

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
TOWNSHIP BOARD REGULAR MEETING - **APPROVED** -
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198
853-4000, Town Hall Room
TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 2015 **6:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Supervisor LeGoff, Clerk Dreyfus, Treasurer Brixie, Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Wilson
ABSENT: None
STAFF: Township Manager Frank Walsh, Assistant Township Manager/Director of Public Works Derek Perry, Director of Community Planning & Development Mark Kieselbach, Director of Public Works and Engineering Ray Severy, Police Chief David Hall

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Supervisor LeGoff called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS

Supervisor LeGoff led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

The secretary called the roll of the Board.

4. SPECIAL PRESENTATION

A. Haslett High School Girls Varsity Basketball Team

Trustee Styka introduced Haslett High School Girls Varsity Basketball Coach Dr. Bob Currier. Coach Currier subsequently introduced two team members, Makenna Ott and Sarah Trosko and outlined the team's journey to the Breslin Center for the championship playoffs. Ms. Ott highlighted her experience as a member of the Haslett girls' varsity basketball team.

5. PUBLIC REMARKS

Supervisor LeGoff opened Public Remarks.

Mary Haas, 1491 Franklin Street, Haslett, spoke in support of Bodwin & Associates' continued representation of Meridian Township in the area of prosecutorial services.

Ann Zimmerman, 2344 Coyote Creek, Okemos, spoke in support of the Smith Drain Study.

Steve Freemire, 3622 Kansas Road, Okemos, spoke in support of the Smith Drain Study.

Theresa Bodwin, 1668 Fifth Avenue, Okemos, current Diversion Coordinator for Meridian Township, spoke in support of renewal of Bodwin & Associates' contract with Meridian Township for prosecutorial services.

Aaron Hanson, 4903 Dawn Avenue, East Lansing, and co-owner of Ellison Brewery spoke in support of the Ellison Brewery and Spirits Liquor License application.

Lanny Brunette, 5918 Coventry Circle, East Lansing, spoke to the high caliber of legal services of the Bodwin & Associates Law Firm and spoke in support of the Township's renewal of the Bodwin & Associates' contract for prosecutorial services.

William Kim, 2970 East Lake Lansing Road, highlighted his law experience and spoke in support of Board renewal of the Bodwin prosecution services contract.

Andy Such, 1147 Woodwind Trail, Haslett, spoke to the annual subscription service offered by the Haslett Kiwanis Club which provides the raising and lowering of flags in front of residents' homes for six (6) holidays per year.

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, addressed the need to make the Board packet text searchable on the Township website as noted in the 2015 Goals and Objectives. He believed the list of goals and objectives consisted mainly of duties already performed by staff. Mr. Bowlby spoke to the need for the Township to stay on the five (5) year standard sewer cleaning cycle.

Jacqueline Swanson, 1668 Fifth Avenue, Okemos, spoke in support of Township renewal of the prosecutorial services contract with Bodwin & Associates.

Randolf Bodwin, Bodwin & Associates, 2970 E. Lake Lansing Road, East Lansing, offered rationale why his firm, Bodwin & Associates, should be selected to continue providing prosecutorial services for Meridian Township.

Leonard Provencher, 5824 Buena Parkway, Haslett, voiced his opposition to civil forfeiture by the Township, in support of the vendor ordinance amendments, in support of the Smith Drain Study (with the cost shared proportionally by all municipalities) and in support of the vegetation ordinance amendment, scaled to the various zoning designations.

Lauren Swanson April, 2198 Riverwood Drive, Okemos, spoke in support of Bodwin & Associates retaining the prosecutorial services contract with Meridian Township.

Supervisor LeGoff closed Public Remarks.

6. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

A. First Quarter 2015 Goals and Objectives Report

Manager Walsh offered highlights of the 2015 Goals and Objectives.

