



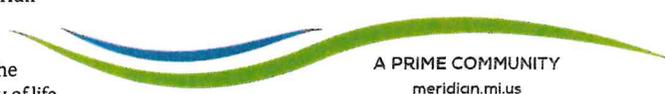
AGENDA
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
Community Resources Commission
December 13th, 2023

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
2. CONSENT AGENDA
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 2023
4. OLD BUSINESS
 - A. Thanksgiving/Holiday Food Baskets
 - B. 2024 Commission appointment update
 - C. Fundraisers
 - D. Zoom Meetings
 - E. Year End Letter/Thank you to donors.
5. NEW BUSINESS
 - A. 2024 Meeting dates resolution
 - B. Marketing analysis by Communications Department
 - C. Outreach/Public Relations
 - D. Donor listing
6. HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAM REPORT
7. BOARD LIAISON REPORT
8. OPEN FORUM
9. ADJOURNMENT

Next meeting: January 10th, 2023, at 6:00 P.M.

Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Meridian Township Board by contacting:
Township Manager Frank L. Walsh, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 or 517.853.4258 - Ten Day Notice is Required.
Meeting Location: 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 Township Hall

Meridian Township exists to create a sustainable community through the most effective use of available resources that achieve the highest quality of life.



A PRIME COMMUNITY
meridian.mi.us

**Meridian Township Community Resources Commission
Needs Fund Report
November 2023**

Starting Cash Balance **\$ 35,760.00**

Donations

Redi-Ride Sales	\$60.00	
Employee Payroll Donation	\$38.48	
Pop Bottle Return	\$ 9.50	
Water Bill Roundup Gift	\$ 0.00	Not completed in November
Walmart Grant	\$1000.00	For Emergency Fund
Baby Bottle Fundraiser Supplies	\$300.00	
Resident Donations	\$600.00	
Interest	\$ 49.57	
Reimbursement from Okemos Pres.	\$1855.00	

Cash Balance after Donations **39,672.55**

Emergency Funds used in November \$5155.93

Ending Cash Balance **\$34,590.82**

Emergency Funds used in 2023 **\$38,679.59**

PayPal Balance as of 11/31/23 \$1676.28

Redi-Ride Passes sold in November 10

Redi-Ride Passes YTD 178

Date	Household	Assistance	Amount	Leverage	Authorization
11/01/23	M.W.	Rent	429.75	429.75	Styka
11/01/23	C.M.	Rent	153.00	153.00	Styka
11/01/23	T.E.	Rent	415.00	0.00	Styka
11/07/23	J.S.	Utilities	304.53	304.53	Styka
11/07/23	T.R.	Utilities	463.41	0.00	Styka
11/07/23	T.J.	Utilities	152.14	470.00	Styka
11/16/23	S.M.	Utilities	211.60	0.00	Styka
11/16/23	S.M.	Rent	368.00	368.00	Styka

11/29/23	D.V.	Rent	186.50	186.50	Styka
11/29/23	D.D.	Rent	538.00	1750.00	Styka
11/30/23	P.A.	Rent	500.00	692.00	Styka
11/30/23	S.S.	Rent	234.00	0.00	Styka
11/30/23	N.W.	Utilities	508.00	248.05	Styka
			4463.93*	4601.83	

* The ledger of used emergency funds is \$5155.93, the difference is that we are waiting for a 692.00 reimbursement check from Okemos Community Church for P.A.

Other November Notes

- Much of November was spent collecting and organizing names for the Thanksgiving food applications.
- It was a very busy month with emergency needs as the holiday season gets closer.
- On Saturday, November 18th, Naren, Kathy and Katie delivered food only Meijer gift cards to residents.
- On Sunday, November 19th Katie met a group of OHS students to shop for and deliver Thanksgiving food and food only gift cards to Marsh Point residents.
- We had 9-10 BASTAS bulbs on Katie's door for township employees and residents to take and make purchases.
- We set up a coat drive at the Okemos Senior Center.
- Katie took a webinar with Michigan Address Confidentiality Program.
- Worked with several residents throughout the month to fill out Poverty Tax Exemptions for Property Tax Review in December.

**MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP
COMMUNITY RESOURCES COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 8, 2023-DRAFT
ADMIN CONFERENCE ROOM**

PRESENT: Chair Styka, Vice-Chair Robinson, Commissioner Langhals, Commissioner Turimella, Commissioner Maingu, Commissioner Webster

ABSENT:

STAFF: Human Services Specialist Love

BOARD LIASON: Trustee Wilson

PUBLIC:

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

A: Chair Styka called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

2. CONSENT AGENDA

A: Add Zoom meetings to new business 6D

B: Add Year End Report/Annual Appeal Letter 6E

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Commissioner Robinson moves to approve the October 11th, 2023, minutes as written.
Seconded by Commissioner Langhals
Motion Carried 6-0.**

4. OLD BUSINESS

A: Thanksgiving/Holiday Food Baskets

- Going well. Sponsors for Thanksgiving baskets are St. Lukes Church, Federau group, Okemos Presbyterian, Red Cedar Church, St. Marthas woman's group, Commons Church, Schafer Dental and Okemos Community Church.
- Our DPW will handle the rotary delivery for Grange Acres in December. The date of delivery will be **Wednesday, December 13th at 10:00**. Any CRC member is welcome to participate. Meet at the Community Center at 10:00 A.M.
- St. Lukes will be delivering Thanksgiving baskets door to door on Saturday, November 18th between 9-12 to Grange Acres and Carriage Lane.

- Edgewood village deliveries of food only Meijer gift cards will be Saturday, November 18th from 1-3 p.m. (meet at the Okemos HS parking lot at 1:00 P.M.) Any CRC members are welcome to attend.
- Marsh point deliveries of food baskets and Meijer food only gift cards will be November Sunday, 19th from 1-3 P.M. (meet Katie at the Marsh Point parking lot at 1:00 P.M.) I will be shopping with OHS high school students at 10:00 a.m. to purchase food. Any CRC members are welcome to attend. The OHS ACTION team is making 50 cards for the residents at Marsh Point.

B: Halloween Extravaganza

- Commissioner Webster had a nice time at the event. It ran from 4-6 P.M. Typically 150 people are there. 7 cars were trunks for treats. Inside were activities done by ACTION students.
- For the future it would be nice to have a brochure of information with a coloring/activity sheet for kid's events.

C: 2024 Commission appointments

- We have an interested candidate to join the CRC, Lisa Whiting-Dobson.
- Feedback from email that was sent with her bio was good.
- Discussion that she would be a great fit for our commission.
- She is already an appointee on the communication commission, so make sure that is pointed out to Supervisor Jackson.

Commissioner Styka moves to bring forth Lisa Whiting-Dobson's name to Supervisor Jackson for inclusion on our commission effective in January 2024.

Motion Carried 6-0.

D: Marketing

- Meridian Cares will be reserved a spot in the full color Prime magazine that will be published once in 2024.

E: Fundraisers

- Dusty's Celler Fundraiser: Liaison Wilson spoke with Matt Rhodes from Dusty's Celler. They are not in the position this year to do a 1-1 match of donations. Wilson will contact Matt next week to follow up after their weekend meeting. We would do all the advertising. They would just collect the money.
- Baby Bottle Boomerang: Target denied our gift card request. A Commissioner who chooses to remain anonymous would like to make a \$300 donation for the purchase of Baby Bottles for this fundraiser. A huge THANK YOU! We plan to carry out this fundraiser in early 2024.

5. NEW BUSINESS

A: Grant Approval

- We received a community grant from Walmart for \$1000.00. The check has already been received for our Emergency Needs fund.

B: This was doubled up on the agenda. Already talked about 4C.

C: Okemos Food Pantry - Love had a meeting with Beth Baldwin and Mary Garder from the Okemos Food Pantry located at Okemos Community Church. (see packet material)

- They are struggling to get monetary and food donations.
- They are running out of room, find it hard to get donations could be because people assume it is run by the church. They are not connected to the church. They are a pantry that falls under the Lansing Food Bank. There are 17 in the Greater Lansing Area.
- They are involved in the Simply Give program, they do receive food from the GLFB once a month, no meat, you have no idea what you will get.
- They are to feed all in 48864 zip code with need that comes to them.
- Areas of concern: Branding, Awareness, Space, Financing, location.
- Their question was... why is Meridian Township not more involved in the Okemos and Haslett food bank?
- They are looking to the future and will this trajectory they are not going to make it.
- What would prevent Meridian Cares from getting involved in helping the food pantry?
- Possible fridge/freezer space at other pantries.
- Liaison Willson shared concern about straying in the lane of satellite food pantries that are under the control of a non-profit organization.
- Meridian Cares could use our entity to help spread the word with branding.
- We can offer support but helping with administration would be out of scope.
- Need to raise awareness that when doing food drives to the food pantries, keep it local instead of to the Greater Lansing food bank. Instead donate directly to Okemos/Haslett Food Pantry

D: Zoom Meetings

- Any time Okemos Public schools are closed on the day of our meeting we move our meeting to zoom.
- Liaison Wilson has a zoom license, and we can use her meeting room for these meetings.
- No cameras are needed. You can call in on your phone if you would like.

