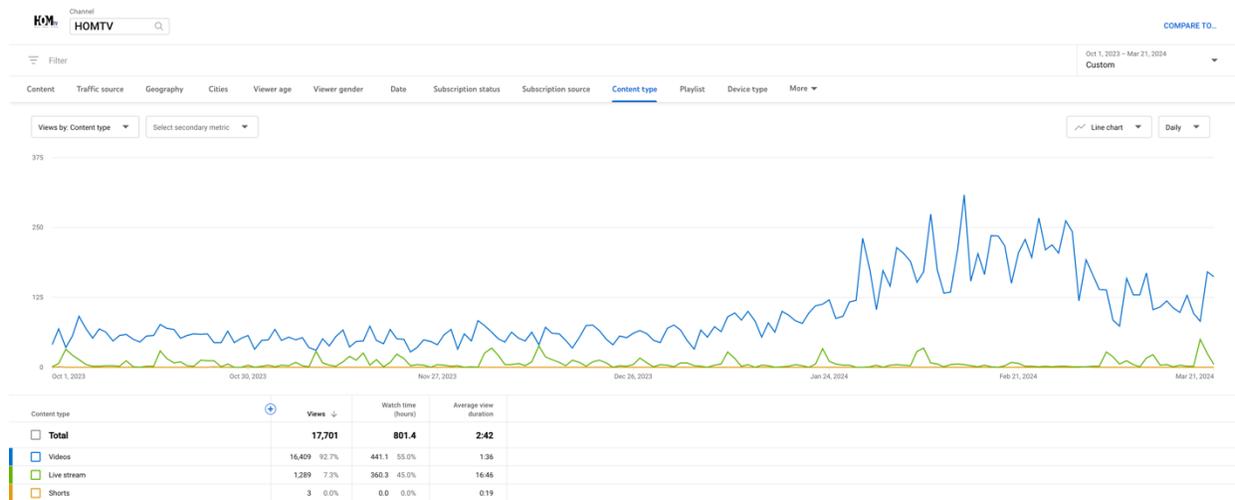
**Memo to Communications Commission**  
**March 22, 2024**  
**Re: Programming**  
**Page 2**

**HOMTV Website Video On-Demand (Swagit)**

Currently unavailable due to not completing the migration process to update a newer version of Google Analytics.

**YouTube Live vs. Uploaded Content Stats**

This graph shows the amount of HOMTV YouTube views based on uploaded content and live streams. Of the 17,701 total views for the year, 92.7% of those were for uploaded content and 7.3% were for the video streamed live (Township meetings).



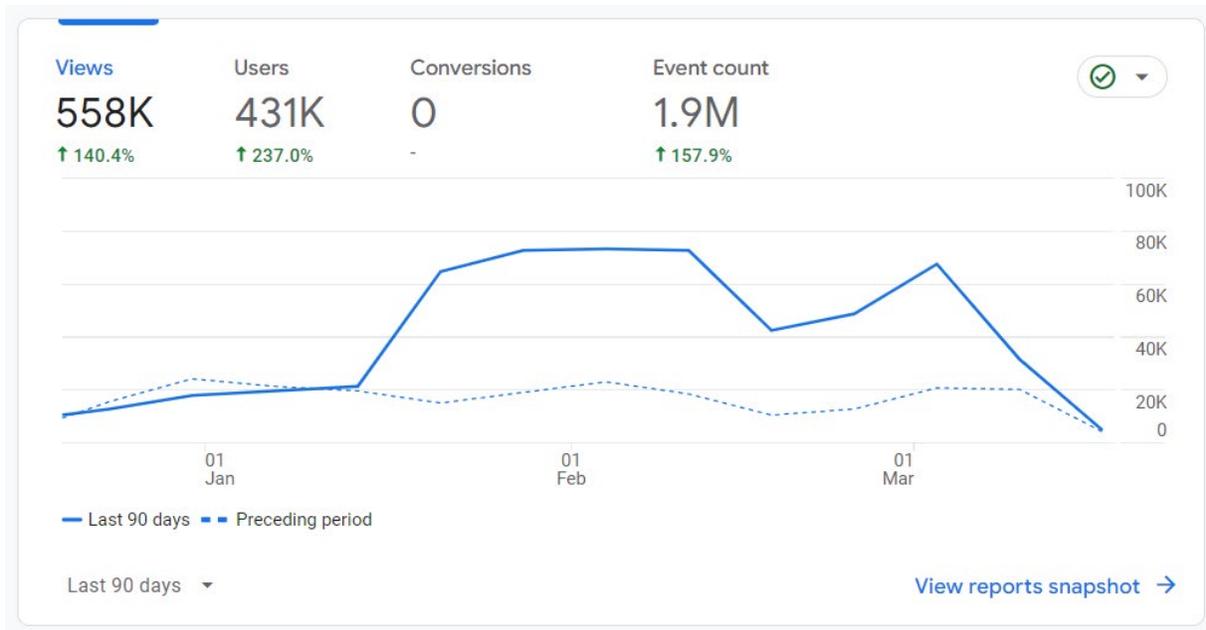


**To:** Communications Commission  
**From:** Rachael Stohlin, Marketing and Public Relations Specialist  
**Date:** March 19, 2024  
**Re:** Meridian Township & HOMTV Website Analytics

---

In the last quarter, Meridian Township’s website received 558,000 unique page views from 431,000 viewers. Viewership increased beyond normal fluctuations between the end of January and early March, but it is unknown yet why this occurred. Many of these unique visits were associated with Meridian Township’s public meetings calendar.

Google Analytics data still needs to be set up for the HOMTV.net webpage. This has not yet been done due to an inability to get in touch with HOMTV.net’s developer.