Board discussion:

- Pension and long term liability
- Actuarial study necessary to determine how to fund future liabilities prior to negotiations with the seven (7) union contracts which expire in 2016
- Conversations with various communities regarding their approach to long term pension obligations with respect to the defined benefit programs
- Possibility of changing to a defined contribution program
- Board member suggestion to speak with Ingham County regarding their hybrid model which is a blend of both defined benefit and defined contribution plans
- Board member appreciation for the detail included in this comprehensive report

7. BOARD COMMENTS & REPORTS

Clerk Dreyfus reminded voters of the May 5th statewide election where Proposal 1 will be on the ballot. Proposal 1 is a measure to raise the state sales tax to fund roads, schools and other state programs and activities. He indicated absentee voter ballots can be requested from the Clerk's office through Monday, May 4th. Clerk Dreyfus announced the Clerk's Office will be open Saturday, May 2nd from 8:00 AM until 2:00 P.M, which is the last day voters can request an absentee ballot and take it with them. Clerk Dreyfus announced the polls will be open on May 5th from 7:00 A.M. until 8:00 P.M. He announced that due to the May 5th Election, the next regularly scheduled Township Board Meeting will be held on Thursday, May 7th at 6:00 P.M.

Clerk Dreyfus announced the Parks and Recreation Department will be hosting a community wide Park Clean-Up Event on Saturday April 25th from 9:00 A.M. until 12:00 P.M. He noted residents should contact Jane Greenway at 853-4610 to volunteer. Clerk Dreyfus reported his attendance at an Economic Alliance for Michigan informational "meet and greet", a statewide nonpartisan business/labor coalition, adding its model is to develop cooperation between parties to find areas of common interest.

Trustee Styka announced this is Earth Week and in addition to the Parks Clean Up Event, the Township is hosting a Recycling Event this Saturday at Chippewa Middle School. He reported the Farmers Market will be reopening at the Pavilion Saturday, May 2nd. Trustee Styka announced the

Okemos High School musical, *Loserville*, will be performed the next two weekends, April 24th and 25th, as well as May 1st, 2nd and 3rd.

Trustee Scales reported his attendance at the April 16th National Honor Society induction ceremony at Haslett High School, where over 90 inductees were welcomed into the society. He announced Saturday, April 25th is Kids Free Day at all branches of the area's YMCA.

Trustee Wilson reported her attendance, along with several other Board members, at the Michigan Townships Association's (MTA) Legislative Day last week at the Capitol where Board members learned how pending legislation may affect Meridian Township. She voiced her support for the Haslett Kiwanis flag service program.

Treasurer Brixie stated the sheet she handed out from Flagstar Bank, titled "Certificate of Deposit Account Registry Service (CDARS)", showed interest rates available for government banking over \$100,000. She noted this handout was provided in response to Board member comment regarding low interest rates. The interest rate for a one year CD is .3% as previously announced. Treasurer Brixie offered to meet individually with Board members during regular business hours to discuss Township interest rates and investment strategies. She reported her attendance at last week's Land Preservation Advisory Board meeting where stewardship monies were approved for the Northwest Preserve (Towar Woods) for invasive species removal, tree planting and cleanup. Treasurer Brixie reported that at last Wednesday's Capital Area Transportation Authority (CATA) meeting, the CATA board unanimously approved the bus rapid transit (BRT) alignment, adding that Debbie Alexander will be giving a presentation to the Board in the near future on the alignment.

8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Trustee Scales moved to approve the agenda as submitted. Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

9. CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor LeGoff reviewed the consent agenda.

Treasurer Brixie moved to adopt the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Trustee Wilson.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Wilson, Supervisor LeGoff,
Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

A. Communications

Treasurer Brixie moved that the communications be received and placed on file, and any communications not already assigned for disposition be referred to the Township Manager or Supervisor for follow-up. Seconded by Trustee Wilson.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Wilson, Supervisor LeGoff,
Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

B. Bills

Treasurer Brixie moved that the Township Board approve the Manager's Bills as follows:

Common Cash	\$ 281,073.45
Public Works	\$ 230,477.33
Total Checks	\$ 511,550.78
Credit Card Transactions	\$ 9,014.01
Total Purchases	<u>\$ 520,564.79</u>

ACH Payments	<u>\$ 769,994.46</u>
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Seconded by Trustee Wilson.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Wilson, Supervisor LeGoff,
Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
NAYS: None
Motion carried unanimously.