E: Year End Report

- In addition to our successes have we done a donor letter?

- We have helped ___ people.
- Send a letter to all the donors.
- Love will send last year's yearend report for review.
- There is a lot of competition for donations.
- A possible timeline would be the end of January.

6. HUMAN SERVICES REPORT

A: Love created a new layout for the Community Needs Fund report.

B: Emergency Funds used so far in 2023 is \$33,523.63

C: We have \$35,701.91 in cash to use for emergency needs.

D: We also have around \$40,000 in a money market.

E: We have \$5236.00 in the knob hill fire fund. We may have a resident who would be eligible to use this money.

F: Liaison Wilson recommended changing the word "committed" to "restricted" when talking about reserved funds for certain needs on the Needs Report.

7. BOARD LIASON REPORT- Board Liaison Wilson

The Senior/Community center continues to progress. There are talks with the mall about purchasing and repurposing a spot. The current senior center will be torn down in the next 5-6 years. The township will be approving a company to help with preplanning and messaging.

8. OPEN FORUM

9. ADJOURNEMENT

Chair Styka adjourned the meeting at 7:02 P.M. with no opposition.



To: Community Resource Commission
From: Rachael Stohlin, Marketing & Public Relations Specialist
Date: November 27, 2023
Re: Meridian Cares Marketing Options

Following a recent discussion with Human Services Specialist Katie Love regarding the interest in increasing marketing for and brand awareness of Meridian Cares, I am providing a list of options for your consideration in building Meridian Cares' relationships with the Township community, with Communications Department feedback under each option:

1. **Meridian Cares E-Newsletter or Informal Email List**
 - a. **Summary:** A formal, templated (via Constant Contact, MailChimp, etc.) or informal email newsletter in which the Human Services Specialist provides community resource news, events, and other information.
 - b. **Communications Department Feedback:**
 - i. *This is the Communications Department's preferred option of the four provided.*
 - ii. Email marketing is the most effective form of digital marketing, providing the greatest assurance that messages reach the audience's inbox. However, subscriptions must be organically gathered. We can help recruit subscriptions by marketing the email list on social media, the Meridian Cares website, or elsewhere.
 - iii. We would highly suggest using an email marketing software like Constant Contact or MailChimp, as this will help the Human Services Specialist save time in tracking subscriptions and un-subscriptions and use pre-formatted newsletters. However, the Communications Department did not budget for a new email newsletter in 2024, so this would likely be an added expense for the Meridian Cares program. That said, emailing subscribers directly from Outlook is an option as well.
 - iv. The Communications Department will assist the Human Services Specialist in starting Meridian Cares email marketing if this option is chosen.
2. **Meridian Cares Facebook Page**
 - a. **Summary:** The Meridian Cares program has had a Facebook page in the past, but the account was previously deleted due to a small following and low engagement. This option involves the reactivation of the account so that Meridian Cares can provide updates to the community.
 - b. **Communications Department Feedback:**
 - i. As discussed with the Human Services Specialist, concerns exist regarding ever-changing social media algorithms, which highly favor video content, content created by users' close friends and loved ones, and the specific interests of the end user. Institutions like Meridian Township are often

competing with skilled content to reach users' feeds, which could repeat the account's challenge in building a following and engagement.

3. Designated Meridian Cares Section in the Meridian Happenings

- a. **Summary:** The Meridian Happenings email newsletter provides subscribed Meridian Township community members with general Township news, event reminders, and HOMTV programming recaps. As of November 2023, the newsletter reaches approximately 6,400 subscribers and is typically opened by about 50% of the addresses it reaches.
- b. **Communications Department Feedback:**
 - i. Concerns include regular priorities in sharing other local news, especially in summer months and the upcoming election year.
 - ii. A secondary concern would be the necessity for the Meridian Cares section to be included within the Meridian Happenings newsletter, as not all readers are interested in obtaining assistance from community resources or donating to the program.

4. Meridian Cares Themed Facebook Group

- a. Facebook groups tend to be favored by social media algorithms, especially when they're actively used and are of interest to their participants. Recalling the strong interest in resource seekers to obtain assistance, as well as the community-minded individuals who wish to support their Township neighbors, a Facebook group may have high engagement and offer an opportunity for public conversation about resources in the Township.
- b. **Communications Department Feedback:**
 - i. Moderation requirements may make this option too much for the Human Services Specialist and Communications Department to manage.