**To: Communications Commission**  
**From: Rachael Stohlin, Marketing and Public Relations Specialist**  
**Date: March 19, 2024**  
**Re: Marketing Updates & Social Media Performance Summary YTD**

---

## Updates

As a highlight to kickoff 2024, we are proud to reflect on the design, writing, editing, and distribution of Meridian Township's annual Prime Meridian Magazine. This magazine, which illustrates the Township's forward-thinking, vibrant, and supportive ideals, included need-to-know Township news and resources to find more information. With a restricted budget line compared to previous years, we sought to restrict expenses where possible, including reductions in pages and premium finishes. However, increased residential units in the Township combined with inflated postage and material costs led to us narrowly exceeding our budget, despite using our lowest quote. Though an exceeded budget was not what we had hoped for, all feedback regarding this magazine has been positive, and we look forward to the magazine's next edition.

The start of 2024 also marked the return of the revamped Marketing & Public Relations internship (formerly Social Media & Promotions). Our trial intern, Elleana Ortiz, has done a phenomenal job and has provided feedback to help us improve the internship in future semesters.

As I near the end of my first year with the Township, I have sought further education in government public relations and social media. Recently, I joined the Government Social Media Association, which provides networking and skill-building opportunities for professionals in this field. We also submitted an entry into Government Social Media's Golden Post Awards, seeking recognition for our customer service across our platforms.

Looking back at this quarter of marketing, we assisted in promoting staff retirements, the presidential primary election, winter Farmers' Market days, the Greater Lansing Chinese Association's Lunar New Year Celebration, Green Meridian's Sustainable Fashion Show, and various other smaller events. In this quarter, we also reactivated the social media account for Meridian Cares. Human Services Specialist Katie Love will maintain this account.

## Social Media Performance Overview:

Across the board, our social media performance this quarter was lower than expected. We do not have good options with which to compare our current analytics (2023 YTD was influenced by several crises situations, and our fall and winter seasons have natural fluctuations in engagement due to a decrease in local events and news), but I know there is plenty of room for improvement.

Several areas for improvement were discovered or confirmed for the following quarter:



- Engaging more with popular local organizations, businesses, and influencers by interacting with their posts.
- Working on more humanized, humorous, and entertaining content to contrast with our high volume of informational content.
- Continue to provide superior customer service, which in turn improves post engagement.
- Building connections with our Nextdoor audience.

Moving forward, we have made the decision to halt posting to Meridian Township's Twitter/X account due to consistently inferior performance compared to other platforms, various changes to the platform since its rebrand, and a desire to improve post quality on other platforms rather than post quantity.

## Facebook

### Meridian Township:

- Facebook followers: 9255 (+112 since start of 2024).
- Page reach: 39,887 (-54.2% compared to previous quarter).
- The top performing post of the quarter informed residents of a closure along Okemos Road through Fall 2024.

### HOMTV:

- Total Facebook followers: 2,466 (+15 since start of 2024).
- Page reach: 2,135 (-96.4% this quarter).
- The top performing post in the quarter covered the inability of HOMTV to live broadcast a Township Board meeting on February 20.

### Meridian Township Parks & Recreation:

- Facebook followers: 3,467 (+62 since start of 2024).
- Page reach: 18,655 (-69.8% this quarter).
- The top performing post of the quarter announced the Songwriters' Showcase event in May 2024.

### Harris Nature Center:

- Facebook followers: 4,363 (+62 since start of 2024).
- Page reach: 10,279 (+38.5% this quarter).
- The top performing post of the quarter announced HNC's summer day camp for 2024.

### Meridian Township Farmers' Market:

- Facebook followers: 13,323 (+148 new followers since start of 2024).
- Page reach: 61,366 (-36.2% this quarter).
- The top performing post for this quarter announced the March 16 Farmers' Market.

### Meridian Township Fire Department:



- Facebook followers: 3,083 (+122 since start of 2024).
- Page reach: 12,826 (-57.2% this quarter).
- The top performing post of the quarter was a series of Valentine's Day cards with fire department themed designs.

**Meridian Cares (results limited to January 16 and after):**

- Facebook followers: 325 (+29 since account opened).
- Page reach: 1,269 (+100% this quarter)
- The top performing post highlighted the Baby Bottle Boomerang program.

**X (formerly Twitter)**

**Meridian Township:**

- Total followers: 3,383 (+3 this quarter).
- Impressions: 6,973 this quarter.
- The top tweet announced a series of road closures due to flooding.

**HOMTV:**

- Total followers: 1695 (-6 this quarter).
- Impressions: 1,300 this quarter.
- The top tweet announced the 2024 Broadway season at Wharton.

**Instagram**

**Meridian Township:**

- Total followers: 2,366 (+41 this quarter).
- Reach: 1,487 (-53% this quarter).

**HOMTV:**

- Total followers: 501 (-4 this quarter).
- Reach: 834 (+2.8% this quarter).

**Meridian Township Parks & Recreation**

- Total followers: 240 (+10 this quarter)
- Reach: 639 (-68.6% this quarter)

**Harris Nature Center:**

- Total followers: 997 (+11 this quarter).
- Reach: 565 (-20.1% this quarter).

**Meridian Township Farmers' Market:**

- Total followers: 1455 (+22 this quarter).
- Reach: 682 (-28% this quarter).



## LinkedIn

### **Meridian Township:**

- Total followers: 805.
- Post impressions: 629 this quarter.
- Unique visitors: 180 this quarter.

### **HOMTV:**

- Total followers: 1,190.
- Post impressions: 123.
- Unique visitors: 59 this quarter.

**Nextdoor:** Nextdoor continues to have the highest volume of followers and greatest engagement for the Township. Meridian Township has 13,934 subscribers, which is an increase of 478 this quarter alone.

**Constant Contact:** Currently, we have 9,568 contacts across the Township's three newsletters, with an average open rate of 59%, remaining well above the industry average.



**To: Communications Commission**  
**From: Samantha Diehl, Communications Manager**  
**Date: March 20, 2024**  
**Re: 2024 Prime Meridian Magazine**

---

The 2024 edition of the Prime Meridian Magazine was mailed to all Township residents in mid-March. This year's publication was comprised of 16 pages and was printed by Allegra Print & Imaging out of Lansing.

Though it is expensive to print and distribute a publication like this, it provides a key way of reaching residents who are new to the area or who do not use online services to access our information.

