

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
REGULAR MEETING TOWNSHIP BOARD **-APPROVED-**
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos MI 48864-1198
517.853.4000, Township Hall Room
TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2025, 6:00PM

PRESENT: Supervisor Hendrickson, Clerk Demas, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Lentz, Trustee Wilson, Trustee Trezise and Trustee Sundland

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Interim Manager Schmitt, Chief Hamel, Fire Marshal Millerov, Director Gebes, Director Clark, Manager Diehl

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Supervisor Hendrickson called the January 21, 2025, Regular Township Board meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS

Supervisor Hendrickson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Clerk Demas called the roll of the Board.

Supervisor Hendrickson, Clerk Demas, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Lentz, Trustee Sundland, Trustee Trezise, and Trustee Wilson present at 6:01 pm.

4. PRESENTATION

A. Electric Vehicle Fires

Chief Hamel explained the danger of EV fires and gave details about the Township Fire Department protocol and response plan for EV fires.

Trustee Lentz asked about the frequency of EV fires. Chief Hamel clarified that battery failure that leads to fire can occur without there being a car wreck.

Trustee Wilson asked about occurrences of EV fires in the Township. Chief Hamel clarified that there have been no EV fires but there have been three fires caused by this same effect in smaller batteries.

Supervisor Hendrickson asked if Chief Hamel could provide some advice to residents. Chief Hamel said the primary advice he would give is to not charge the vehicle in the garage or near buildings. He also said to be careful when purchasing after-market charging devices for all rechargeable batteries.

5. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Supervisor Hendrickson opened comments from the public at 6:27 pm.

Supervisor Hendrickson closed comments from the public at 6:28 pm.

6. INTERIM TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

- Director Wisinski has completed the Request for Proposals for the Red Cedar Multijurisdictional Clearing Project.
- The police portion of deer cull will continue for roughly two more weeks, completing when the take permitted by MI Department of Natural Resources is reached. A report will be provided to the Board late in February or early in March.
- The new fire truck has arrived and is in use. The second engine will be inspected on January 22 in Ohio, then will be delivered.

Supervisor Henrickson asked about the payroll transition to a new bank. Interim Manager Schmitt indicated that the transition would occur with this week's payroll

7. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS OF ACTIVITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Trustee Sundland reported that the Economic Development Corporation discussed the Business and Façade Improvement Program grants available to local businesses to improve their façades.

Trustee Wilson reported that the Community Resource Commission utilized donations to deliver holiday baskets to 280 families and noted that this number was achievable because of a 4th quarter budget amendment to the Meridian Cares program.

Clerk Demas reported that the Land Preservation Advisory Board discussed property acquisition. She also attended the I Heart Mac and Cheese opening event.

Trustee Lentz reported that the Environmental Commission discussed the Climate Sustainability Plan. He will be attending a Tri-County Regional Planning Commission meeting on January 22. He met with a member of the Greater Lansing Chamber of Commerce to discuss Meridian Township's role in the Greater Lansing community.

Treasurer Deschaine reported that Capital Area Transportation Authority ridership in Meridian Township has increased and that a presentation will be available in March. He noted that the Ingham County Materials Management is working on a Countywide Materials Management Plan. He gave more details regarding the transfer to the new bank.

Trustee Trezise briefed the Board on the cases that were before the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting this month.

Supervisor Hendrickson noted that the Corridor Improvement Authority meeting was cancelled for lack of business, but that there are upcoming items to be addressed to increase safety in the corridor. The Local Officials Compensation Commission discussed comparable wages, and the results of the meeting are in the packet. He met with a contact from ITC that is responsible for the high voltage towers and equipment in Meridian Township and the potential for using ITC property to create pathways. The upcoming Senior and Community Center meeting will discuss building plans and costs.

8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Trustee Sundland moved to approve the Agenda. Supported by Trustee Lentz.

VOICE VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Hendrickson, Clerk Demas, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Lentz, Trustee Wilson, Trustee Sundland and Trustee Trezise

NAYS: NONE

Motion carried: 7-0

9. CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor Hendrickson listed the items on the Consent Agenda and noted that he noticed one misspelling on item 9.B which he asked to be corrected.

Clerk Demas noted that a Communications item related to 12.C was received late and that it will be included in the Communications section of the next meeting's packet.

Trustee Wilson moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Supported by Treasurer Deschaine

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Clerk Demas, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Lentz, Trustee Sundland, Trustee Trezise, Trustee Wilson, and Supervisor Hendrickson

NAYS: NONE

Motion carried: 7-0

10. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY

NONE

11. HEARINGS

NONE

12. ACTION ITEMS

A. Ordinance 2025-02-Youth Commission Establishment-Final Adoption

Director Clark briefly presented the item, indicating no changes since the previous discussions. She indicated that there is a period of 30 days between this approval and when the Commission can be created.

Trustee Trezise moved for final adoption Ordinance 2025-02 to amend Chapter 2, Article VI of the Code of Ordinances to establish a Youth Commission for and in the Charter Township of Meridian. Supported by Clerk Demas.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Lentz, Trustee Sundland, Trustee Trezise, Trustee Wilson, Supervisor Hendrickson, and Clerk Demas

NAYS: NONE

Motion carried: 7-0

B. Findings of the Local Officials Compensation Commission

Supervisor Hendrickson gave an overview of the item. The increases will take effect 30 days from the January 15th, the date it was filed with the Clerk's Office, unless the Board takes specific action to reject the finding of the LOCC.

