

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
TOWNSHIP BOARD REGULAR MEETING - **APPROVED** -
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198
853-4000, Town Hall Room
TUESDAY, APRIL 4, 2017 **6:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Supervisor Styka, Clerk Dreyfus, Treasurer Brixie, Trustees, Jackson, Sundland
ABSENT: Trustees Deschaine, Opsommer
STAFF: Township Manager Frank Walsh, Assistant Township Manager/Director of Public Works and Engineering Derek Perry, Director of Community Planning & Development Mark Kieselbach, Fire Chief Fred Cowper, Police Chief David Hall, Finance Director Miriam Mattison, Human Resources Director Joyce Marx, Senior Planner Peter Menser, Economic Development Coordinator/Associate Planner Ben Motil

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
Supervisor Styka called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS
Supervisor Styka led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. ROLL CALL
The Clerk called the roll of the Board.
4. PRESENTATION (None)
5. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS
Supervisor Styka opened Public Remarks.

Kathy DeVito, 470 Chimney Oaks, Okemos, stated she submitted a letter to the Board which expressed her displeasure with the Board because she believed they are not representing all members of our community. She addressed Board members engaging in what she characterized as “high school” behaviors going after another Board member. Ms. DeVito stated she did not believe the Board should worry about sanctuary city status for Meridian Township, as there are more important things to focus on, i.e., police and fire pension liability. She indicated the concept brought forth by some Board members regarding their proposed raise was a “silly sacrifice” and did not make sense. Ms. DeVito urged Board members to do a better job representing the Township.

Patty McPhee, 5275 Thames, Okemos, noted the problem with the police and fire pension liability existed when the Township Manager’s performance review was being held and comments made during the discussion on the Local Officials Compensation Commission (LOCC) recommendation regarding “shared sacrifice” were insulting to the public’s intelligence. She believed it is not up to Board members to decide what another Board member’s personal finances can handle and called the maneuver a “cheap shot.” Ms. McPhee stressed that empty storefronts show no more additional building is needed, and rezoning from residential to commercial is not needed. She stated the Township resolution on immigration did not represent her, alleging the Board “blazed it through” and should not do so again by following Lansing’s lead in declaring sanctuary city status, due to federal funding implications.

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, stated it is rare for elected officials to admit they made a mistake and take action to correct it, citing, as an example the Board rejecting the recommendations of the LOCC. He indicated the Board was so adamant to reject the LOCC recommendation that the vote was taken without a full complement of the Board present, thus all members did not have an opportunity to weigh in on the issue. Mr. Bowlby did not believe it right to make other people sacrifice, characterizing the manner in which the Board handled the matter as “unconscionable.” While acknowledging there is a need to buy new police cars and fire equipment over the next few years, he believed the question is whether to ask the taxpayers of Meridian Township to pay for it. Mr. Bowlby stated it is not the “end of the world” if the fire and police millage does not pass, as the Township can come back again next year with a more reasonable proposal for a millage increase.

Larry Klayman, 2247 Hamilton Road, Okemos stated his 15-year employment in the Office of Purchasing within the Department of Management and Budget taught him the best way to ensure the highest price possible is a sole-source award. He believed if a sole-source award is given, the Township must be certain there are no other law firms who can provide the same prosecutorial services at a lower price.

Odie Norkin, 3803 Sandlewood Drive, Okemos, believed at the last meeting there was a 5-1 vote against the Clerk relative to the LOCC recommendation. He displayed a postcard on the overhead that was mailed to Democrats in the Township just prior the August 2, 2016 Primary Election. Mr. Norkin noted the headline “slandered and libeled” two members running for reelection by stating “they don’t represent our community’s values”. He addressed statements on the postcard about one Trustee requesting a 13% pay raise. Mr. Norkin asked the Trustee about this and the Trustee shared that the Treasurer requested he ask for the raise. He believed one of the trustees was labeled on the postcard as a proponent of privatization, although that trustee repeatedly argued for prevailing wage and unions. Mr. Norkin believed that postcard was in retaliation for that Board member’s opposition to the CATA sole-source contract.

Supervisor Styka closed Public Remarks.

6. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

Township Manager Walsh reported on the following:

- Walnut Hills rezoning recommendation from the Planning Commission will be before the Township Board for discussion at its April 18th meeting
- Hannah Farms East was recommended for approval by Planning Commission and will be before the Township Board for discussion on May 2nd
- Four (4) union contracts have been settled and approved by the Township Board; three (3) which remain have defined benefit retirement programs
- Michigan Townships Association annual conference will be held next week at the Lansing Center
- Neighborhood meeting will be held in the near future with residents of Sleepy Hollow to ascertain the procedure for the water, sewer and road infrastructure improvements
- Meridian Township to take receipt this week of over \$62,000 for its negotiated share of the building permit fee relative to the Costco project
- Meridian Township will also collect 5 mills of property tax negotiated for the Costco project

A. Quarterly Report

Manager Walsh availed himself for questions from Board members.

7. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Clerk Dreyfus reported his attendance at a demonstration conducted by the vendor selected to provide new election equipment to municipalities within Ingham County, including a high-speed scanner which will tabulate at the rate of 30 ballots per minute. He stated the Election Commission met this evening and approved election inspectors and the receiving board members of six (6) precincts for the May 2, 2017 Election. Clerk Dreyfus also reported his attendance at the Michigan Municipal League Conference last week, highlighting the session on Distributed Antennae Systems (DAS) as well as a session on upcoming changes to voting in Michigan. Of note, he indicated it is highly unlikely federal funds will ever be available again for election equipment purchases and it was recommended municipalities budget \$1,000 per precinct annually, commencing no later than five years from now.

Treasurer Brixie reported the Land Preservation Advisory Board (LPAB) made a site visit for potential property acquisition. She noted her attendance at the Michigan Government Finance Officers Association's (MGFOA) Spring Seminar held last Friday, highlighting the session on fraud prevention and detection. She requested the Township Manager provide information to the public on the LOCC's process, given several communications from the public urging Board members to individually turn down their salary, but allow the raises of other elected officials to take effect.

Manager Walsh indicated the LOCC meets in the odd numbered years, and members are appointed by the governing body. He stated the LOCC can hold several meetings before they make a recommendation, which is then turned over to the Clerk. Upon submission to the Clerk, the governing body has 30 days to act on the recommendation. The governing body can do one (1) of two (2) things within that 30 day timeframe; either initiate no action (upon which the recommendation stands), or reject the recommendation by a super majority vote of those elected. He deferred to legal counsel as to the process when a governing body wants to change a decision it has made relative to the LOCC recommendation.

Reversing the decision made at the last meeting on the LOCC recommendation:

(Questions for the Attorney (Agenda Item #10))

Q. Can we reverse our decision?

A. The Township has decided to follow something called Robert's Rules of Order. That is not something that the Township is required to do, but it's a choice that was made by the Board, and has been made by the Board, many times over the years.

What I am going to be quoting to you are the rules that apply under Robert's Rules of Order. They are fairly arcane; they are very rigid, but there are some ways that things can be changed at subsequent meetings. There, actually, are three (3) things that could be done to change what you did at the last meeting. Easiest one first, and that would be a motion to change a vote. It would be possible for the Board to permit a person who voted at the last meeting to change their vote. There would have to be a motion brought, a second, and then the Board would vote on whether or not to allow that person to change their vote from the last meeting. In order for that motion to carry, you would have to have a majority of those present tonight voting to do that.

The second way that this could be done would be a motion to rescind. That gets to be a little bit more complicated because a motion to rescind, and how that rolls, depends upon whether or not the notice of this motion to rescind was given in the call of the meeting or if it was presented at the last meeting. If it was, then a motion to rescind could pass by a simple majority. If a motion to rescind was not included in the call of the meeting or disclosed at the last meeting, then in order for a motion to rescind to pass, you would need to have a two-thirds majority vote in favor of it.

The third, and last, option that we're aware of that could be used would be something called "suspending the rules." There are a number of protections there put in place for suspending the rules. One of those protections that I think would make it impossible tonight, as I see it, is you would have to have all seven (7) members present tonight in order to vote to suspend the rules; so, that one really is not available to you. That leaves the first two; motion to change a vote which would basically require a majority of those present here and the second would be a motion to rescind, which would require a two-thirds majority vote for it to pass.

Supervisor Styka reported on the results of the Pancake Fundraiser held a few weekends ago hosted mainly by the Meridian Township Firefighters Union, which raised over \$2,300 dollars: \$2,000 went to the Boy Scouts for their camping scholarships and \$300 donated to the Muscular Dystrophy Event. He announced Marsh Pointe celebrated a major renovation last week and Chick-fil-A opened for business during the same time period. Supervisor Styka announced the Semi-Annual Recycling Event which will take place on Saturday, April 22, 2017 at Chippewa Middle School.