(Bill list in Official Minute Book)

- C. Reappointments to the Lake Lansing Advisory Committee
Treasurer Brixie moved that the following property owners be reappointed to the Lake Lansing Watershed Advisory Committee for terms expiring April 30, 2017: Robert Hollenshead, 6068 Columbia; Ronal Rowe, 6247 E. Lake Drive and Larry Wagenknecht, 6097 Partridge. Seconded by Trustee Wilson.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Wilson, Supervisor LeGoff,
Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
NAYS: None
Motion carried unanimously.

- D. Traffic Signal Agreement Resolution – New Central Fire Station
Treasurer Brixie moved to approve the resolution authorizing the Township Manager to sign the Ingham County Road Department Permit Acknowledgment for Traffic Signal Control Responsibilities. Seconded by Trustee Wilson.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Wilson, Supervisor LeGoff,
Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
NAYS: None
Motion carried unanimously.

10. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY (None)

11. HEARINGS

- A. 2015 Order to Maintain Sidewalks, Special Assessment District No. 16
Supervisor LeGoff opened the public hearing at 6:46 P.M.

Director Severy summarized the special assessment district as outlined in staff memorandum dated April 16, 2015. He explained options available to affected property owners.

Casey O'Donnell, 2433 Kings Cross, East Lansing, questioned how the assessments were determined. He requested more transparency from the Township regarding assessment calculation.

Director Severy explained any broken concrete or slabs with an inch lip or more must be replaced or raised (mud jacking). He added tree roots and the type of soil exposed to the freeze/thaw cycles aid in displacing the concrete. Mr. Severy indicated costs are calculated on a square foot basis as determined in the contractor's bid and vary dependent on whether it is a corner lot. He noted if the work to be performed is on a side yard, 40% of the cost is borne by the Township.

Karsten Bekemeier, 2399 Kings Cross, East Lansing, requested criteria for determining slabs for sidewalk repair. He inquired as to how often the Township cycles through subdivisions.

Mr. Severy responded if a slab has a crack down the middle and does not appear that it will break into small pieces or present a safety issue, it will not normally be replaced. He added sidewalk repair is on a ten year rotating cycle for the entire Township.

Supervisor LeGoff closed the public hearing at 6:58 P.M.

12. ACTION ITEMS

Supervisor LeGoff opened Public Remarks.

Aaron Hanson, Owner/President of Ellison Brewery and Spirits, 4903 Dawn Avenue, East Lansing, spoke in support of the Ellison Brewery and Spirits Liquor License listed on tonight's agenda.

Randolf Bodwin, Bodwin & Associates, 2970 E. Lake Lansing Road, East Lansing, availed himself for Board questions when it deliberates Action Item #12B.

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, urged the Board to reject both proposals for prosecutorial services as neither one contains lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) anti-discrimination language. He spoke in support in the vendor ordinance amendments as written.

Lauren Swanson April, 2198 Riverwood Drive, Okemos, spoke in support of amendments to the vendor ordinance to restrict hours of operations.

A. Appointment to the Economic Development Corporation (EDC)

Trustee Wilson moved to appoint Shawn Dunham to the Economic Development Corporation for the term ending December 31, 2018. Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.

Board and staff discussion:

- Applicant is the Assistant General Manager of the Meridian Mall
- The EDC is one of two Boards and Commissions which does not require its members to be a qualified elector of the Township as business interests should be represented
- Businesses within the Township may not be owned by Township residents
- Neither the state act nor the articles of incorporation for the Meridian EDC require that a member be a resident of the Township
- The Application for Public Service will be changed by the Clerk to reflect that members of the EDC do not necessarily need to be a Township resident

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Wilson, Supervisor LeGoff,
Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

B. Prosecution Services Contract

Trustee Scales moved to approve the two-year retainer agreement for prosecutorial support with the Harkness Law Firm for \$80,000 annually and, prior to any signing of the contract, the Township LGBT language be included. Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.