No motion was necessary if the Trustees agreed to allow the increases to take effect. The Trustees allowed the increases to take effect.

C. El Camino Liquor License

Director Clark provided a summary of the discussion that has occurred to date.

Trustee Lentz indicated that he would not support the resolution because it will not be issued in the regions that are targeted for redevelopment. Treasurer Deschaine concurred.

Trustee Wilson thanked the applicant for their willingness to provide information but cited the same reasons as Trustee Lentz and Treasurer Deschaine for not supporting the resolution.

Supervisor Hendrickson noted that there is already a space being created in one of the redevelopment areas appropriate for this kind of business and suggested that the applicant pursue this concept in a location within one of the redevelopment areas.

Treasurer Deschaine moved to deny the Local Government Approval Resolution to recommend and approve the issuance of a For Quota Class C On-Premise With Sunday AM and PM Sales Liquor License to Stacy and Matthew Wesolek of El Camino's Garage, 4790 S. Hagadorn Rd Suite 102. Supported by Trustee Trezise.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustee Lentz, Trustee Sundland, Trustee Trezise, Trustee Wilson, Supervisor Hendrickson, Clerk Demas, and Treasurer Deschaine

NAYS: NONE

Motion carried: 7-0

D. Text Amendment 2025-01-Fire Code Update-Introduction

Fire Marshal Millerov reviewed the proposed text amendment noting the change that the Township attorneys requested from the last time this item was discussed.

Trustee Wilson moved to approve the Resolution to Introduce Ordinance 2025-01, and Ordinance to update the Township Code pursuant to the 2024 International Fire Code including Appendix chapters B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, K, N, and O as published by the International Code Council with Meridian Township amendments. Seconded by Trustee Trezise.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustee Sundland, Trustee Trezise, Trustee Wilson, Supervisor Hendrickson, Clerk Demas, Treasurer Deschaine, and Trustee Lentz

NAYS: NONE

Motion carried: 7-0

13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Purchasing Policy Updates

Interim Manager Schmitt outlined the proposed updates.

Trustee Lentz asked how much the Township anticipates saving in late fees. Interim Manager Schmitt clarified that the primary concern is the amount of staff time devoted to avoiding late fees which is caused by the current process.

Trustee Sundland noted that these updates follow practices she has noticed at the State level and will streamline the process. Trustee Trezise concurred, adding that these are practices used elsewhere.

Trustee Wilson wanted more information about the \$1,000 threshold. Interim Manager Schmitt clarified that this only removes the requirement that the Finance Director reviews all purchases under \$1,000 and does not affect the other authorizations in the approval process.

Treasurer Deschaine disagreed with the Electronic Funds Transfer process as it does not reflect the current process. Interim Manager Schmitt suggested waiting to make any changes to the Electronic Funds Transfer process until a Finance Director is hired.

Supervisor Hendrickson expressed concern that the differences between the designations of "Accounting" and "Finance Director" are sometimes unclear and asked if the Accounting staff approve Finance Director purchases. Interim Manager Schmitt concurred. Supervisor Hendrickson asked what other communities do to help maintain oversight in such circumstances. Interim Manager Schmitt stated that he will find out.

B. Rifle Purchase Program

Chief Grillo outlined the existing program and explained the need for the increase in allowance.

Trustee Lentz asked if money has been set aside in the past for safe storage. Chief Grillo clarified that it was added to this update because the need for safe storage is based on a new law. Trustee Lentz asked for more details about how the Police Department ensures safe storage. Chief Grillo stated that he will need to speak with attorneys to clarify that. Supervisor Hendrickson noted that it could be included in contract negotiations and that safe storage is required by State Law regardless of whether the Police Department requires it contractually.

Trustee Wilson noted that other communities offer similar programs and stated that it makes sense to provide a higher allowance due to inflation.

Trustee Trezise asked if there is a limit for the times an individual can use this program. Chief Grillo stated that each officer is allowed to access it once every five years, that the purpose is to encourage them to use the best equipment they can while they are on duty.

Trustee Sundland asked if the rifle stays with the officer if they move away from the Township. Chief Grillo stated that once the rifle is paid off it is theirs, if it isn't paid off, they either surrender the rifle to the Police Department or they pay off the remainder of the allowance.

Treasurer Deschaine asked about the approval process within the Police Department. Chief Grillo gave details about the Department's process.

Clerk Demas asked if the addition of the safe storage law was the reasoning behind asking for the increase. She also asked if there are statistics regarding the safety due to customization. Chief Grillo stated that the increase is to accommodate safe storage options and indicated that he and other Police personnel state that they are most comfortable with their own personalized equipment because each person adjusts their equipment to their own needs.

Supervisor Hendrickson asked that the Township attorneys review the policy to ensure that the Township is not open to a potential lawsuit. He also asked that the motion include language about the additional \$500 for the safe on top of the increase to \$2500. Chief Grillo indicated that he can look into it and noted that the checks are issued directly to the manufacturers, not to the employees.

14. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Supervisor Hendrickson opened public comments at 7:30 pm

Supervisor Hendrickson closed public comments at 7:30 pm

15. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

None

16. ADJOURNMENT

Treasurer Deschaine moved to adjourn. Seconded by Trustee Wilson

VOICE VOTE YEAS: Supervisor Hendrickson, Clerk Demas, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Lentz, Trustee Sundland, Trustee Trezise, and Trustee Wilson

NAYS: NONE

Motion carried: 7-0

The meeting adjourned at 7:31 pm



Scott Hendrickson
Township Supervisor



Angela Demas
Township Clerk