Extra copies of the magazine are available at the Meridian Township Municipal Building and the Meridian Township Service Center. The magazine has also been converted into digital format and is available on the Meridian Township website.

The 2024 edition was more expensive than previous years. This is due to an increase in households in the Township, as well as a rise in postage costs. The cost breakdown is available below.

**2024 Prime Meridian Magazine Costs:**

- **Total: \$13,736 (\$36 over original budget)**
- **Printing Costs:**
  - 2020: 24,100 24-page printed copies
    - \$4,500 (18.6 cents per unit)
  - 2024: 27,800 16-page printed copies
    - \$6,700 (24 cents per unit)
- **Postage and Mailing Service Costs:**
  - 2019: Approximately \$4,300
  - 2024: Approximately \$7,000 (increase due to both growth in units and rising postage costs)

Attached to this memo is a positive response we received from a resident, as well as the digital copy of the Prime Meridian Magazine.

**\*NEW SUBMISSION\* Contact Us**

Meridian Township, MI <webmaster@meridian.mi.us>

Wed 3/20/2024 10:29 AM

To:webmaster <webmaster@meridian.mi.us>

**Contact Us**

**Submission #:** 3078523  
**IP Address:** 217.180.219.227  
**Submission Date:** 03/20/2024 10:29  
**Survey Time:** 2 minutes, 57 seconds

You have a new online form submission.

Note: all answers displaying "\*\*\*\*\*" are marked as sensitive and must be viewed after your login.

**Please feel free to contact us with any comments or questions. Someone will contact you.**

**What is your first and last name?**

Tamsyn Mihalus

**Where can we email a response?**

tmihalus@gmail.com

**What is your phone number?**

(517) 348-0603

**What is your address?**

4453 Oakwood Drive  
Okemos, MI 48864  
United States

**Comments**

Hi, I recently moved to Okemos and received my first Prime Meridian. Wanted to let you know it is a great publication with a lot of helpful information. Thank you. Tamsyn

**Would you like to be contacted regarding your comments?**

No

**Do you have a preferred contact method?**

Please reply by email address

Thank you,

**Meridian Township, MI**

---

**This is an automated message generated by Granicus. Please do not reply directly to this email.**

# PRIME MERIDIAN

magazine  
2024



CELEBRATING THE

*50th Anniversary*

OF THE MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP FARMERS' MARKET  
AND THE MERIDIAN HISTORICAL VILLAGE

# Elected Officials

## Township Board

Supervisor Patricia H. Jackson  
Clerk Deborah Guthrie  
Treasurer Phil Deschaine  
Trustee Scott Hendrickson  
Trustee Kathy Ann Sundland  
Trustee Peter Trezise  
Trustee Marna Wilson

## Park Commission

Mary Nardo Farris (Chair)  
Ami Van Antwerp (Vice Chair)  
Amanda A. Lick  
Michael McDonald  
Mark Stephens

**Township Manager Frank Walsh (Non-Elected)**

## 2023 Township Board Listening Sessions

Following the Township Board's Community Listening Sessions in 2023, the Board compiled common community concerns and ideas to help guide decisions on local issues in the coming years. Find the Board's summary from the Community Listening Sessions by scanning the QR code provided here.



# Participate in a Public Meeting!

## Attend a Public Meeting

Hearing residents' questions, concerns, and ideas allows Meridian Township to cultivate a prime community to live and work. Consider attending any of our public meetings to share your voice and make positive change. Scan the QR code provided here to find Meridian Township's public meetings calendar.



## Watch Public Meetings From Home

Meridian Township's government-access channel, HOMTV, broadcasts the meetings of the Meridian Township Board, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Environmental Commission at the following locations:



- Comcast Channel 21
- homtv.net
- youtube.com/user/21HOMTV
- meridianmi.swagit.com/live



## Prime Meridian Magazine Contributions

### Design & Production

Rachael Stohlin  
Samantha Diehl

### Copy Editors

Leslie Charles    Danneisha McDole  
Melissa Massie    Elleana Ortiz

### Printing & Mailing

Allegra Marketing

One of Meridian Township's new wayfinding signs, located along northbound Okemos Road



# Table of Contents

|                                    |    |
|------------------------------------|----|
| Table of Contents                  | 3  |
| Township Projects                  | 4  |
| Upcoming Developments              | 4  |
| Events & Programs                  | 5  |
| Elections                          | 6  |
| Taxes, Utilities, & Other Payments | 7  |
| Green Meridian                     | 7  |
| Farmers' Market                    | 8  |
| Parks & Recreation                 | 10 |
| Harris Nature Center               |    |
| Meridian Historical Village        |    |
| Meridian Senior Center             |    |
| Parks, Pathways, & Preserves Map   |    |
| Get Involved                       | 14 |
| Meridian Cares                     | 15 |

## QR Codes

We want to make sure you have all the information you need to enjoy an exceptional year in Meridian Township, so we're using QR codes to provide you with quick links to access additional information from this magazine! To use a QR code:

1. Open your smartphone camera app (if available).
2. Point your camera at the QR code and hold steady!
3. A link will appear on your screen. Tap on the link to open our suggested website. Try it here to reach our homepage!

## Looking for Other Topics?

Visit Meridian Township's website, [www.meridian.mi.us](http://www.meridian.mi.us), to access routinely updated news, calendar events, contact information, and more!





# Township Projects

## Local Roads Program

In 2023, Meridian Township completed the following work on its local roads:

- **8.86 miles of road reconstruction**
- **7.3 miles of overlay paving**
- **14.27 miles of asphalt rejuvenator**
- **3.95 miles of crack sealing**

The 2024 program will be announced in March. Scan the QR code to learn more.



## MSU to Lake Lansing Trail

In December of 2023, Meridian Township opened Phase I of the MSU to Lake Lansing Trail, connecting the north side of the Hagadorn Road/Shaw Lane intersection with the Grand River Avenue/Park Lake Road intersection.

Phase II is on schedule to be completed in June of 2024, providing 1.2 miles of pathways beginning near the Grand River Avenue/Campus Hill Drive intersection and concluding near the Okemos Road/Gaylord C. Smith Court intersection. Once all three phases are complete, the MSU to Lake Lansing Trail will enhance the Meridian Township region with approximately 6.75 miles of trail system connecting to the MSU and Lansing River Trails.