Board and staff discussion:

- Both law firms have agreed to add the LGBT language as instructed, but discussion of this issue took place after bids were submitted
- Concern with the inappropriateness of amending bids after they were submitted
- Board member belief there is no need for a separate firm to provide prosecutorial services
- Board member preference to wait until the law firm for general legal services is acted upon
- Board member preference for a clause to be included in the contract for general legal services to not have a lawyer in their firm defend an individual the Township is prosecuting
- Board member preference to stay with the law firm used for the last several years
- Opinion of interim legal counsel that only the two bids originally presented to the Board in the closed bidding process should be considered
- All relevant information regarding this issue has been presented to the Board
- Issue before the Board is whether to select the law firm with which the Board previously had a contract or the lawyer who previously provided prosecutorial services for the Township
- Police officers, the Township and the Board are satisfied with the previously provided prosecutorial services

- Mr. Harkness is a familiar face to Board members as he has been in attendance at several Board meetings
- Mr. Harkness has been a presenter at training for the State Bar of Michigan
- Concern with the Township Board being charged \$80,000 annually for prosecutorial services over the last four (4) years which the provider has subsequently determined to be worth only \$67,500
- A firm which provides general law services would charge prosecutorial services at an hourly rate, likely to be greater than \$80,000
- Harkness Law Firm will designate two attorneys and two paralegal/legal assistants who will perform prosecutorial services on behalf of Meridian Township
- Mr. Harkness will initially spearhead the diversion program for his law firm
- The diversion program is mainly an administrative task
- Bodwin Law Firm will designate two attorneys and one paralegal to perform prosecutorial services on behalf of Meridian Township
- Appreciation for the previous responsiveness to the Board by Mr. Harkness over the last several years

Trustee Veenstra offered the following friendly amendment:

- **Change the phrase “prosecutorial support” in the motion to “prosecution services”**

The amendment was accepted by the maker of the main motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Wilson, Supervisor LeGoff,
Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
NAYS: Trustee Veenstra
Motion carried 6-1.

C. Vendor Ordinance Amendments

Treasurer Brixie moved [and read into the record] NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN hereby introduces for publication and subsequent adoption Ordinance No. _____ entitled “Ordinance Amending the Code of the Charter Township of Meridian, Ingham County, Michigan, Chapter 38, Article IV, Division 1, by amending Sections 38-121, 38-122, 38-123, 38-124, 38-125 and 38-126; and Chapter 38, Article IV, Division 2, Sections 38-151, 38-155, 38-156 and 38-158.”

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the Charter Township of Meridian is directed to publish the Ordinance at least once prior to the next regular meeting of the Township Board.

Seconded by Trustee Wilson.

Board and staff discussion:

- Amendments go beyond limiting hours
- Concern with the amount of the per person cash bond
- Vendor does not recoup the cash bond for six (6) months
- Purpose of the cash bond is to cover claims as the result of acts by the vendor
- License fee is \$20/week or \$60/month per person
- In-depth review of the language should be handled when interim legal counsel is in attendance at the Board meeting to answer all questions
- Board member belief the only substantive change is the time allowed for door-to-door vending
- Intent of the language is for only one \$500 bond payment per organization

Trustee Scales moved to table the motion until Trustee Veenstra submits his questions in writing and they are addressed by interim legal counsel. Seconded by Trustee Veenstra.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Veenstra, Supervisor LeGoff, Clerk Dreyfus
NAYS: Trustees Styka, Wilson, Treasurer Brixie
Motion carried 4-3.

- D. Celebrate Downtown Okemos Liquor License
Trustee Veenstra moved to approve DDA's request to apply for a one-day liquor license from the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC) for the Celebrate Downtown Okemos Event on June 13, 2015. Seconded by Trustee Scales.

Board discussion:

- Event has been very successful
- This will be the second year for the "beer and wine tent" which will be open from noon until 11:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Wilson, Supervisor LeGoff,
Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
NAYS: None
Motion carried unanimously.

- E. Ellison Brewery and Spirits Liquor Licenses
Clerk Dreyfus moved to approve Ellison Brewery and Spirits' request to apply for licenses to manufacture beer, wine and spirits at 4903 Dawn Avenue from the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC). Seconded by Trustee Veenstra.

