

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
TOWNSHIP BOARD VIRTUAL REGULAR MEETING **-APPROVED-**  
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos MI 48864-1198  
517-349-1232, Virtual Meeting via Zoom  
TUESDAY, June 2, 2020 **6:00 pm.**

PRESENT: Supervisor Styka, Clerk Dreyfus, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Jackson, Opsommer, Wisinski, Sundland

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Township Manager Walsh, Director of Public Works Perry, Fire Chief Hamel, Police Chief Plaga, Community Planning Director Kieselbach, Information Technology Director Gebes, Principal Planner Menser, Economic Development Director Lane, Finance Director Mattison, Human Resources Director Marx

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Supervisor Styka called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS

Supervisor Styka led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Clerk Dreyfus called the roll of the Board.

4. PRESENTATIONS

A. 2019 Audit-Yeo & Yeo

Ms. Ali Barnes of Yeo & Yeo presented slides of the 2019 Audit findings. There were no material deficiencies and the audit was positive

B. Coronavirus Task Force Update

Chief Hamel provided an update on the Coronavirus task force.

C. Meridian EDC Small Business Relief Grant Program Update

Director Lane gave an update on the EDC Small Business Relief Grant Program.

5. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Supervisor Styka opened public remarks at 6:16 pm.

None.

Supervisor Styka closed public remarks at 6:21 pm.

6. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

Manager Walsh reported: Farmer’s market project is underway, road construction has started, new tenant will occupy former Toys’R’Us site, outdoor service centers are opening June 8 for the public due to Covid19.

7. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Clerk Dreyfus:

- Attended Ground Water Management Board visioning session / goal-setting
- Election update: ordered supplies & ballots, recruiting/hiring election workers and staff for in-house temporary employees, co-located Haslett precincts, citizens are being mailed Absentee Voting applications by various groups and individuals, voter turnout for the August primary is expected to be very high

Trustee Jackson:

- Attended Tri-county Regional Planning Commission meeting. Short-term Transportation Plan amendments, discussed DNR grant proposals - including 2 Meridian Township proposals - for park improvements

Trustee Opsommer:

- CATA is returning to normal operations with cautions in place for Covid19 safety

Treasurer Deschaine:

- Attended via Zoom following meetings: Chamber of Commerce, Elections Commission precinct consolidation, Brownfield Redevelopment Authority discussed Marathon Station in Haslett, Economic Development Commission reviewed Covid small grant program, Downtown Development Authority.

Supervisor Styka:

- Attended via Zoom following meetings: Corridor Improvement Authority, Downtown Development Authority, Economic Development Commission.
- Asked Director Kieselbach for information regarding feral cat colonies within the Township Director Kieselbach stated our ordinances do not address this, and other roadblocks impede a speedy resolution.

8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**Clerk Dreyfus moved to approve the Agenda as presented. Seconded by Trustee Opsommer.**

**Trustee Opsommer moved to add Item 13B to discuss a prospective ordinance to address the tall grass at Walnut Hills. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine.**

ROLL CALL VOTE:

YEAS: Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Jackson, Opsommer, Sundland, Wisinski, Supervisor Styka, Clerk Dreyfus

NAYS: None

Motion carried 7 – 0

MAIN MOTION VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Jackson, Opsommer, Sundland, Wisinski, Supervisor Styka, Clerk Dreyfus, Treasurer Deschaine

NAYS: None

Motion carried 7 – 0

9. CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor Styka reviewed the consent agenda.

**Clerk Dreyfus moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Seconded by Trustee Sundland.**

Supervisor Styka proposed amendments and changes to the Board Minutes for May 19, 2020. Clerk Dreyfus asked about reasons for proposed deletions of brief comments regarding letter that was submitted to the Board. Supervisor Styka stated letter explained itself.

Clerk inquired about deletion of brief summary of Haslett Four Corners project, concern that no language offered to replace deleted comments. Supervisor responded as per Board policy, the detail was unnecessary.

Clerk expressed concern with inconsistency in Board approval of minutes, pointed to changes made by Supervisor and approved by Board for March 3, 2020 Board Meeting. Clerk’s view that changes were very lengthy and detailed, and violated Board policy.

