



CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Township Service Center
2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court | Haslett, MI
Wednesday, March 12, 2025, 6 PM

PRESENT: Board Members: Jamie Hiller, Steve Thomas, Kris Parnell, Kathy Fay, Yu Man Lee.
ABSENT: Mark Stephens.
STAFF: Emma Campbell, Stewardship Coordinator
TOWNSHIP: Township Clerk, Angela Demas

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

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

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. Tim Potter, Township Resident proposed two sledding hills to be implemented at Okemos Road Preserve, asking for an exemption to the Land Preservation Ordinance, Chapter 22-110, to allow for sledding to provide winter recreation.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

- a. March 12, 2025

Chair Hiller moves to make a motion to amend the Agenda to include Communications Item 5C and add Items 6A and 6B to a Closed Session. Board Member Parnell seconded.

Commissioner Stephens moved to approve the amended March 12, 2025 Agenda to place on file. Board Member Parnell seconded.

Voice vote: Unanimous

4. APPROVE MINUTES

- a. January 8, 2025

Board member Fay makes a motion to add a correction to the January 8, 2025 minutes in the 2024 Land Preservation Annual Report. Commissioner Stephens seconded.

Chair Hiller makes a motion to place the amended January 8, 2025 minutes on file. Board Member Parnell seconded.

Voice vote: Unanimous

5. COMMUNICATIONS

- a. Review of Board Member Expectations
- b. New Parks and Recreation Department Administrative Assistant, Hannah Pachucki
- c. Tim Potter, township resident provided a written proposal for Sledding Hill in Okemos Road Preserve (Exhibit A)

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Commissioner Stephens makes a motion to place Communications on file. Board Member Fay seconded.

Board Member Fay makes a motion to move into closed session. Commissioner Stephens seconded.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Jamie Hiller, Steve Thomas, Mark Stephens, Yu Man Lee, Kris Parnell, Kathy Fay.

Nays: None.

(BEGIN CLOSED SESSION)

6. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. Parcels for Acquisition Consideration (Exhibit B)
 - i. Parcel A
 - ii. Parcel B
 - iii. Parcel C

Board Member Fay makes a motion to move out of closed session. Commissioner Stephens seconded.

Roll Call:

Yayes: Jamie Hiller, Steve Thomas, Yu Man Lee, Mark Stephens, Kris Parnell, Kathy Fay.

Nays: None.

(END CLOSED SESSION)

Vice Chair Thomas moved to take action on what was discussed in closed session. Board Member Parnell seconded.

Roll Call:

Yayes: Jamie Hiller, Steve Thomas, Yu Man Lee, Mark Stephens, Kris Parnell, Kathy Fay.

Nays: None.

b. Acquisition Prioritization

- i. Chair Hiller introduces this issue to address how the board will move forward in considering future land preservation acquisitions.
- ii. Chair Hiller would like to introduce sub-committees for this issue at the April 9th meeting for more detailed discussion for this issue.
- iii. Ecological Screening Criteria; modify the existing ecological screening criteria to create a more accurate scoring for potential acquisition sites.
 - 1. A verbal score in combination with a numerical score may be a more explainable way to measure this criteria. Taxpayers should be able to

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- understand the criteria.
2. Include a 'why' reason for each of these measurements.
3. Board members proposed a checkbox system to check off certain landscape features such as water, connectivity, invasive species, etc.
4. Once the form is completed the board can take it to a preserve that we already own and complete the ecological screening criteria.

7. REPORTS

- a. STAFF REPORT: Stewardship Coordinator, Emma Campbell
 - i. Update on current preservation projects and issues (Exhibit C)
 1. Financial Statement
 - a. Reserve fund (218) is not accessible to the board
 - b. Land Acquisition Fund (217) is accessible to the board for acquisition
 - c. Land Preservation Millage (217) is accessible to staff for management activities and staff salaries
 2. Meridian Conservation Corps 2024 Annual Corps Report
 3. February & March Stewardship Calendar
 - ii. ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION REPORT: Commissioner Yu Man Lee
 - i. Commissioner Lee reports an update on the Climate sustainability plan (CSP). The Environmental Commission would like track goals from the CSP. A spreadsheet is being created to track objectives for the CSP. Commissioner Lee will bring this one a future LPAB meeting to see how the Land Preservation Program has contributed to these goals.
 - ii. Township Green Grant Program for 2025. Funding for Wetland Education got rolled together into Climate Sustainability Funds, totaling \$30,000 to have grants awarded for any projects aligning with the CSP.
 1. We can apply for this with any projects we feel would be worthy.
 - iii. Green Burial Program; they did a feasibility study to see how likely the Township Board would be to approve this idea.
 - iii. PARK COMMISSION REPORT: Commissioner Mark Stephens
 - i. Looking for a place to put a cricket field, and there are some options they are looking into.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. None.

9. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS

- a. None.

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. Next Land Preservation Advisory Board Meeting: Wednesday, April 9, 2025 at 6 pm at the Township Service Center, 2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court, Okemos, Michigan 48864.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Stephens moved to adjourn the meeting. Board Member Fay seconded.

Chair Hiller adjourned the meeting at 8:11 pm.

Exhibit A



Request to be on Land Preservation Advisory Board meetg agenda

From Tim Potter <flyingdutchman63@gmail.com>

Date Sat 3/8/2025 9:33 PM

To Emma Campbell <ecampbell@meridian.mi.us>

Hello Emma,

I'd like to request to have the following item put on the agenda of this week's Land Preservation Advisory Board meeting. Please let me know if it does get added to the agenda and if I can expect to hear any discussion by the board members.

Proposal to Establish & Maintain Two New Sledding Hills in the Township

This past January I explored the MSU to Lk. Lansing Pathway/ Trail on XC skis on a snowy day and discovered/ realized that the construction of the Phase 2 segment left behind 2 ideal sledding hills, one smaller and safer for younger kids and one larger for older kids. The only other sledding hill in the township that I'm aware of is the one in the N. Meridian Rd. Park which is a long way from the core of the township where these 2 hills are located.

I conducted an [informal poll](#) on the [Friends of Meridian Township Pathways](#) group to gauge community support for my proposal. It was posted on January 15th and as of March 8 there is 81% (29 people) in strong support, another 17% (6) who support and 2% (1) in opposition.

I grew up in this township and my backyard was the neighborhood sledding hill. I have many fond memories of sledding over the years of my youth and with my children and now grandchildren as well since I live next door to my childhood home. This is a very fun and wholesome activity which gives kids and adults good exercise along with the fun.

Since many people are concerned about getting our kids and young adults out of their bedrooms and off their smart phones to "feel the grass", reunite with reality, I believe these two hills are a classic example of "low hanging fruit" which are already built and only require ongoing maintenance (mowing) and some signage to explain things, list rules, etc. Sledding on an existing grassy slope will cause next to zero damage (and if it does, it's damage to common field grass).

Since these two hills are so close (walking distance) to the homes of many residents I don't believe car parking needs to be a concern; that can work itself out. The Twp. has many facilities for people to recreate outdoors that doesn't provide car parking for all the users, so I don't believe that should be a requirement.

Reference photos/ video /maps for proposed sledding hills:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/euL64dsWCXHsecgG7>

Official Land Preserve map for the exact location of this property (the Okemos Road Preserve, no. 9 on the map):

<https://www.meridian.mi.us/home/showdocument?id=14448&t=638393672447813602>

I understand the ordinance language (§ 22-110 Skating and sledding [Ord. No. 2007-15, 12-16-2007]) , that sledding isn't allowed "Unless posted otherwise..." That exception gives me hope that you will give this proposal a fair hearing for a possible exception to this rule.

Thank you for the consideration for the health and recreational options for our youth and future generations. I plan to attend your Mar. 12th meeting to present this proposal and would appreciate hearing some discussion of it during the meeting if possible.

Tim Potter
4632 Van Atta Rd.
Okemos, MI 48864

[MSU Bike Advisory Comm.](#) member
[TCBA Advocacy Comm.](#) member
[Ride of Silence](#) webmaster
[LCI](#) #5207

Ride of Silence: www.rideofsilence.org

2025 Ride of Silence: Wed. May 21st, 7:00 PM
One day. One time. One world, world wide.
Let the silence roar!

Exhibit C

Item 7.A.a.b



To: Land Preservation Advisory Board Members
From: Emma Campbell, Stewardship Coordinator
Date: March 12, 2025
Re: March 2025 Stewardship Staff Report

Staff provides a brief summary of land preserve updates:

1. The 2024 Annual Corps Rapport was released in mid-February, and is included in the March 12th meeting packet. This annual publication from the Stewardship Coordinator is created to highlight the accomplishments of the Meridian Conservation Corps (MCC) and Land Preservation Program.
2. Meridian Township's Deer Management Program concluded on February 3rd, 2025 with a total harvest of 300 white-tailed deer and the donation of over 7,400 pounds of venison locally.
3. Two prescribed burns are planned for the spring 2025 season. Two burn units making up about 15 acres at Davis Foster Preserve will be burned by David Borneman LLC. One burn unit made up of about 5 acres at Red Cedar Glen Preserve will be burned by Stantec Consulting Michigan, Inc.
 - a. Letters of notification were sent this week to neighboring residents to alert them and provide information (letters are included in the meeting packet).
4. Staff will be presenting at the Ohio River Valley Invasive Species Conference hosted by the Midwest Invasive Plant Network, from March 19th through March 20th in Burlington, KY.
 - a. The presentation is called, *Community Conservation: Turning Intention into Action with the Meridian Conservation Corps*. This talk will focus on the creation of the MCC and its many efforts.
5. The March 2025 Stewardship Calendar is included in the meeting packet. Work will focus around native seeding, the last of invasive shrub cutting, litter cleanup, and vernal pool monitoring.
 - a. Management of Lesser Celandine (*Ficaria verna*) will most likely begin the week of March 10th, 2025. This invasive plant is a high priority and is currently being managed at Ted Black Woods Park and Ottawa Hills Park.



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STEWARDSHIP

WETLAND LOVE EDITION

STEWARDSHIP SATURDAYS | 9:30 AM - 12 PM

- February 8th, Eastgate Park (4203 Meridian Rd), Invasive bitternsweat removal & scouting
- February 22nd, Sumbal Preserve (4540 Okemos Rd), Invasive shrub removal

WEEKDAY WARRIORS | 1-3PM

- February 13th, Okemos Road Preserve (2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court), Invasive shrub removal & native seeding
- February 27th, Legg Park (3900 Van Atta Rd), wetland buffer invasive shrub removal

TRAILSIDE ECOLOGY | Wetland Exploration

• Join us at Ponderosa Preserve (end of Ponderosa Dr. in Okemos) to learn about wetland hydrology & how we can support these important ecosystems through the changing season. We will explore some vernal pools and document invasive species for future management!



*ALL EVENTS ARE WEATHER DEPENDENT & MAY BE CANCELLED THE DAY OF

S M T W T F S

2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1
World Wetlands Day FEBRUARY 2				13 WEEKDAY WARRIORS 1-3 PM	14	15	STEWARDSHIP SATURDAY 9:30-12 PM
9	10	11	12				
	17 OFFICES CLOSED	18 TRAILSIDE ECOLOGY 5-6:30 PM	19	20	21	22 STEWARDSHIP SATURDAY 9:30-12 PM	
16							
23	24	25	26	27 WEEKDAY WARRIORS 1-3 PM	28		

PLEASE CONTACT EMMA AT ECAMPBELL@MERRIDIAN.MI.US, OR 517.853.4614



MARCH

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STEWARDSHIP SATURDAYS | 9:30 AM - 12 PM

These workdays occur every other Saturday year round.

- March 8th, Lake Lansing North Preserve (1000 Wild Ginger Trail), Native seed sowing & invasive shrub cutting
- March 22nd, Hartrick Park (3685 Hulett Rd., Okemos), Scouting & Bagging invasive mustard plants

VERNAL POOL PATROL VIRTUAL TRAINING SERIES

- If you are interested in learning about vernal pools & potentially volunteering to monitor them, consider attending this three part virtual training. We will host a follow up field training on March 29th | 10 am - 12 pm | Location TBD

WEEKDAY WARRIORS | 1 - 3 PM

- March 13th, Marketplace on the Green (1995 Central Park Dr.), trash pickup
- March 27th, Foster Crouse Preserve (Buttercup Ln, Okemos), Invasive mustard pull & native plant inventory

TRAILSIDE ECOLOGY | VERNAL EQUINOX

MARCH 22ND | 2 PM - 3:30 PM

Vernal Pool Discovery Walk at Ponderosa Preserve



- Celebrate the spring equinox by learning about some of our smallest & most valuable wetlands: Vernal Pools! We will do some pool dipping to look for indicator species like fairy shrimp & salamanders! Wear your muck boots and get ready for some magic. *This event is limited to 20 people.



STEWARDSHIP

* ALL EVENTS ARE WEATHER DEPENDENT & MAY BE CANCELLED THE DAY OF

S M T W T F S

2	3	4 VERNAL POOL TRAINING 6-8 PM	5	6	7	8 STEWARDSHIP SATURDAY 9:30-12 PM
9	10	11 VERNAL POOL TRAINING 6-8 PM	12	13 WEEKDAY WARRIORS 1-3 PM	14	15
16	17	18 VERNAL POOL TRAINING 6-8 PM	19	20	21	22 STEWARDSHIP SATURDAY 9:30-12 PM
23 RED CEDAR RIVER CLEANUP 11AM-3 PM	24	25	26	27 WEEKDAY WARRIORS 1-3 PM	28	29 VPP FIELD TRAINING 10AM-12 PM

PLEASE CONTACT EMMA AT ECAMPBELL@MERIDIAN.MI.US, OR 517.853.4614