Board discussion:

- This is a highly anticipated business for the community
- Craft beers will be produced by local residents

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Wilson, Supervisor LeGoff,
Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
NAYS: None
Motion carried unanimously.

13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

Supervisor LeGoff opened Public Remarks.

Brent Forsberg, TA Forsberg, 2422 Jolly Road, Okemos, spoke in support of the Smith Drain Study to ascertain what the specific issues are to achieve safe drainage for all affected residents.

Mark Clouse, George F Eyde Family Partnership, 232 S. Washington Square, Lansing, spoke in support of Rezoning #15020 as recommended by the Planning Commission.

Supervisor LeGoff closed Public Remarks.

Trustee Scales moved to amend the agenda as follows:

- Reletter Agenda Item #13C to Agenda Item #13B
- Reletter Agenda Item #13B to Agenda Item #13C

Seconded by Trustee Veenstra.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Wilson, Supervisor LeGoff,
Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
NAYS: None
Motion carried unanimously.

- A. Joint Committee – Master Plan Update

Planning Commission Chair Scott-Craig offered an invitation to the Board to work closely with the Planning Commission in moving the Master Plan forward. As such, a meeting has been scheduled for Thursday, May 21, 2015 in the Township Hall from 7:00 P.M. until 10:00 P.M. to receive public input on how to move forward with the seven (7) goals and objectives of the Master Plan. He explained that attendees will be divided into seven (7) groups (one for each goal) to vet ideas from the public on how to implement each of the seven (7) goals. Chair Scott-Craig requested Board and Planning Commission members be the “eyes and ears” regarding the public and their comments.

Board discussion:

- Written invitations will be sent to all invitees with a packet regarding each goal
- Invitation to other Boards and Commissions
- Joint meeting of the Planning Commission and Board must be noticed to comply with the Open Meetings Act
- Need to engage all types of stakeholders in the community
- Each Planning Commissioner will spearhead one goal and will invite individuals who relate to that goal
- Suggestion to send an invitation to the Meridian Area Business Association and service clubs (e.g., Haslett and Okemos Kiwanis Clubs, Okemos Rotary) within the Township
- Suggestion to have a featured piece on HOMTV
- Letters to Homeowners Associations

B. Smith Drain Study

Patrick Lindemann, Ingham County Drain Commissioner, 707 Buhl Street, Mason, spoke to the process which should be used to advance the study of the Smith Drain at an initial cost to the Township of \$17,500, which will be reimbursed through a Stormwater, Asset Management and Wastewater (SAW) grant.

James Ensign, Spicer Group, 4488 Holt Road, Holt, offered a Powerpoint presentation on the Smith Drain, giving an extensive overview of the drain since its origination in 1891.

Shawn Middleton, Spicer Group, 1515 Michigan Street, NE, Grand Rapids, continued the Powerpoint presentation, addressing the complexity of the Smith Drain from a modeling hydraulic standpoint. He spoke to the culvert capacity underneath I-96 and discussed the fact the requested study will look at the time based function of water runoff for the entire system, determine the hydraulic capacity of the system (now and in the future) and possibly remap the area using a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR).

Board, staff and presenter discussion:

- Smith Drain services 1,100 parcels totaling 2,000 acres
- Smith Drain is approaching full build out
- Identification of hydraulic deficiencies
- 450 feet of drain, laid in 1963 underneath Jolly Road, is made of corrugated metal and in very poor condition
- In 2011, a sinkhole formed adjacent to the Value Tire parking lot and the roadway collapsed into the pipe, was repaired, collapsed again and a temporary repair was performed in 2013
- Pipe underneath Jolly Road is 6 feet in diameter
- Pipe becomes smaller on the Meridian side of Jolly Road
- Resolution to petition was created by the Township
- A petition is not needed to perform the study
- Only requirement at this point is the 434 Agreement to perform the study
- Use of SAW grant monies do not require work to be done
- ICDC needs Township approval for work to be performed on the drain after the study is completed
- Rationale for why the ICRD has not previously addressed the condition underneath Jolly Road
- Petition must be sought for any substantive work on the drain
- Majority of the drain and the issues associated with the drain are in Meridian Township