**Treasurer Deschaine moved that we accept the Supervisor’s revised minutes as presented. Seconded by Trustee Opsommer.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Opsommer, Sundland, Wisinski, Supervisor Styka, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Jackson

NAYS: Clerk Dreyfus

Motion carried 6 – 1

A. Communications

Clerk Dreyfus stated no communications were received prior to the deadline.

B. Approval of Minutes – May 19, 2020 Virtual Regular Meeting

**Clerk Dreyfus moved to approve and ratify the minutes of the Virtual Regular Meeting of May 19, 2020 as amended by Supervisor Styka. Seconded by Trustee Sundland.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Clerk Dreyfus, Trustees Sundland, Wisinski, Supervisor Styka, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Jackson, Opsommer

NAYS:

Motion carried 7 - 0

C. Bills

**Clerk Dreyfus moved to approve that the Township Board approve the Manager's Bills as follows. Seconded by Trustee Sundland:**

<b>COMMON CASH</b>		<b>\$ 238,139.89</b>
<b>PUBLIC WORKS</b>		<b>\$ 35,883.88</b>
<b>TRUST &amp; AGENCY</b>		<b>\$ 299.36</b>
	<b>TOTAL CHECKS:</b>	<b>\$ 274,323.13</b>
<b>CREDIT CARD TRANSACTIONS</b>		
5/14/2020-5/26/2020		
	<b>TOTAL PURCHASES:</b>	<b>\$ 4,811.32</b>
	<b>ACH Payments</b>	<b>\$ 436,488.50</b>

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Clerk Dreyfus, Trustees Sundland, Wisinski, Supervisor Styka, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Jackson, Opsommer

NAYS:

Motion carried 7 - 0

D. Ratification of New Police Officer Appointment

**Clerk Dreyfus moved to ratify the appointment of Jordan Kuhn to the position of Police Officer contingent upon successful completion of those items stipulated in the conditional offer of employment. Seconded by Trustee Sundland.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Clerk Dreyfus, Trustees Sundland, Wisinski, Supervisor Styka, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Jackson, Opsommer

NAYS:

Motion carried 7 - 0

10. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY - NONE

11. HEARINGS - NONE

12. ACTION ITEMS

A. Mixed Use Planned Unit Development #19034 (Hudson Senior Living)

**Trustee Opsommer moved to adopt the resolution approving Mixed use Planned Unit Development #19034 to construct a 133 unit senior housing apartment building at 1673 Haslett Road. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.**

Board discussion: Site plan revisions, extra commercial space appreciated, desire for new businesses in Haslett, applicant responsiveness noted, view that citizens are quiet on the project and neither pro nor con, commercial component still unknown, future phases important, four corners of Haslett not envisioned to be entirely senior-focused, natural environment component that links to trails – important for health and appreciated.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustee Wisinski, Supervisor Styka, Clerk Dreyfus, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Jackson, Opsommer, Sundland

NAYS: None

Motion carried 7-0

B. Special Use Permit #19181 (Hudson Senior Living) Pine Village

Board discussion: Special User Permit (SUP) related to MUPUD #19034

**Trustee Jackson moved to adopt the resolution approving Special Use Permit #19181 to construct a 147,721 square foot senior housing apartment building at 1673 Haslett Road. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Styka, Clerk Dreyfus, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Jackson, Opsommer, Sundland, Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried 7-0

C. Acceptance of 2019 Audit Findings

Board discussion: The Board thanked Director Mattison and her employees for their efforts on the audit.

**Trustee Opsommer moved to approve the 2019 audited financial statements as presented by Yeo & Yeo. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine.**

Board discussion: appreciation to staff for assisting on audit

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Clerk Dreyfus, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Jackson, Opsommer, Sundland, Wisinski, Supervisor Styka

NAYS: None

Motion carried 7-0

D. 2020 1<sup>st</sup> quarter Budget Amendments

Board discussion: Director Mattison explained the proposed changes to the first quarter 2020 budget presented to the Board.