## Projects in Motion

As several developments begin and continue in 2024, residents may notice changes coming to the following areas:

- 2755 E. Grand River Avenue
- 2763 E. Grand River Avenue
- 2731 W. Grand River Avenue
- 1614 W. Grand River Avenue, Okemos
- 1655 Haslett Road, Haslett
- Vacant land south of The Willows at Okemos (between Central Park Drive and Powell Road)

# Upcoming Developments

Meridian Township has been active in development since the COVID-19 pandemic. During this period of growth, the 2023 Master Plan was approved, which will guide the vision and developments in the Township over the next 5 to 20 years.

For the current status of ongoing projects, scan the QR code or check out our page for updates: [www.meridian.mi.us/DevelopmentProjects](http://www.meridian.mi.us/DevelopmentProjects).



## Are You a Business Owner in the Township?

Consider joining the Meridian Area Business Association (MABA)! This group meets at 9:00 am on the second Friday of every month at the Farm Lane MSUFCU in East Lansing. Earn free membership into the Small Business Association of Michigan and establish a direct connection to Meridian Township and its government!

# Special Events



## Celebrate Meridian Festival

June 28 (Teen Night) & June 29 (Block Party)

Once summer arrives and the sun's shining, join us for live music, food trucks, kiddie fun, a beer tent, historical exhibits, and a grand finale event! Updates to come at [meridian.mi.us/CelebrateMeridian](http://meridian.mi.us/CelebrateMeridian).



## Heritage Festival

October 5

History comes alive at the Meridian Historical Village with a family-friendly celebration of our local history! Join the Village's 50th anniversary celebration and experience historical demonstrations, games, and exhibits!

## Other Events & Programs\*



### Spring

Meridian Garden Club Plant Sale  
Harris Nature Center Native Plant Sale  
Songwriters Showcase  
Memorial Day Ceremony  
Spring Recycling Day



### Summer

Summer Farmers' Market (all season)  
Summer Concert Series (all season)  
Meridian Senior Center DJ Bingo & BBQ  
Blues & Jazz Festival  
Karaoke at the Marketplace



### Autumn

Meridian Senior Center Health Fair  
Fall Electronics Recycling Event  
Fire Prevention Open House  
Harris Nature Center Autumn Stroll  
Halloween Adventures



### Winter

Artificial Ice Rink at Marketplace  
Christmas in the Village  
Harris Nature Center Wine in the Woods  
Meet & Greet With Santa  
GLCA Chinese New Year Celebration

\*The list of events provided is not exhaustive, and events may be added, modified, or removed as planning continues. For an active listing of Township events, visit: [www.meridian.mi.us/Calendar](http://www.meridian.mi.us/Calendar).



CUT AND SAVE FOR LATER



# Elections



**PRESIDENTIAL  
PRIMARY**

TUESDAY,  
FEBRUARY 27

**PRIMARY  
ELECTION**

TUESDAY,  
AUGUST 6

**GENERAL  
ELECTION**

TUESDAY,  
NOVEMBER 5

## Voting Options

### Option 1: Voting In-Person on Election Day

Find your polling location at [mi.gov/vote](http://mi.gov/vote) or refer to your Voter Information Card. If you need a new card, email [clerksoffice@meridian.mi.us](mailto:clerksoffice@meridian.mi.us).

### Option 2: Voting In-Person Early

Meridian Township's early voting site is at the Meridian Township Municipal Building. Early voting is held for the 9 consecutive days prior to the Monday before Election Day between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm.

- Presidential Primary: February 17 to February 25
- Primary Election: July 27 to August 4
- General Election: October 26 to November 3

### Option 3: Voting Absentee

You may apply for an absentee ballot by filling out an application. Voters who wish to automatically receive a ballot for all future elections may sign up for the Permanent Mail Ballot List. Applications are available at [mi.gov/vote](http://mi.gov/vote).

## What's on the Ballot?

Voters can visit [mi.gov/vote](http://mi.gov/vote) to preview their ballot or visit the Clerk's Office to get a sample ballot.

# Ballot Drop Box Locations

## Meridian Township Municipal Building

5151 Marsh Road,  
Okemos, 48864

*\*Indoor & outdoor  
drop boxes available*

## Haslett Library

1590 Franklin Street,  
Haslett, 48840

## Okemos Library

4321 Okemos Road,  
Okemos, 48864

Drop boxes will close  
at 8:00 pm on each  
election day.

# Taxes, Utility Bills & Other Payments

## Did You Know?

Summer 2024 tax bills will be mailed on July 1, 2024 and due September 14, 2024. Winter 2024 tax bills will be mailed on December 1, 2024 and due February 14, 2025.

Taxes levied within the "summer" and "winter" tax bills cover the full year, not just the "summer" or "winter" seasons.

## Improved Payment Options in 2024!

Payments can be made by cash or check, and many payments (taxes, utilities, permits, and special assessments) can now be made by credit or debit card.

For more information, call the Treasurer's Office at 517.853.4140, scan the QR code, or visit [www.meridian.mi.us/BillPayments](http://www.meridian.mi.us/BillPayments).



Pay Your Bill Your Way!

Online Payments

Drop Box Payments

In Person Payments

Mail In Payments

# Green Meridian

## Green Dialogue

Join us on Wednesdays at 9:00 am on Zoom to discuss environmental topics, interests, challenges, questions, and more!



## Green Gazette

Subscribe to our monthly newsletter highlighting environmental news, opportunities, and resources in our community!



## Green Grants

Neighborhoods, schools, businesses, and organizations are invited to apply for assistance for their environmental projects, such as tree planting, native landscaping, energy projects, and more!