- ICDC will have conversations with Alaieton Township as well
- All parties within the drainage district will share in both the benefit and the cost of repairs
- Major developments are pending which will affect the Smith Drain
- Cost of the study will be reimbursed to the Township through incorporation of the project cost
- Explanation of a 434 Agreement as Section 434 of Public Act 40 of the Drain Code which allows any municipality to advance money toward a study to determine the problems needing to be “fixed”
- SAW grant is used to identify problems and develop plans to address those problems
- S2 grant is a study which requires the first project which comes out of the study to be done (Toward Lift Station) and is different than the SAW grant
- SAW grant covers storm sewer systems, not open channel drains
- Main “backbone” of the Smith Drain is an open channel
- Need for a differentiation between problems currently known and problems revealed through the study
- Cost of identified problems will not be known until the project is bid
- Process to be used after problems are identified:
 - Petition will be sought by the ICDC to fix the issues
 - Cost will be borne by all property owners in the district and all municipalities (i.e., state highway department, ICRD, Alaieton Township, City of Lansing and Meridian Township)
- Explanation of the petition process
 - Petitioner can be five (5) residents, 50 residents for a consolidation or one (1) municipality
- In-line v. off-line detention
- Detention is the difference between the incoming water and what is allowed to flow out
- In-line detentions which currently exist in this system were approved many years ago and have subsequently been proven to be inefficient and not work
- ICDC fixed part of the existing Delta Dental in-line detention problems in 2012
- Hydrologic Engineering Centers River Analysis System (HEC-RAS) model is the right tool to analyze in-line detention basins
- ICDC will require Jackson National Life to use off-line detention
- All affected entities will be involved in discussing the findings of the Smith Drain Study prior to any petition being filed
- One of the problems associated with the Smith Drain is within Coyote Creek

It was the consensus of the Board to place this item on for action at its May 7, 2015 Board Meeting.

C. 2015 Order to Maintain Sidewalks, Special Assessment District No. 16

Board discussion:

- Total assessments are less than \$14,000
- There is no controversy on this SAD

It was the consensus of the Board to place this item on the consent agenda for the May 7, 2015 Board meeting.

D. Rezoning #15020 (George F. Eyde Family, LLC) – Rezoning Request for 1614 & 1622 Grand River Avenue and an Undeveloped Parcel on Central Park Drive

Director Kieselbach summarized the rezoning request as outlined in staff memorandum dated April 16, 2015.

Board discussion:

- Recommendation for support of the rezoning by the Planning Commission
- Zoning of parcels immediately west of the parcels which front Grand River is C-2
- Rezoning request is not consistent with the Future Land Use Map (FLUM)

- If the Planning Commission makes recommendations for rezonings, the FLUM should be amended to reflect those rezonings
- Concern with Board decision making which uses a FLUM which is not up to date
- Information contained in the CBRE Martin study stated that availability of Class A office space in the eastern submarket of the Tri-County area is 2%
- CBRE Martin's description of the central business district contained in the study is the downtown Lansing area
- Staff calculation that for the last half of 2014, Meridian Township had an overall vacancy rate of 15%, while the eastern submarket in which the Township is located in is 7.1% overall
- Class A office space is the office space most desirable, with the greatest amount of amenities available
- Staff to investigate the percentage of Class A office space in Meridian Township
- Only one (1) property east of Sparrow is zoned C-2
- Doggy Day Care being constructed at the corner of Grand River and Cornell Road is zoned residential and allowed as a non-residential use in a residential district
- All three (3) parcels do not have to be rezoned at the same

It was the consensus of the Board to place this item on for action at its May 7, 2015 Board meeting.

E. Proposed Vegetation Ordinance Amendment

Director Kieselbach summarized the proposed vegetation ordinance amendment as outlined in staff memorandum dated April 14, 2015.