8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

Clerk Dreyfus moved to amend the agenda as follows:

- **Add Agenda Item #12E: Potential action to allow a Board member to change their vote from the March 21, 2017 Board Meeting (regarding the Local Officials Compensation Commission Recommendation)**

Seconded by Trustee Sundland.

VOICE VOTE ON THE AMENDMENT: Motion carried 3-2 (Treasurer Brixie, Trustee Jackson).

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 5-0.

9. CONSENT AGENDA (SALMON)

Supervisor Styka reviewed the consent agenda.

Clerk Dreyfus moved to adopt the Consent Agenda amended as follows:

- **Amend the motion for Agenda Item #9E to read: moved to rescind the resolution approving a 2017-2026 Police and Fire Protection Millage in the amount of 1.483 mills dated March 21, 2017 and adopt the resolution for a 2017-2026 Police and Fire Protection Millage in the amount of 1.483 mills to be placed on the ballot for the Tuesday, August 8, 2017 Election.**

Seconded by Trustee Jackson.

Without objection, Supervisor Styka removed Agenda Item #9B: Minutes – March 21, 2017 Regular Meeting as he stated he wanted to discuss changes to the draft minutes with Clerk Dreyfus.

Board and staff discussion:

- Concern that last minute changes for the Police and Fire Millage language meet with approval from counsel

ATTORNEY COMMENT: Manager Walsh, my concern would be....I guess I don't understand why we would rescind a motion and then readopt it when what really all that needs to be done is to correct a motion that was previously adopted. I think, for a number of reasons, that's the appropriate way to go about it, not the least of which is I don't think that this Board wants to go on record as rescinding the idea that you want to put this on the ballot. Obviously, you still want to put it on the ballot. All that does need to be done is to correct a reference to the Charter Township of Meridian, which is the correct reference to this entity, rather than Meridian Charter Township. Technical though it may be, it is correct and, therefore, a motion to correct the previous motion would be, I think, the appropriate motion to make tonight.

Treasurer Brixie moved to have Agenda Item #9E reflect the attorney's recommendation. Seconded by Trustee Sundland.

Without objection, Supervisor Styka moved Agenda Item #9E to #12F: Police and Fire August Millage 2017-2026.

Treasurer Brixie withdrew her previous motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Jackson, Sundland, Supervisor Styka, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
 NAYS: None
 Motion carried 5-0.

A. Communications

(1) Board Information (BI)

- BI-1 Stuart D. Sleight, 6250 Skyline Drive, East Lansing; RE: Rezoning #16060 (Summer Park Realty)
- BI-2 Patty McPhee, 5275 Thames Drive, Haslett; RE: BRT and other concerns
- BI-3 Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett; RE: Board action regarding the recommendation of the Local Officials Compensation Commission
- BI-4 Ody Norkin, 3803 Sandlewood Drive, Okemos; RE: Shameful gang style attack by the Brixie led Board on Clerk Dreyfus
- BI-5 Donna Rose, 6207 Cobblers Drive, East Lansing; RE: Board action regarding the recommendation of the Local Officials Compensation Commission, CATA BRT and Redi-Ride

Clerk Dreyfus 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 Jackson.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Jackson, Sundland, Supervisor Styka, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
 NAYS: None
 Motion carried 5-0.

C. Bills

Clerk Dreyfus moved that the Township Board approve the Manager’s Bills as follows:

| | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Common Cash | \$ 93,326.62 |
| Public Works | \$ 12,377.46 |
| Trust & Agency | \$ 150.00 |
| Total Checks | \$ 111,854.08 |
| Credit Card Transactions (March 16 th to March 29 th) | \$ 7,037.47 |
| Total Purchases | <u>\$ 111,891.55</u> |
| ACH Payments | <u>\$ 440,486.41</u> |

Seconded by Trustee Jackson.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Jackson, Sundland, Supervisor Styka, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
 NAYS: None
 Motion carried 5-0.

[Bill list in Official Minute Book]

D. Amendment to the DDA Loan Installment Payment Schedule

Clerk Dreyfus moved to approve the third amendment to the DDA Loan Payment Schedule and authorize the Township Supervisor and Clerk to sign the amendment. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Jackson, Sundland, Supervisor Styka, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
 NAYS: None
 Motion carried 5-0.