# Green Meridian 2024 Events

March 16: Green Fashion & Energy Day

April 27: Spring Recycling Day

May 18: Planting a Native Meridian

June 8: Eco-Tour & Compost Bin Sale

July 20: Green Fair

September 28: Electronics Recycling Day

For more information about Green Meridian, visit [www.meridian.mi.us/greenmeridian](http://www.meridian.mi.us/greenmeridian) or call 517.853.4466





# Farmers' Market

## 50th Anniversary

### 2024 Farmers' Market Schedule

#### Winter Market

Alternating Saturdays  
Through April 20  
10:00 am to 2:00 pm  
Meridian Mall  
JCPenney Wing

#### Saturday Summer Market

Every Saturday  
May 4 - November 23  
8:00 am\* to 2:00 pm  
Marketplace on the Green  
*\*10:00 am beginning Nov 2*

#### Wednesday Summer Market

Every Wednesday  
June 5 - October 30  
3:00 pm to 7:00 pm  
Marketplace on the Green

#### Winter Market

Every Saturday  
November 30 - December 20  
10:00 am to 2:00 pm  
Meridian Mall  
JCPenney Wing

On May 4, 1974, four regional vendors and farms gathered in the parking lot outside Meridian Township's Municipal Building, providing the community's first opportunity for residents to shop fresh, local produce and goods.

Within a few years, the Meridian Township Farmers' Market quickly expanded, connecting more vendors with the Township community. Such growth required the construction of the Farmers' Market Pavilion (now Central Park Pavilion) outside the Municipal Building in 1978.

In the decades since, the Market has expanded further, with community support inspiring the construction of the Marketplace on the Green pavilion, a vibrant, outdoor gathering spot for the Market, summer concerts, an artificial ice rink, and various special events throughout each year.

This expansion has also grown the Township's reputation for providing quality products and sustainable practices. In 2023, the Market was named Greater Lansing's Best Farmers' Market in City Pulse's Top of the Town contest.

### Collecting Farmers' Market Memories

Do you remember the early Township Farmers' Markets? Do you have photos of the Market over the years? We'd love to hear your story or see your photos! Please email [meridianmarket50th@gmail.com](mailto:meridianmarket50th@gmail.com) to share your Farmers' Market memories with the community.

Find weekly market updates, vendor and musician information, and more at [meridian.mi.us/FarmersMarket/](https://meridian.mi.us/FarmersMarket/)





Thank You!  
for voting us  
Greater Lansing's  
BEST FARMERS'  
MARKET



Wednesday Market Summer Concert Series





# Parks & Recreation



## Letter from the Director

Dear Meridian Township Resident,

I am exceptionally excited to serve as your new Parks and Recreation Director. Our team has many recreation opportunities and activities in the works, including the 50th Anniversary of the Farmers' Market and the Meridian Historical Village!

In 2024, we will continue to focus on ensuring our parks are enjoyable and accessible to everyone. We are also working hard to renew the ecological value of our land preserves and the environmental integrity of our adored parks and natural spaces.

We look forward to spending time and having fun with you this year.

All the best,

Courtney Wisinski

## Pavilion Rentals

We offer rentals at eight pavilions at a rate of \$100 for residents and \$200 for non-residents (excluding Marketplace on the Green). Rental time blocks include 8:00 am to 3:00 pm or 4:00 pm to dusk. Scan the QR code or visit [recreation.meridian.mi.us](http://recreation.meridian.mi.us) and select *Park Pavilion Registrations* to schedule your rental.



## Subscribe to Our E-Newsletter to Receive Monthly Program Updates!

Scan the QR code to subscribe to our monthly newsletter, The Playbook, to hear about upcoming events, programs, and registration openings!



# Year-Round Sports for Year-Round Play!

We offer sports programs throughout our park and trail system to bring our community's families and friends together for fun, activity, and exploration of new skills and spaces.

To register for a sports program, visit [recreation.meridian.mi.us](http://recreation.meridian.mi.us) and select *Adult Sports* or *Youth Sports* from the menu to see available offerings.



## Spring

Softball (1st-4th grade; U12-14)  
Baseball (1st-4th, U10-U14) & T-Ball (DK-K)



## Summer

Sand Volleyball (Adult Co-ed)  
Softball (Mens & Adult Co-ed)



## Fall

Soccer (K-6th)  
Flag Football (K-7th)  
Kickball (Adult Co-ed)



## Winter

Basketball (K-6th, Haslett)



## Multiple Seasons

Fitness Over 50  
Sporties for Shorties (3-5 yo)



## Weddings in the Village

Hold a beautiful, local wedding ceremony at the Meridian Historical Village! Our chapel serves as a special year-round venue, and our gazebo is perfect for summertime weddings located in the heart of the Village looking over Lake Catherine.

Scan the QR code to find more information about these venues and schedule a venue tour.



## Bring Your Barks to Our Dog Parks!

Our centrally located, off-leash small (30 pounds and under) and large (30 pounds and over) dog parks mean your furry friends have the perfect place to make new friends, test their agility, burn off their energy, and enjoy the sounds of nature!

**\*DOG PARK MEMBERSHIP IS REQUIRED FOR PARK ACCESS. MEMBERSHIP REQUIRES DOG LICENSE AND PROOF OF RABIES VACCINE.**



Membership fees (first dog/additional dogs):  
Residents - \$20/\$15; Non-Residents - \$35/\$20

To register, scan the QR code and select *Dog Parks*.



# Harris Nature Center

Surrounded by 200 acres of forest and meadows and rested against the beautiful Red Cedar River, the Harris Nature Center (3998 Van Atta Road, Okemos) provides wonderful opportunities for all ages to explore trails, discover wildlife, and enjoy the wondrous colors of nature each season.

Inside the nature center, visitors can view several Michigan native reptile, amphibian, and bird species. Outside the center, visitors will find several miles of trails, quiet areas to sit, a pavilion, outdoor restrooms and the Nature Exploration Area.

Find more information by scanning the QR code or visiting [www.meridian.mi.us/HNC](http://www.meridian.mi.us/HNC).



