

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
TOWNSHIP BOARD REGULAR MEETING - **APPROVED** -  
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos MI 48864-1198  
853-4000, Township Hall Room  
TUESDAY, September 17, 2019 **6:00 pm.**

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

ABSENT:

STAFF: Township Manager Walsh, Director of Public Works Perry, Fire Chief Hamel, Police Chief Plaga, Community Planning Director Kieselbach, Information Technology Director Gebes, Planner Menser, Finance Director Mattison, Human Resources Director Marx, Parks and Land Management Coordinator Greenway, Parks Naturalist Dillon

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Supervisor Styka called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS

Supervisor Styka led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

The Recording Secretary called the roll of the Board.

4. PRESENTATIONS

A. Deer Management Program

Jane Greenway, Parks and Land Management coordinator, and Kelsey Dillon, Park Naturalist, provided an overview and details on the Meridian Township Parks and Recreation 2019 Deer Management Program that spreads across 2,300 acres of property.

Board discussion: safety procedures, dawn to dusk hours, no accidents, balance of resident desires, efforts to track/manage Chronic Wasting Disease.

5. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Supervisor Styka opened public remarks at 6:17 pm.

George Kass, Indian Hills Homeowners Association, 4512 Nakoma, Okemos; spoke on concerns with possible AirBnB rentals (Non-Agenda Item) and the Deer Management Program (Agenda Item 4A).

Eric Torng, 4138 Benca Way, Okemos; spoke on the Tentative Preliminary Plat #19012 - Giguere Homes (Agenda Item 12E) and showed concern with rezoning three acres to PO zoning.

Sue Flowers, 2601 Elderberry Dr., Okemos; spoke in opposition to Agenda Item 12E due to not meeting the tree buffer conditions requested.

Brian Lick, 2613 Elderberry Dr., Okemos; spoke in opposition to Agenda Item 12E.

Lynne Page, 3912 Raleigh Dr., Okemos; spoke in opposition to Rezoning #19060 – Bennett Road Holding, LLC (Agenda Item 12A).

Supervisor Styka closed public remarks at 6:30 pm.

## 6. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

Manager Walsh reported: Michigan State solar project, meeting with MSU President Stanley, medical marihuana permitting lottery Sept. 23, Garden Club recognized with award, Oct. 11 Meridian Leadership Group, AAA+ Bond Rating, CATA response to Meridian requests

## 7. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Treasurer Deschaine:

- Sept. 16 taxes were due; 96.2% collection rate, 3.8% delinquent.
- Sept. 4, attended Haslett Redevelopment follow-up meeting; discussed best uses.
- Sept. 4, attended Environmental Comm meeting; local approaches for addressing Global Warming.
- Sept. 5, attended Economic Development Corporation meeting; discussed Meridian Mall.
- Sept. 13, attended Meridian Area Business Association.
- Sept. 12, attended Michigan State Van Kamp Business Incubator opening.

Trustee Opsommer:

- New CATA services to be provided; third bus, fifth bus on Mondays during peak hours.

Trustee Jackson:

- Sept. 17, attended Lansing Economic Area Partnership meeting; discussed talent attraction and brain drain.
- Commended efforts of VanCamp incubator as a lab business incubator.

Clerk Dreyfus:

- Attended Michigan Association of Municipal Clerks annual education day meeting; discussed 2018 Proposition 3 and its impacts on Michigan elections.

Supervisor Styka:

- Met with Granger Waste Management; discussed the importance of Meridian for Granger's business.
- Garden Club recognized from Michigan Nursery Landscaping Association for Meridian Safety Gardens around Township public safety buildings.
- Announced upcoming Harris Nature Center events.
- Oct. 12 Fire Safety event hosted by Meridian Fire Department.
- Oct. 18 Meridian Cares Fundraiser at Old Chicago, 4 pm to 9 pm.

## 8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Supervisor Style requested the Board take up for action a resolution supporting the national appeal of the FCC August 2 as Agenda Item 12I.

Supervisor Styka requested the Board discuss a resolution supporting the repeal of the United States' economic embargo against the Republic of Cuba as Agenda Item 13D, and to postpone Agenda Item 12E to a later meeting.