F. Celebrate Meridian Liquor License

Clerk Dreyfus moved to approve the Parks & Recreation request to apply for a one-day liquor license from the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC) for the Celebrate Meridian Event on July 1, 2017. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Jackson, Sundland, Supervisor Styka, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
 NAYS: None
 Motion carried 5-0.

10. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY (See Agenda Item #7)

Q. We have received a number of communications that say “Individuals who wish to make a sacrifice by refusing their own raise would be free to do so. Could you explain or Director Marx, if you would like to explain (whoever we think more appropriate), the idea that we have received four (4) communications from the public that if Board members want to turn down their raises, they should turn down their own raise but no one else’s.

- A. Two problems with that. The first problem is that the LOCC provision of the Charter Township Act does not allow individual “rejections”, if you will. The Board simply votes on whether to reject the package or not to reject the package. The second problem is more of, and this is going to sound kind of “wonky” from a tax perspective, but it is really a tax problem. You could say I’ll turn down my compensation and what will happen is you will pay me and then I’ll simply give you the money right back. The problem with that is that when you get paid, that is compensation according to the federal government and according to the state government for purposes of your taxes. If you were paid and gave that money back, you would still be paying taxes on that money, which is obviously something that would be extremely difficult for people to give money back and still have to pay taxes on it. That would be a difficult thing for most people to do. So, practically speaking, it is not possible to turn it down and not have tax consequences to each individual who is put in that position.
- Q. I think the question that was just posed to you mischaracterized the letters the public actually sent. I think it was much simpler than that and I think the attorney just touched on that. That is, I do believe that the question really was if individual members, since the motion was made about sacrifice.... I think the simple proposal was let the LOCC’s recommendation go through for the 2% raise, and any of the members that wanted to sacrifice, could individually donate whatever portion of their salary they wanted to donate. Also, many people make donations without having to get a tax write-off; that’s not the reason they “do” a donation. Some people do it for a tax donation; some people do it altruistically and don’t care about a tax donation. So, is it not true, that if the Board accepted the recommendations of the LOCC, we receive a 1.75% increase this year (because it actually starts April 1st) and 2% next year. If the Board member, for example, who introduced the motion and the board member who supported it are both part-time trustees (\$10,000 a year), that 2% raise would be \$200 per year. So if the raise went through, those individuals who made the motion and supported the motion for sacrifice could literally take the \$200 increase they received and simply donate it back to the Township regardless of tax consequences if they chose to do so.
- A. Yes, they would be able to donate that money back to the Township and they would have to pay taxes on it as well.

11. HEARINGS

- A. Meridian Township Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BRA)
Supervisor Styka opened the public hearing at 6:50 P.M.

Senior Planner Menser summarized the proposed Meridian Township Brownfield Redevelopment Authority as outlined in staff memorandum dated March 29, 2017. He introduced Janet Michaluk, Brownfield Coordinator with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ).

Township Manager Walsh added there appears to be full Board support for establishment of a BRA. He noted the BRA Board of Directors makes recommendations to the Township Board, so the final authority for any brownfield granted would rest with the Township Board. Manager Walsh indicated the Board will oversee who will serve on the BRA.

- Public (None)

Supervisor Styka closed the public hearing at 6:53 P.M.

- B. Bennett Village Phase #2 Streetlighting Special Assessment District #424
Supervisor Styka opened the public hearing at 6:53 P.M.

Assistant Township Manager/Director of Public Works Perry summarized the streetlighting special assessment request as outlined in staff memorandum dated April 4, 2017. He displayed a map on the overhead projector delineating where the three (3) streetlights would be located on Turning Leaf Lane. In response to Board member inquiry, he indicated the proposed streetlights would be in compliance with the Township's dark sky ordinance.

- Public (None)

Supervisor Styka closed the public hearing at 6:55P.M.

12. ACTION ITEMS

- A. Rezoning #16070 (Singh) 1954 Saginaw Highway RR (Rural Residential) to RDD (Multiple Family-5 units per acre)-**Final Adoption**

Trustee Jackson moved to adopt the resolution for final adoption of Ordinance No. 2017-03 pursuant to Rezoning Petition #16070. Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.

Board discussion:

- Support by Board member based on the recommendation of the Planning Commission, location of the site and noted difficulty with commercial development in this location
- Board member opposition because property is on a major arterial highway and area is developing and growing
- Location on a major road is good for commercial and not as good for residential
- Board member belief that a better use of the property is commercial and is more in line with the future vision of the Township
- Multifamily housing will provide transition between adjacent residences to the west and adjacent business interests to the northeast and northwest
- Site is in a location that is being commercially developed further to the east
- Not currently commercial but rural residential (RR)

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 4-1 (Clerk Dreyfus).

