

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, MARCH 2, 2021 **6:00 pm.**

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

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Township Manager Walsh, Director of Public Works Perry, Fire Chief Hamel, Community Planning and Development Director Kieselbach, Information Technology Director Gebes, Parks and Recreation Director Maisner, Finance Director Mattison, Human Resources Director Tithof, Economic Development and Neighborhoods Director Clark, Communications Manager Yates, Principal Planner Menser

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 Guthrie called the roll of the Board.

4. PRESENTATIONS

A. 2021 Township Action Plan Work Groups Updates

Manager Walsh outlined the ten (10) work groups and staff offered updates on: 1) COVID-19; 2) Sustainability; 3) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; 4) Downtown Okemos/Downtown Haslett Development Areas; 5) Roads; 6) Broadband/High Speed Internet; 7) MSU/Lake Lansing Pathway; 8) Signage; 9) Website; 10) Retirement/MERS

5. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Supervisor Styka opened public remarks at 6:20 pm

TJ Waller, 5508 Okemos Road, Okemos spoke in support for recreational marihuana in the Township and requested to have a safe place in his community to make his purchase.

Caroline Reynnet, 256 W Grand River, Okemos, asked the Board to offer their views on recreational marihuana facilities and how will these shops enhance living in the Township. She supports medical marihuana but does not recreational marihuana in the Township.

Owen Frank, 334 E. Washington Street, Ann Arbor, MI, spoke in support for allowing recreational marihuana in the Township.

Joyce VanCoevering, 5882 Okemos Road, Okemos, spoke in support of conducting a survey to receive citizen input on recreational marihuana before allowing recreational marihuana in the Township.

Mei You, 2690 Morning Glory Drive, Okemos, spoke in opposition to allowing recreational marihuana but does support medical marihuana in the Township.

Vance Poquette, 2226 Kent Street, Okemos, stated there is no an immediate need for recreational marihuana at this time.

Mary Waller, 5508 Okemos Road, Okemos questioned spending \$10,000 on a survey when recreational marihuana has already been voted on. She asked the Board to do its job and trusts the Board to create an ordinance to address this issue.

Manuela Kress, 1376 Biscayne Way, Haslett, stated she has already moved in the Township because her neighbor was smoking marihuana and is concerned with this smell in her new neighborhood.

Kevin Liu, 2690 Morning Glory Drive, Okemos, stated he sent a communication and spoke in opposition to recreational marihuana.

Wei Li, 2565 Sophiea Parkway, Okemos, spoke in opposition to allowing recreational marihuana.

Lynne Page, 3912 Raleigh Drive, Okemos, spoke in support for prohibiting commercial recreational marihuana businesses in the Township.

Marcus Baldori, 2267 Mt. Hope Road, Okemos, spoke in support of recreational marihuana facilities.

Leszek Gawarecki, 4568 Tacoma Boulevard, Okemos, stated the ballot language was to allow recreational marihuana but not to build facilities. Although he is against building facilities, he recommended obtaining citizen input and a financial analysis before making any decisions.

Supervisor Styka closed public remarks at 6:51 pm.

6. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

Manager Walsh reported

- Prime Meridian Magazine will be mailed out next week
- Deer Management Program – 304 deer have been harvested to date. The Cull Deer Phase has 25 tags remaining
- Jolly Road Proposed Rezoning – It will be heard by the Planning Commission on March 8 and the Board will receive an update at a future meeting
- Food Pantry – met with the Okemos Library and have confirmed a panty location on their site
- LEAP Public Art Grant – should hear the announcement soon on the public art grant submitted for the Marketplace on the Green
- Redevelopment Opportunity on Powell Road – meeting with developers interested in developing a senior housing complex on the Lafontaine parcel
- Prevailing Wages – the policy is being challenged and will be heard by the Board on March 16
- SmartZones – Director Clark is working with East Lansing and Lansing on project in the Local Development Finance Authority (LDFA) Smart Zones and the Board will receive an update at a future agenda

- Congratulated Chief Engineer Younes Ishraidi on celebrating 32 years with the Township and stated he is one of three who assisted with the design of the Okemos Road boardwalk.

7. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Treasurer Deschaine:

- Attended the February 17 CATA Board Meeting, the February 20 Township Board Retreat and the February 22 DDA Meeting
- Today, March 2, is the last day to pay winter taxes. After today, a resident will need to pay their taxes with the Ingham County Treasurer. 99% of last year's receipts have been paid

Trustee Jackson:

- Attended the February 23 Tri-County Regional Planning Commission Board Meeting where there was an amendment to the Transportation and Improvement Program (TIP) which included changes to lights and traffic movement on Grand River Avenue, Dobie Road and Central Park Drive

Supervisor Styka

- Attended the February 22 DDA meeting and all board members attended the Township Board Retreat on February 20

Trustee Opsommer:

- The Land Preservation Advisory Board (LPAB) is in the process of renaming of some of the land preserves. If a citizen or board member would like to comment, a message can be sent to the staff. Information is located online in the LPAB February Board Meeting packet.
- Reported the construction on the light changes for green arrows from Central Park Drive and Dobie Road onto Grand River Avenue will begin in September

8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

9. CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor Styka reviewed the consent agenda.

Trustee Wisinski moved to adopt the Consent Agenda as presented. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

A. Communications

Trustee Wisinski the communications not already assigned for disposition be referred to the Township Manager or Supervisor for follow-up. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

B. Approval of Minutes – February 2, 2021 Virtual Regular Meeting

Trustee Wisinski moved to approve and ratify the minutes of the February 2, 2021 Virtual Regular Meeting, as submitted. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

C. Bills

Trustee Wisinski moved to approve that the Township Board approve the Manager’s Bills as follows: Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine

Common Cash		\$	185,767.84
Public Works		\$	4,133.20
Trust & Agency		\$	<u>4,806.09</u>
	Total Checks	\$	194,707.13
Credit Card Transactions		\$	6,516.02
02/18/2021-02/24/2021			
	Total Purchases	\$	<u>201,223.15</u>
ACH Payments		\$	<u>6,404.79</u>

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

D. Disposal of Surplus Vehicles & Equipment

Trustee Wisinski moved to authorize the disposal of vehicle #2 (2013 Ford Taurus, vehicle #46 (2013 Ford Taurus), vehicle #101 (2012 Ford Focus), vehicle #102 (2012 Ford Focus), vehicle #611 (2013 Ford Taurus), vehicle #9 (2008 Sterling dump truck), vehicle #10 (2001 Freightliner Vactor), equipment #59 (1991 Trackless including attachments), equipment #78 (2007 Toro Mower), equipment #86 (2001 Toro 455D mower), equipment #88 (1992 John Deere 1070 Tractor), flood lights with stand, water line thaw machine, Ammoco Drum/Rotor Lathe, Snap-On tire balancer, and drinking fountains by public auction, internet auction, direct sale to another municipality or by sealed bid. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

E. Request for Section 61 Review for Proposed Land Acquisition for Parks

Trustee Wisinski move to forward the proposed acquisition of property for park purposes to the Planning Commission for approval of revisions to the Township's Comprehensive Development Plan as required by MCL 125.39 (Section 61 Review). The Section 61 Review is for the acquisition of 1.85-acre parcel (Parcel #33-02-02-16-200-011) located at 5280 Okemos Road, Haslett. This site, when acquired, will host an improved entrance to Nancy Moore Park and serve as a trailhead area for users of the Pedestrian/Bicycle Pathway System. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

F. Election Polling Location Changes

Trustee Wisinski move to approve the resolution for the temporary relocation of Precinct 10 from the Meridian Township Service Center to Precinct 12; Wardcliff School and to approve the temporary relocation of Precinct 15 from the Meridian Township Senior Center to Precinct 7; Kinawa School for the May 4, 2021 Special Election. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

10. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY – NONE

11. HEARINGS - NONE

12. ACTION ITEMS

A. Powell Road PRI SAD #43 – Resolution #3

Deputy Manager Perry stated this is Resolution #3 of the Special Assessment District to pave Powell Road 1,600 feet north of Grand River Avenue to the Silverstone Estates Development. The projected cost is \$460,000. The developer's cost is at 56% for a projected cost of \$256,000 and the remaining percentage assessed is to the other properties in the district. A public hearing was held on February 23 and this resolution is an authorization to proceed with the special assessment district.

Treasurer Deschaine move to approve Powell Road Public Road Improvements Special Assessment District #43 Resolution #3; to approve the improvements to grade, gravel and pave Powell Road, and be completed by the owner of Silverstone Subdivision; and to defray the cost thereof by special assessment against the properties specially benefitted thereby in the manner previously listed; approve the total estimated cost of \$460,003.62; and approve the special assessment district. Seconded by Trustee Jackson

Discussion:

- Information on the possibility of preserving the trees will be available after the meeting with the developer on March 3 but it is challenging with the grade of Powell Road

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

B. Resolution Celebrating Women's History Month

Treasurer Deschaine move to approve resolution Celebrating Women's History Month. Seconded by Trustee Jackson

Discussion:

- Trustee Jackson moved the following amendment to include department heads and staff as follows: "WHEREAS, women have played and continue to play a major role in the governing of the Charter Township of Meridian, serving on numerous Boards and Commissions and as the Supervisor, Treasurer, Clerk, *Trustees, Department Heads and staff members* throughout the Township's history" Seconded by Trustee Wisinski