## Special Events

### SUMMER DAY CAMPS

June 18 to August 9  
Registration Begins March 1

### HNC FOUNDATION FUN RUN

June 5

### NATIVE PLANT SALES

May 4 & October 5



## Meridian Historical Village

The Meridian Historical Village (5151 Marsh Road, Okemos) fosters an appreciation of local history with a speaker series, summer day camp, and special events each year, including the Heritage Festival. By popular demand, additional 2024 events include a Victorian Tea on May 19 from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm and the 50th Birthday Celebration of the Friends of Historic Meridian on May 5 at 3:00 pm.

To contact the Friends of Historic Meridian, call 517.347.7300 or visit [www.meridianhistoricalvillage.org](http://www.meridianhistoricalvillage.org) to learn more.



## Meridian Senior Center

Join a welcoming community for Meridian Township residents age 55 and over to engage in enrichment programs and activities! At the Meridian Senior Center (4000 N. Okemos Road; east wing of Chippewa Middle School), new friendships are formed, skills are built, and memories are made with various programs and class opportunities.

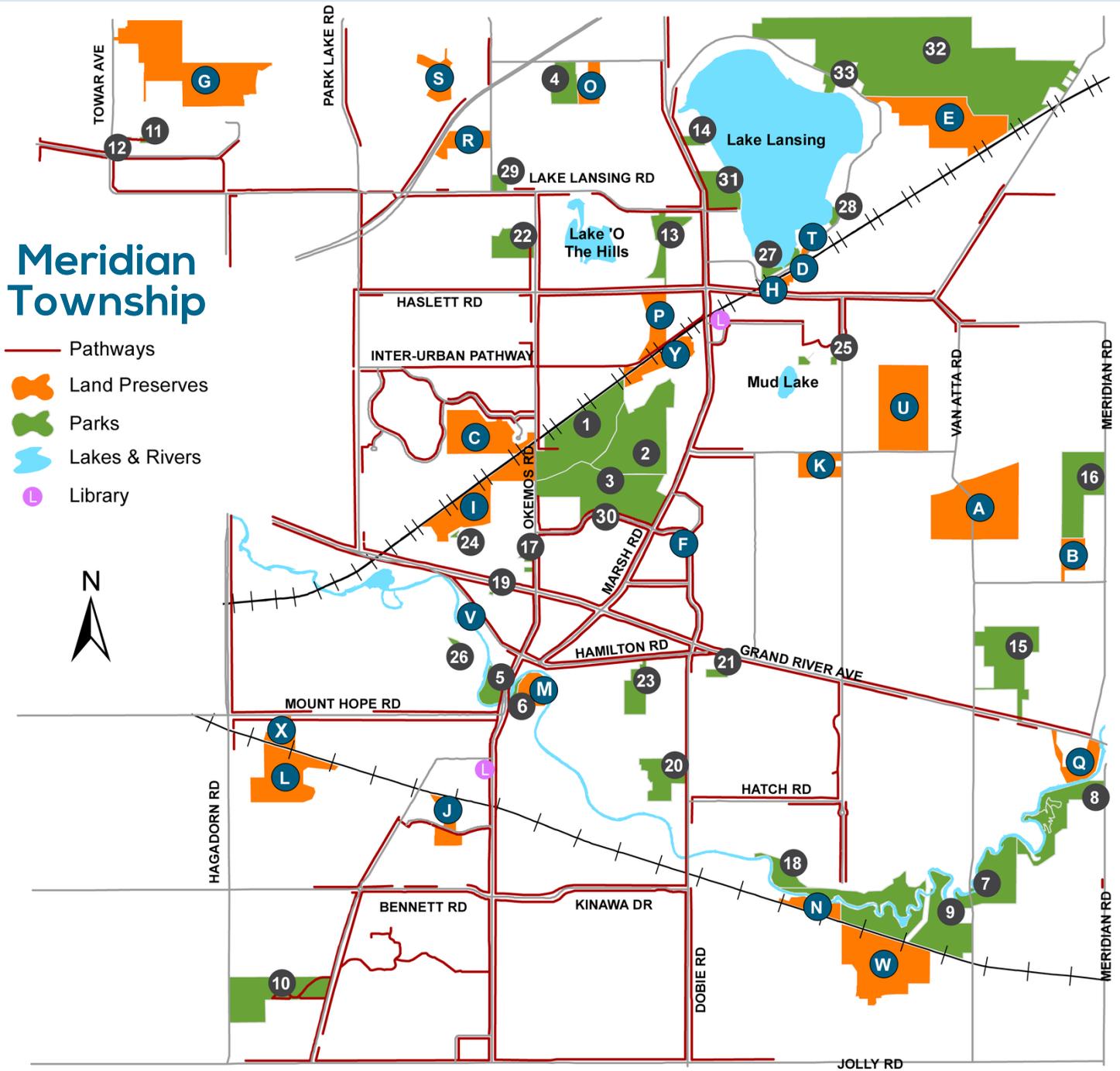
To learn more, visit [meridianseniorcenter.weebly.com](http://meridianseniorcenter.weebly.com), scan the QR code, or call the senior center at 517.706.5045.



### Meridian Township Land Preserves (see map on page 13)

- |                                      |                                        |                                 |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>A</b> Davis/Foster Preserve       | <b>J</b> Sower Woods Preserve          | <b>R</b> Forest Grove Preserve  |
| <b>B</b> Foster-Crouse Preserve      | <b>K</b> Cornell Wetland Preserve      | <b>S</b> Glacial Ridge Preserve |
| <b>C</b> Hubbel Preserve             | <b>L</b> Heron Creek Preserve          | <b>T</b> Tank Wetland           |
| <b>D</b> Kuzma Preserve              | <b>M</b> Sumbal Preserve               | <b>U</b> Tihart Preserve        |
| <b>E</b> Lake Lansing North Preserve | <b>N</b> Red Cedar Glen Preserve       | <b>V</b> Mandenberg Woods       |
| <b>F</b> Newman Equities Preserve    | <b>O</b> Towner Wetland Preserve       | <b>W</b> Ponderosa Preserve     |
| <b>G</b> Towar Woods Preserve        | <b>P</b> Inter-Urban Wetland Preserve  | <b>X</b> Serafine Preserve      |
| <b>H</b> Pike Crossing Preserve      | <b>Q</b> Red Cedar River East Preserve | <b>Y</b> Nemoke Preserve        |
| <b>I</b> Okemos Road Preserve        |                                        |                                 |

