

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
TOWNSHIP BOARD SPECIAL MEETING - **APPROVED** -
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198
853-4000, Town Hall Room
TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 2017 **6:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Supervisor Styka, Clerk Dreyfus, Treasurer Brixie, Trustees Deschaine, Jackson, Opsommer, Sundland
ABSENT: None
STAFF: Township Manager Frank Walsh, Assistant Township Manager/Director of Public Works and Engineering Derek Perry, Fire Chief Fred Cowper, Director of Community Planning & Development Mark Kieselbach, Director of Information and Technology Stephen Gebes, Finance Director Miriam Mattison, Director of Human Resources Joyce Marx, Economic Development Coordinator/Associate Planner Ben Motil

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Supervisor Styka called the meeting to order at 6:04 P.M.

2. ROLL CALL

The Clerk called the roll of the Board.

3. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Supervisor Styka opened Public Remarks.

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, addressed the location of tonight's meeting, previous discussion of the minutes, the urban services boundary, the Georgetown Payback District and the Municipal Employees Retirement System (MERS) pension debt.

Ann Alchin, 5972 Cypress, Haslett, addressed the past practice of study sessions prior to all Board meetings and offered suggestions regarding minute taking by staff.

Supervisor Styka closed Public Remarks.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

5. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Review Minute Taking Process

Board discussion:

- What should and should not be included in the minutes
- Difficulty in being both an active participant in the meeting and the minute taker
- Development of an established policy will help reduce friction among Board members
- Video coverage provides greater transparency for the public
- Preference for minutes to contain a summary of comments
- Minutes as an objective statement of Board proceedings and actions
- Review of pre-draft minutes and making changes to the draft minutes
- Need for inclusion of more than the statutory minimum requirements
- Aspects involved with a recording secretary attending Board meetings
- Online agendas and packets

B. Review Master Plan Process

Director Kieselbach summarized the status of the 2017 Master Plan as outlined in staff memorandum dated April 20, 2017.

Board discussion:

- Review of the approval process
- Township history of the urban services boundary (USB)
- Placement of the USB in the Township
- Pros and cons of including The Haslett Preserve in Area 3 of the map
- Extension of the USB to Meridian Road
- Maintaining the eastern third of the Township as rural
- Consideration of housing needs for families with children
- Student enrollment
- Aging in place within the Township
- Pros and cons in retaining the RR zoning designation for the Walnut Hills property
- Planned residential development (PRD) as a development tool
- Ability of access to public water and sewer outside of the USB

C. MERS Pension Debt: Charting a Course

Township Manager Frank Walsh summarized the existing Municipal Employees Retirement System (MERS) pension debt as outlined in staff memorandum dated April 21, 2017.

Board discussion:

- Potential Elimination of Township staff positions to pay off the debt in ten (10) years if the millage does not pass
- Inquiry regarding police and fire layoffs
- Draft plans from administration with millage approval and millage defeat – two (2) budgets
- Preference for scenarios of debt payoff over 10, 15 and 20 years
- Rising annual required contribution (ARC) with longer debt payoff
- Consideration of cutting expenses in other areas v. elimination of some staff positions

It was the consensus of the Board to have the Township Manager prepare two (2) 2018 budgets for consideration.

6. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Supervisor Styka opened Public Remarks.

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood, Haslett, commented on the Township’s water and sewer infrastructure, concern with the ballot language and possible use of fund balance.

Joyce Van Coevering, 1744 Maple Ridge, Haslett, spoke in support of including Area 3 in the USB and buying a ladder truck.

Supervisor Styka closed Public Remarks.

7. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS (None)

8. ADJOURNMENT

Treasurer Brixie moved to adjourn. Seconded by Trustee Deschaine.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Styka adjourned the meeting at 9:30 P.M.

RONALD J. STYKA
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

BRETT DREYFUS, CMMC
TOWNSHIP CLERK

Sandra K. Otto, Secretary