VOICE/HAND VOTE: Amendment carried 7-0

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. 6503 Park Lake Road Open Space Easement

Director Kieselbach stated the Open Space Easement request is from David and Joan Johnson, Halmich Sod Nurseries, Inc., 6503 Park Lake Road. This request is part of the State's Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program. The easement is an agreement between the landowner and the Township giving the owner certain benefits, tax credits and exemptions for various special assessments to preserve the land as open space. The parcel is 57 acres and was previously a sod farm with a two house and three accessory buildings. A portion of the site is shared with Bath Township and it is currently used for agricultural crops. Director Kieselbach outlined the process and reported he received an email from the Conservation District's Board of Directors stating the Board did not have any concerns or comments on the property going into the open space easement. Township Assessor Dave Lee will be performing an assessment but has indicated the property has zero value for development rights. The Township has 45 days to make a decision on the request and it could be listed as an action item at the March 16 meeting.

Discussion:

- During the 90 years of the agreement, the parcel can continue to be used for agricultural purposes.
- Director Kieselbach stated during discussions with Mr. Johnson indicated he was not interested in allowing public access.
- Director Kieselbach was asked to research with the State on the termination process of an agreement and will work with Assessor Lee on the tax credit information.

Board consensus to place this item on the next Board meeting agenda.

B. 2021 Citizen Survey

Director Clark stated the Township performs a citizen survey every three (3) years and the last survey was conducted in 2018. Typically, the survey is conducted by a national survey service but the Board is entertaining an idea of performing the survey in-house to focus on the Township issues.

The Board had asked for information on organizations that could assist with the project. Information was provided from Colbolt Community Research and MSU's Institute for Public Policy and Social Research. Both institutes have experience working with municipalities and the topic of marihuana.

Colbolt's analysis will include the community's progress, year-to-year and a comparison of the community across the state and at the national level. Colbolt recently perform a community survey on marihuana in Royal Oak. Colbolt has the ability to work with specific questions and can analyze by a wide variety of demographics. Colbolt can perform a one topic survey for \$10,000 or

community multi-topic survey for \$16,000 with postage with a random sampling at 1,500 residents. For every 1,000 resident names added to the sampling, the cost increased by \$1,000.

MSU indicated they could perform a one topic or multiple topic survey at the same cost of \$12,768 plus postage. MSU has an indirect cost policy and the Township would have to adopt it and pay the surcharge.

Eighty percent (80%) of the Township's population is registered voters. Both entities indicated they feel safe using the registered voter sampling and have provisions for on-line sampling. Both entities indicated they will be able to keep the random sampling and on-line sampling information separate and will be able to give an overall view of the community from the data results.

Discussion:

- Director Clark was asked to obtain survey samples, increase the resident sampling number and obtain quotes from additional entities for a multi-topic survey

Board consensus to place this item on the next Board meeting agenda.

C. Recreational Marihuana

Attorney Kuschel reviewed his legal memorandum.

Discussion:

- Board members discussed including the marihuana question(s) in the multi-topic survey

Treasurer Deschaine move to defer discussion of the recreational marihuana ordinance until after receiving the Citizen Survey results. Seconded by Clerk Guthrie

Discussion:

- Treasurer Deschaine suggested completing the data research before proceeding with developing an ordinance

Supervisor Styka stated a parliamentary action is required first. This topic is not an action item and would require a motion to suspend the rules and consider the topic an action item or there can be a motion to table discussion on the topic.

Treasurer Deschaine withdrew his motion and asked to have this topic as an action item on the next Board meeting agenda. He also asked to include Expansion of Redi-Ride Boundaries to include access to medical and/or recreational marihuana facilities as an action item on the next agenda.

Supervisor Styka stated for the next agenda, under discussion, will be the Citizen Survey and Recreational Marihuana and the Expansion of Redi-Ride locations.

Board consensus to place this item on the next Board meeting agenda.

14. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Supervisor Styka Opened Public Remarks at 9:13 pm.

Jeffery Hank, East Lansing, stated he assisted with the drafting of recreational marihuana (MRTMA) and developing the recreational marihuana law. He also ran the campaign to legalize recreational marihuana. He supports opting in; the need for a social equity program and recreational marihuana should be a licensing program and not a land use issue.

Supervisor Styka Closed Public Remarks at 9:18 pm.

15. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

16. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Wisinski moved to adjourn. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine

VOICE/HAND VOTE: Motion carried 7-0.

Supervisor Styka adjourned the meeting at 9:18 pm.

RONALD J. STYKA,
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

DEBORAH GUTHRIE,
TOWNSHIP CLERK