# Parks, Pathways & Preserves



## Meridian Township Parks

|                                  |                             |                                      |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 Nancy Moore Park               | 12 Towar Park               | 23 Tacoma Hills Park                 |
| 2 Central Park                   | 13 Hillbrook Park           | 24 Schriener Park                    |
| 3 Central Park South             | 14 Marshall Park            | 25 Orlando Park                      |
| 4 Towner Road Park               | 15 Ted Black Woods          | 26 Indian Hills Park                 |
| 5 Wonch Park                     | 16 North Meridian Road Park | 27 Lake Lansing Marsh                |
| 6 Ferguson Park                  | 17 Ottawa Hills Park        | 28 Spengler Marsh                    |
| 7 Harris Nature Center           | 18 Red Cedar Natural Area   | 29 Newton Road Park                  |
| 8 Eastgate Park                  | 19 Cedar Bend Heights Park  | 30 Marketplace on the Green          |
| 9 Legg Park                      | 20 Sander Farm              | 31 Lake Lansing Park South (County)  |
| 10 Hartrick Park                 | 21 Forest Hills Park        | 32 Lake Lansing Park North (County)  |
| 11 Snell-Towar Recreation Center | 22 Brattin Woods            | 33 Lake Lansing Boat Launch (County) |

Looking for Park Amenities? Visit: [bit.ly/MTwpParkAmenities](https://bit.ly/MTwpParkAmenities)





Meridian Garden Club members tend the Blue Star Memorial garden outside of the Meridian Township Municipal Building.

# Get Involved



Special Event Volunteers



Meridian Conservation Corps

Meridian Township is a prime community in part due to the engagement and generosity of its residents, many of whom are involved in community organizations and our Township boards and commissions.

With exceptional options for community participation between our local volunteer groups, non-profits, boards, and commissions, there is an opportunity for nearly every resident to be heard, share their passion, build community, and make a positive difference.

If you are unable to provide time as a volunteer, please consider supporting Meridian Cares, described on the following page.

## Boards & Commissions

The input of our residents matters! Join a board or commission to influence community decisions and create positive change! Scan the QR code to find our Public Service Application.

Example opportunities include the Environmental Commission, Economic Development Corporation, Communications Commission, and many more!



## Local Volunteer Opportunities

- Friends of Haslett Library
- Friends of Historic Meridian
- Friends of Meridian Township Pathways
- Friends of Okemos Library
- Friends of Red Cedar River
- Haslett Beautification Association
- Meridian Conservation Corps
- Meridian Garden Club
- Meridian Senior Center
- Nokomis Cultural Heritage Center
- East Lansing Meridian Lions Club
- Kiwanis Club of Haslett-Okemos
- Rotary Club of Haslett-Okemos





# MERIDIAN *Cares* Making a Difference

Meridian Cares provides Meridian Township residents facing emergency financial need with assistance from a human services specialist. The Emergency Needs Fund is also available to support residents at risk of losing their shelter or facing a utility shutoff.

## How Does Meridian Cares Work?

Meridian Township residents facing emergency financial need (relating to shelter or utilities) contact the Human Services Specialist.

Resident's need is determined in a confidential intake assessment.

Federal, state, and local resources are considered for financial aid. When no aid or not enough aid is available, Meridian Cares may use its donation-based Emergency Needs Fund to financially assist the resident.

Financial assistance recommendations are made by the Human Services Specialist to the Township's Community Resource Commission for approval.

Approved financial assistance is given directly to the utility company or landlord seeking payment.

Resident remains in their home with working utilities.

*"Meridian Cares helped me tremendously; I was recently out of work due to the birth of my son, and I was behind on my rent. I was given help, and we still had our home for the holidays. I'm forever grateful."*

- Meridian Township Resident

The **Meridian Township Emergency Needs Fund** is set aside to assist residents in danger of losing their shelter or having their utilities shut off.

**The Emergency Needs Fund is funded 100% by donations & 100% of donations assist Township residents in emergency need.**

In 2023, this fund supported 96 families with a total of **\$41,796.56.**

## Need Help?

Call Meridian Township's Human Services Specialist, Katie Love, at 517.853.4204 for a confidential call and intake assessment to determine options for your situation.

## To Donate:

Scan the QR code to contribute to the Meridian Cares Emergency Needs Fund (PayPal). Thank you!





5151 Marsh Road  
Okemos, MI 48864

# Let's Get Connected!

## EMERGENCY ALERTS

Your safety and wellbeing matters to us. Meridian Township uses Everbridge to alert you by text and/or email about emergencies affecting our community. Visit [meridian.mi.us/everbridge](https://meridian.mi.us/everbridge) to sign up for alerts including road closures, severe weather, serious incidents, and other local emergencies.



## E-NEWSLETTERS

We provide 3 monthly email newsletters to help keep you updated with local news (Meridian Happenings), Parks & Recreation programs and events (The Playbook), and local green and sustainability initiatives and opportunities (Green Gazette).

To subscribe, visit [bit.ly/SignUpMTwpNewsletters](https://bit.ly/SignUpMTwpNewsletters) or scan the QR code provided here!



@MeridianTownship



Meridian Township



@meridiantownship



Meridian Township



@meridiantwp



@MeridianTownship



Communications  
Commission

# Finance



**To: Communications Commission**  
**From: Samantha Diehl, Communications Manager**  
**Date: March 20, 2024**  
**Re: 2023 PEG and Franchise Fees**

---

As people continue to get rid of their cable subscriptions, we are seeing a continual decline in both PEG and franchise fees each quarter.

Below is a table showing both PEG and franchise fee totals over the last five years (2019-2023).

- There was a 7.2% decrease in total PEG fees from 2022-2023 and a 7.8% decrease in total franchise fees from 2022-2023.
- From 2019-2023, we've seen a 16% decrease in total PEG fees and a 11.6% decrease in total franchise fees.

| Year | PEG Fee Total | Franchise Fee Total |
|------|---------------|---------------------|
| 2019 | \$139,540     | \$620,265           |
| 2020 | \$133,298     | \$603,995           |
| 2021 | \$128,800     | \$594,391           |
| 2022 | \$125,004     | \$595,026           |
| 2023 | \$116,065     | \$548,496           |



Communications  
Commission

# **HOMTV Internship/Alumni**



12G.