Supervisor Styka requested Agenda Item 12E be postponed to a later meeting.

Trustee Opsommer requested the Board discuss the possible regulation of AirBnB rentals under a new Agenda Item 13E.

**Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve the Agenda as amended. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.**

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 7-0

9. CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor Styka reviewed the consent agenda.

**Treasurer Deschaine moved to adopt the Consent Agenda as presented. Seconded by Clerk Dreyfus.**

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

NAYS:

Motion carried 7-0

A. Communications

**Treasurer Deschaine 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 Clerk Dreyfus.**

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

NAYS:

Motion carried 7-0

B. Approval of Minutes – September 3, 2019 Regular Meeting

**Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve and ratify the minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 3, 2019 as submitted. Seconded by Clerk Dreyfus.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Treasurer Deschaine, Supervisor Styka, Clerk Dreyfus,

Trustees Sundland, Jackson, Opsommer, Wisinski

NAYS:

Motion carried 7-0

C. Bills

**Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve that the Township Board approve the Manager’s Bills as follows, seconded by Clerk Dreyfus:**

<b>Common Cash</b>		\$	<b>295,002.96</b>
<b>Public Works</b>		\$	<b>873,838.94</b>
<b>Trust &amp; Agency</b>		\$	<b>5,955,826.66</b>
	<b>Total Checks</b>	\$	<b>7,122,668.56</b>
<b>Credit Card Transactions</b>		\$	<b>5,491.23</b>
<b>Aug 29 to Sept 11</b>			
	<b>Total Purchases</b>	\$	<b><u>7,128,159.79</u></b>
<b>ACH Payments</b>		\$	<b><u>909,139.16</u></b>

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

NAYS:

Motion carried 7-0

10. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY – NONE

11. HEARINGS

A. 2360 Jolly Road Brownfield Plan

Principal Planner introduced the proposed brownfield plan for 2360 Jolly Road and outlined the review done by the Meridian Township Brownfield Redevelopment Authority.

Dave Van Haaren, Economic Development Director, TriTerra, 1375 S. Washington Ave., Ste. 300, Lansing; provided an overview of the proposed brownfield plan and details of the proposed project. He explained the plan’s 12 year duration starting in 2021, eligible activities, use of local tax capture.

**Supervisor Styka called the public hearing to order at 6:52 pm.**

**Supervisor Styka closed the public hearing at 6:53 pm.**

12. ACTION ITEMS

A. Rezoning #19060 (Bennett Road Holding, LLC)

Manager Walsh presented the history of the surrounding properties and provided results of efforts for a conditional agreement between the developer and the surrounding neighborhoods.

**Trustee Jackson moved to refer Rezoning #19060 to the Planning Commission for a new public hearing and recommendation. Seconded by Trustee Sundland.**

Board discussion: emergency vehicle access to pathway, pathway maintenance, use as RR zoning would require connections, density should be controlled rather than matched to existing zoning, 50% open space needed with PUD, existing PUD's including pathways in open space, tax payer costs in maintaining pathway, pathway could be maintained and preserved by future homeowners association like other PUDs, Board will have a separate opportunity to review after Planning Commission recommendation, belief that density can reduce millages, land donation and pathway impact on current adjacent land preserve, proposed project would match master plan, belief that most citizen concerns were met, 5 letters just received are opposed to agreement, land could be deed restricted, positives of dispersing open space, possible future Professional/Office zoning conditions, Board member comments can guide Planning Commission, review process will refine details.

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

NAYS:

Motion carried 7-0

**Supervisor Styka moved to recess for 10 minutes at 7:47 pm.**

**Supervisor Styka moved the meeting back from recess at 8:00 pm.**

B. Amendment to Chapter 66 Tax Exemption – PILOT Final Adoption

**Trustee Jackson moved to approve the resolution for the final adoption of the amendment to Chapter 66, Article II to allow for a tax exemption and Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) for persons and families of low to moderate income. Seconded by Trustee Opsommer.**

Board discussion: proposed change would open ordinance up to all low/moderate income persons, would support proposed Woodward Way development, amendment would meet current needs caused by poverty rate.