Board discussion:

- Over the last five (5) years, the number one complaint received from residents concerned tall grass: 842 complaints
- 12" tall grass is too tall and makes the neighborhood look bad
- Possible policy for repeat offenders who have the bill placed on the tax roll every year
- Township has hired a code enforcement officer who can go out in the field this year
- Need for sufficient staff to enforce Township ordinances
- Staff suggestion for possible posting of violation on the property
- Need for sufficient punitive measures contained in the ordinance to eliminate recidivism
- Concern with attempting to change too many variables at the same time
- Longer lawns are healthier for the eco system and the environment
- Trend across the country is to allow for longer length of grass
- Current ordinance should be enforced prior to lowering the allowed height of grass
- Use of a shorter notice period, public shaming through placement of a notice on the property, and an increase of fines and cost would achieve the desired result
- The three (3) day limit does not consider longer rain events
- Board member belief the proposed height restriction is too restrictive
- Board member concern with imposing an aesthetic standard on Township residents
- Posting should be a mandatory requirement upon notification
- Ideal height as determined by turf "experts"
- The lower the level of grass the more staff needed to enforce the height limitation
- Funding in the 2015 budget for a dedicated summer staff person to look for nuisances, inoperable vehicles and trash in residential neighborhoods
- Consensus of Board members to accept a compromise of eight (8") inches

The consensus of the Board was to bring this item back for action at the May 7, 2015 Board meeting.

F. General Legal Services Committee Report

Trustee Styka summarized the report from the General Legal Services Committee as outlined in staff memorandum dated April 17, 2015.

Board discussion:

- Board meeting must be noticed for 2:00 P.M. on May 7th when the four (4) law firm interviews commence
- Order of interviewees will be through a random drawing

The consensus of the Board was to move forward with the interview process at the next Board meeting scheduled for Thursday, May 7, 2015.

G. Kinawa Drive Safety Improvements

Chief Hall summarized the proposed safety improvements for Kinawa Drive as outlined in staff memorandum dated April 16, 2015.

Board discussion:

- 500 feet of five (5) foot sidewalk on the north side of Kinawa at the “curve” would be replaced with 500 feet of seven (7) foot sidewalk
- Elimination of the second crosswalk through removal of concrete, installation of grass and buildup of the curb could be paid for through the Pathway Millage Fund
- LED street light and the Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) can be used by pedestrians and motorists at times other than during school hours
- Location of the RRFB is a good test case for additional flashing beacons in the future
- Safety of school children on Kinawa Drive has been an issue for several years
- Senior citizens in the neighborhood walk to the Senior Center
- Plans for the school to educate students on the need for using the light
- Some of the cost will be “split” between Okemos Public Schools and Meridian Township
- Sports are played at the athletic fields at night and participants and their families will use the streetlight
- In Michigan, once a pedestrian places their foot in the crosswalk, a motorist must yield to the pedestrian
- The RRFB will alert motorists that a pedestrian is waiting to cross the street

The consensus of the Board was to place this item on for action at its May 7, 2015 Board meeting.

14. PUBLIC REMARKS

Supervisor LeGoff opened Public Remarks.

Doris Schwartz, 2209 Kent Street, Okemos, addressed the need for replacement of the heritage neighborhood street signs for Cedar Bend Heights as provided for in Section 34-29 of the Meridian Township’s Code of Ordinances. She voiced appreciation for Mr. Severy’s years of service to Meridian Township.

Brent Forsberg, 2422 Jolly Road, Okemos, spoke to the rezoning process at the Planning Commission level for 2360 Jolly Oak Road, which commenced in January with use of a concept plan. He availed himself for any and all Board questions.

Supervisor LeGoff closed Public Remarks.

15. FINAL BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Treasurer Brixie addressed the need for transparency during Election Commission meetings by ensuring the gate at the front counter of the Clerk’s office remains open.

16. ADJOURNMENT

Supervisor LeGoff adjourned the meeting at 10:15 P.M.

ELIZABETH LEGOFF
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

BRETT DREYFUS, CMMC
TOWNSHIP CLERK

Sandra K. Otto, Secretary