**To: Communications Commission**  
**From: Danneisha McDole, Multimedia Production and Operations Specialist**  
**Date: March 22, 2024**  
**Re: HOMTV Internship/Alumni**

---

For the Spring 2024 HOMTV Internship Program, we have three new HOMTV interns. We have two Multimedia Journalist interns, Mikia Lawrence, and Camille DuVernois. We have one Multimedia Production intern, Gage Schlueter. In the months of January and February, they have successfully completed their training workshops in preparations of completing community events in the Township and their own independent projects for the semester. They are required to complete three independent projects before the semester ends. All three have completed the pre-production stages of what their independent projects will be about, and three projects has officially been completed so far.

Our first intern, Mikia Lawrence is debuting her show, “Keeping Up with Ki,” where she showcases the businesses and the community events that Meridian Township has to offer. She has already filmed her promotional video, as well as filming with the Harris Nature Center, the Historical Village, and the Nokomis Center.

Our second intern, Camille DuVernois has filmed a community event, the Sustainable Fashion show that took place inside of the Meridian mall. As well as her new series titled, “Eating Green,” a tour-guide like segment highlighting the best places in Meridian Township to eat for different dietary restrictions: vegan, GF, halal, kosher, etc. that are locally owned restaurants in Meridian Township that support dietary needs, as a resource for people with those restrictions and to promote the local eateries. She is also working on highlighting Meridian Cares.

Our third intern, Gage Schlueter, is working on his independent project, “The Investigation Station.” A kid-friendly show that is all about answering children’s curious science related questions. He also has his co-host, Winston, The World’s Fastest Turtle.

We are very pleased with the outcome of the Spring 2024 semester with our new interns. The spring semester will end on Thursday, April 18. We will be starting the interview process for the Summer 2024 semester on Monday, March 25 and the semester will start on Monday, May 13.



**To: Communications Commission**  
**From: Samantha Diehl, Communications Manager**  
**Date: March 22, 2024**  
**Re: Merit BEAD Mapping Challenge**

---

In November 2021, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act — also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal — was signed into law. This legislation provided \$550 billion dollars in federal funding to improve roads, bridges, mass transit, water infrastructure, broadband, and more.

Out of this law came the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program, which is administered by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA).

BEAD is a high-speed internet grant program that will provide \$42.45 billion dollars to expand high-speed internet access to unserved and underserved locations across the country. Funding was allocated on a state-by-state basis, with Michigan receiving \$1.559 billion dollars. This makes Michigan’s allocation the fourth highest in the country.

Though the BEAD Program is administered by the NTIA, funding provided to Michigan will be administered by the Michigan High-Speed Internet (MIHI) Office out of the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO).

Before any funding can be awarded, it is crucial that each jurisdiction identifies whether a home or business is served, underserved, or unserved. The number of underserved or unserved areas determines the amount of BEAD funding that is allocated. The definitions for served, underserved, and unserved are as follows:

- **Served** is classified as an address with broadband service that meets or exceeds 100 megabits per second (Mbps) download speed and 20 Mbps upload speed (100/20 Mbps)
- **Underserved** is classified as an address with broadband service below 100/20 Mbps but higher than 25/3 Mbps.
- **Unserved** is classified as an address with no internet access, an address who utilizes digital subscriber line (DSL), an address who uses a satellite, or an address with broadband service below 25/3 Mbps.

To determine how their location is classified, citizens can visit Michigan’s Broadband Map at [www.michiganbroadbandmap.com/map](http://www.michiganbroadbandmap.com/map). Citizens will search for their address and the map will state whether they are served, underserved, or unserved. The search will also provide information on who their provider is, the technology used, and the speed of their service.

It is important to note that the map's current data was provided by internet service providers and may not be accurate. If citizens believe that their property has been incorrectly classified, they can participate in a challenge process from March 25, 2024 through April 23, 2024.

Unfortunately, challenges can only be submitted by local units of government, Tribal governments, nonprofit organizations, or internet service providers (ISP). This means that individual citizens cannot officially submit challenges on their behalf.

This is where the Ingham County Broadband Task Force and Merit Network, Inc. get involved. Meridian Township is just one of the many jurisdictions in the area working with Ingham County to secure BEAD funding. Though individual citizens cannot submit a challenge, their feedback can still be gathered due to a partnership between the Task Force and Merit.

Merit is an independent nonprofit corporation governed by Michigan's public universities. It owns and operates America's longest-running regional research and educational network. As one of their initiatives, Merit launched the Michigan Moonshot Project in 2018. This project is a statewide call to action that aims to close the digital divide in Michigan.

The Moonshot team created a free BEAD Mapping Challenge platform that allows citizens to challenge their service status. Once the challenge period has ended on April 23, the information collected during the challenge process will be consolidated and submitted by Ingham County.

Citizens who believe they have been classified incorrectly are encouraged to visit [www.merit.edu/challenge](http://www.merit.edu/challenge) to submit their challenge. Part of this challenge includes a speed test that tests their service speeds. This is an important step in ensuring the accuracy of the Michigan Broadband Map because the map is what will be used to allocate BEAD funds.

For example, if someone were to search their address in the Michigan Broadband Map, they could be told their address is classified as served due to their speed meeting or exceeding 100/20 Mbps. Even though the map classified them as served, that does not mean it is correct. The challenge process via Merit will test their service speed and allow them to submit their correct speed if they feel the map incorrectly classified them.

After the challenge period has ended, ISPs will then have 30 days to provide MIHI with rebuttal evidence for any challenges received. Once the rebuttal period has passed, MIHI will make a decision about the challenges and determine the status of each challenged location. All final determinations will be published after the conclusion of the challenge process.

In order to encourage the public to participate in the challenge, Staff will promote the process on social media and the website.