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

NAYS: Clerk Dreyfus

Motion carried 6-1 (Clerk Dreyfus)

C. Special Use Permit #19121 Woodward Way

**Trustee Opsommer moved to adopt the resolution approving Special Use Permit #19121 with conditions for the size of the Woodward Way housing project. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine.**

Board discussion: standard Special Use Permit that is required, recommended by Planning Commission

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

NAYS: Clerk Dreyfus

Motion carried 6-1 (Clerk Dreyfus)

D. Woodward Way PILOT

**Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve the resolution to grant tax-exempt status with Payment in Lieu of Taxes for the housing project known as Woodward Way and to authorize the Township Manager to sign the Municipal Services Agreement with Woodward Way Limited Dividend Housing Association Limited Partnership. The PILOT shall be effective at the time of publication of the amendment to Chapter 66 of the Code of Ordinances. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.**

Board discussion: PILOT will help allow use of decrepit property to meet a Township need, details of Municipal Services Agreement in capturing funds, support for original zoning on current Future Land Use Map for affordable homeownership opportunities, belief that developer can afford to pay their fair share of property taxes – PILOT not required for development, property ideal for young family home ownership, apartments are also for low-income wage earners – residents earning 50 – 80 % of area income, belief that low-income housing will encourage diversity as a public good, property’s proximity to grocery and transportation services, walkability.

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

NAYS: Clerk Dreyfus

Motion carried 6-1 (Clerk Dreyfus)

~~E. Tentative Preliminary Plat #19012 (Giguere Homes)~~ – **POSTPONED TO FUTURE MEETING**

F. Amend Section 70-28 (c7) Cable Ordinance Franchise Fees

**Trustee Wisinski moved to approve the Township Manager’s recommendation, as presented, to amend Section 70-28(c7) of the 2003 Cable Television Ordinance eliminating the requirement that 80% of franchise fees be allocated to the Cable TV Fund. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.**

Board discussion: logical to use funding source in General Fund, consultation of Communications Department staff, continuation of primary services, importance of public television in government, fees can still be used on communications but won't be tied to it.

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

NAYS:

Motion carried 7-0

G. 2020 Township Budget

**Treasurer Deschaine moved that the Township Board approve the 2020 Recommended Budget Resolution. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski.**

Board discussion: extensive previous discussions, will help achieve economic development, additional funding for solar array and environmental efforts, use of Environmental Commission in utilizing additional funding, continuation of Climate Sustainability Plan goals, addition of right-of-way focused staff member.

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

NAYS:

Motion carried 7-0

H. 2019 Local Road Program

**Trustee Opsommer moved to authorize the Deputy Township Manager to reaffirm our commitment to the Towner Road and Lake Lansing/Hagadorn Road project and proceed with the 2019 cul-de-sac paving work as outlined in the memorandum. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski.**

Board discussion: current and future road programs through 2019, use of extra funds to re-pave five additional cul-de-sacs, Ingham County major projects, future of Towner Road construction, Land Preservation Advisory Board discussion on road around Foster-Davis Preserve, selection process for cul-de-sacs, inventory of current cul-de-sacs.

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

NAYS:

Motion carried 7-0

I. FCC Franchise Fee Case - **AGENDA ITEM ADDED DURING MEETING**

Supervisor Styka explained the current appeal of the FCC’s August 2 in-kind report and order.

**Trustee Opsommer moved that Meridian Township support the national appeal of the FCC August 2, 2019 in-kind report and order unilaterally lowering franchise fees in the Township and across the country, at the rate of \$5,000. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine.**

Board discussion: class action lawsuit that the Township could participate in, Township share of legal fees can range up to \$5000, Meridian Township will not be leading litigation effort.

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

NAYS:

Motion carried 7-0

13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Okemos Road Bridge Replacement

Deputy Manager/Directory Perry explained the proposed Okemos Road Bridge replacement and the alternate choices. He noted the final “preferred alternative” mixed elements of initial proposed alternates that was within the budget, and provided greenspace; a sidewalk; center turn lane; and a potential pathway under the bridge.