**Trustee Jackson moved to approve the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter budget amendments with a decrease in budgeted Fund Balance for the General Fund in the amount of \$381,950 which projects a use of Fund Balance of \$2,084,180. Based on 2109 audit results, the projected Fund Balance at December 31, 2020 will be \$8,410,239. Seconded by Trustee Opsommer.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Jackson, Opsommer, Sundland, Wisinski, Supervisor Styka, Clerk Dreyfus

NAYS: None

Motion carried 7-0

E. National Gun Violence Awareness Day Resolution

Board discussion: Supervisor Styka voiced his support of the resolution. He said June 5, 2020 was a day to wear orange to recognize gun safety.

**Trustee Wisinski moved to approve the National Gun Violence Awareness Day resolution. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustee Opsommer, Sundland, Wisinski, Supervisor Styka, Clerk Dreyfus, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Jackson

NAYS: None

Motion carried 7-0

F. COVID-19 Workplace Preparedness Plan

Board discussion: Director Marx reported on Township Covid-19 safety precautions for employees and customers.

**Treasurer Deschaine moved to adopt the Policy and Safety Guidelines to reopen Meridian Township buildings as presented. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustee Wisinski, Supervisor Styka, Clerk Dreyfus, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Jackson, Opsommer, Sundland

NAYS: None

Motion carried 7-0

### 13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

#### A. Meridian Cares Pandemic Support

Supervisor Styka mentioned financial challenges residents may experience due to Covid-19, \$12,000 available due to not dispersing all small grants to local businesses, help businesses but also help employees and families, attorney opinion that due to emergency we can expend funds to Meridian Cares.

Board discussion: types of expenses Meridian Cares can provide assistance towards, flexibility needed.

**Board consensus to place this item up for action at the next meeting.**

#### B. Former Walnut Hills Golf Course tall grass violation

Trustee Opsommer stated he believed the grass ordinance should be revised to address the issue of tall grass at the former site of Walnut Hills Golf Course; ordinance should be amended to require mowing within 75 feet of sidewalks. Ordinance only requires mowing 75 feet from structures, if no structure there may no mowing by sidewalk. With his proposal, can place property liens on parcel if property owner is non-compliant. Potential exemptions such as parks, land preservation properties, active golf courses.

Board discussion: Discussion with Walnut Hills management could be helpful, current regulations are mow within 75 feet of structure and 8 inches max height, 75 foot proposal to mow from sidewalks may not be right distance, some citizens have different views about lawns and tall grass, negative environmental impact of mowing, health & safety of vs aesthetics, tall grass may harbor wildlife, mice, rats, snakes, mosquitoes; view that staff has no recourse to deal with complaints, greenbelt concept has lawns mowed 10-20 feet from sidewalk and further back is in natural state, amount of feet required to be mowed is up for discussion, need to take action to address resident complaints.

**Board consensus for planning staff to draft language for ordinance change and place this item up for discussion at the next meeting.**

### 14. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Supervisor Styka Opened Public Remarks at 8:21 pm.

Via phone call: Joyce VanCoeving, 5882 Okemos Road, Okemos; asked why her communication was not in packet and about communication policy regarding cut-off dates, asked for written policy.

Via phone call: Tom Haas, 1491 Franklin Street, Haslett; commented on project slated for Haslett Village Square, also stated "Zoom" meetings are not conducive to public comment. Tall grass complaints at Walnut Hills should not dictate Township policy making, should reach out to property owners and work with them.

Supervisor Styka Closed Public Remarks at 8:21 pm.

15. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

- Trustee Jackson thanked the Township M-Team and employees for doing their best to conduct business during the Covid-19 shutdown.
- Trustee Opsommer asked the clerk to provide a written policy for communications (from the public) to the Board. Comments on inconsistent application of policy.
- Clerk Dreyfus stated the policy has been in place for years. Offered to bring written policy to Board.
- Clerk Dreyfus raised concerns about Board inconsistency in application of Board policies, such as changing draft minutes presented by the Clerk.
- Treasurer Deschaine and Trustee Wisinski commented they support having Board policies formalized in a written policy.

16. ADJOURNMENT

**Treasurer Deschaine moved to adjourn. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.**

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 7-0

**Supervisor Styka adjourned the meeting at 8:28 pm.**

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RONALD J. STYKA,  
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

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BRETT DREYFUS,  
TOWNSHIP CLERK