Board discussion: engineering elements to limit traffic stacking, current boulevard should be preserved – need for green infrastructure in streetscapes, small chance of traffic stacking while turning into parks, alternative four negates need for land acquisition, timeliness of decision with Downtown Okemos Project, current Ingham County Road Commission budget of \$6 million, “preferred alternative” will cost \$5.7 million, elimination of turning lane in alternative four could reduce cost, Okemos Road classification as a Major Collector, bridge repair funding process, County needs to provide numbers, should avoid auto-centric view, bridge needs have evolved, special meeting may be required with the County, the bridge is within the DDA and can receive beautification in the future.

**Board consensus to have the Ingham County Road Commission provide more details on bridge replacement options and costs.**

B. Newton Road Water Tower Attachment Agreement

Deputy Manager/Director Perry explained a request from the Lansing Board of Water and Light to allow them the use of the Newton Road Water Tower under the condition of providing a safety rail around the top of the tower.

Board discussion: why a safety railing on the top of the tower, need for cost estimate.

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

C. 2360 Jolly Road Brownfield Plan

Principal Planner Menser introduced the discussion and the applicant’s present to answer questions.

Board discussion: existing adjacent brownfield has 25% pass-through, typical standards don’t include 25% pass-through, adjacent warehouse has been demolished, only remaining surrounding site on Jolly Road that needs clean-up, potential for 60 new jobs created, current taxable value is \$213,000 and will increase to \$1 million, \$14,000 currently paid in taxes; \$71,000 paid after project; and \$92,000 after brownfield expires, three tenants in proposed building, potential lease holders, will be an amenity for the Elevation Apartments development, demolition costs, renovation of current storm water system to comply with standards, indoor/outdoor environmental cleanup, brownfield funds are only intended to prep for new construction.

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

D. Resolution in Support of the Repeal of the United States Economic Embargo of the Republic of Cuba

Trustee Jackson read a proposed resolution that outlines the issues and recognizes the importance of repealing the economic embargo on the Republic of Cuba.

**Trustee Opsommer moved to suspend the rules and take action. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.**

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 7-0

**Trustee Jackson moved to pass the Resolution in Support of the repeal of The United States Economic Embargo against the Republic of Cuba the Seconded by Clerk Dreyfus.**

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 7-0

E. AirBnb Short Term Rental Regulation

Concerns with growing Airbnb. locations in the Township and investigate a possible zoning ordinance to help regulate these short term rentals.

Board discussion: Use Board subcommittee to review the issue and present findings, Board subcommittees should not be used, Community Planning and Development should review the issue as they are charged with that task, Airbnb is a growing issue that will need regulation.

**Board consensus to research a possible zoning ordinance.**

14. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Supervisor Styka Opened Public Remarks at 9:26 pm.

Karen Grannemann, 2628 Creekstone Trl., Okemos; spoke in support of Agenda Item 12A and noted the efforts of residents and Township staff to reach agreements with the developer.

Supervisor Styka Closed Public Remarks at 9:30 pm.

15. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS - NONE

16. CLOSED SESSION

- A. Consider a Confidential Written Legal Opinion Regarding an Employment Severance Agreement

**Treasurer Deschaine moved to take the meeting into closed session for a confidential legal opinion pursuant to Section 8(h) of the Michigan Open Meetings Act regarding employment severance agreements. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.**

Board discussion: Clerk assertion that a complete discussion on a severance package is not permissible to take place in a closed session under Open Meetings Act, only the legal opinion can be strictly discussed in a closed session, body of the discussion, pros and cons, should take place in public meeting.

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

NAYS: Clerk Dreyfus

Motion carried 6-1 (Clerk Dreyfus)

Supervisor Styka moved the meeting into closed session at 9:35 pm.

**Trustee Opsommer moved to return the meeting to open session. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.**

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 7-0

Supervisor Styka moved the meeting back into open session at 9:50pm.

**Trustee Jackson moved that the Township Board approve the Communications Director severance agreement.**

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

NAYS:

Motion carried 7-0

17. ADJOURNMENT

**Trustee Opsommer moved to adjourn. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.**

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 7-0

**Supervisor Styka adjourned the meeting at 9:50pm.**

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RONALD J. STYKA,  
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

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BRETT DREYFUS,  
TOWNSHIP CLERK