- B. Rezoning # 17010 (Portnoy & Tu) north of 2476 Jolly Road from RA (Single Family-Medium Density) to PO (Professional and Office)-**Introduction**

Treasurer Brixie moved to adopt the resolution to introduce for publication and subsequent adoption pursuant to Rezoning Petition #17010. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.

Director Kieselbach summarized the rezoning request as outlined in staff memorandum dated March 31, 2017.

Board discussion:

- Midwest Power, an industrial site, is just east of the subject property

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 5-0.

- C. Harkness Law Firm Contract

Treasurer Brixie moved to approve the two-year retainer agreement for prosecutorial services with the Harkness Law Firm for \$80,000 annually. Seconded by Trustee Sundland.

Township Manager Walsh summarized the proposed contract for prosecutorial services as outlined in staff memorandum dated March 30, 2017.

Board and staff discussion:

- Manager statement that the Board has two (2) options: to either extend Mr. Harkness' contract as delineated in Clause 28, or go out for bid
- Mr. Harkness provided this service to the Township for several years through another law firm prior to starting his own law practice
- Board member statement the Police Chief is satisfied with legal services provided by the Harkness Law Firm
- Fiscally conservative thing to do is to continue with the contract through the extension clause as it does not automatically increase each year
- Concern with the amount of staff time spent on the fair bidding process
- Board member statement going out to bid is a better value for taxpayers
- Going out for bid allows an opportunity for more services to be provided to the Township for the same or lower cost
- If the bidding process does not result in a lower cost, the Harkness Law Firm would be awarded the renewal contract
- Board member support for continuation of the contract as the police department is happy with the level of service provided
- Clause 28 was written for the sake of continuity and to provide the Board with an option to extend the contract for two (2) more years until April 30, 2019
- While generally supportive of utilizing the bidding process in most contract situations, there is a distinct possibility that bids would come in higher due to inflation
- Board member preference to accept the additional two (2) years available to the Board with the same terms and the same amount of money, and prepare to use the bidding process at the end of the two (2) years of this renewed contract

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Jackson, Sundland, Supervisor Styka, Treasurer Brixie
 NAYS: Clerk Dreyfus
 Motion carried 4-1.

D. Sierra Ridge No. 3 Final Plat

Trustee Jackson moved to adopt the resolution to approve Final Plat #03012 (Sierra Ridge Estates, No. 3). Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.

Director Kieselbach summarized the proposed final plat as outlined in staff memorandum dated March 27, 2017.

Board and staff discussion:

- All public improvements, including the culvert under the road, must be complete prior to final plat approval
- Drain Commissioner and the Ingham County Road Department (ICRD) must approve all public improvements prior to final plat approval

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Jackson, Sundland, Supervisor Styka, Treasurer Brixie,
 Clerk Dreyfus
 NAYS: None
 Motion carried 5-0.

E. Opportunity for Board Member to Change Vote from Previous Meeting March 21, 2017 Board Meeting)

No motion was brought forward on this issue.

- F. Police and Fire August Millage 2017-2026
Trustee Jackson moved to correct the resolution adopted at the meeting dated March 21, 2017 pertaining to the Police and Fire August Millage to change the words “Meridian Charter Township” to “Charter Township of Meridian” and change the zip code to 48864.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Jackson, Sundland, Supervisor Styka, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
 NAYS: None
 Motion carried 5-0.

Supervisor Styka moved to adopt the corrected resolution for 2017-2026 Police and Fire Protection Millage in the amount of 1.483 mills to be placed on the ballot for the Tuesday, August 8, 2017 Election. Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Jackson, Sundland, Supervisor Styka, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
 NAYS: None
 Motion carried 5-0.

13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Meridian Township Brownfield Redevelopment Authority

Board, staff and MDEQ representative discussion:

- Makeup of the BRA still needs to be addressed by the Township Board
- There is a wide spectrum of Brownfield Authority compositions throughout the state
 - Delhi Township and Grand Blanc uses its DDA
 - Lansing has its Tax Increment Financing Authority (TIFA), Economic Development Corporation (EDC) and BRA together as one Board
- Board member opposition to having economic development bodies such as the DDA or EDC serve as the BRA due to their narrow scope and not being representative enough of the entire community
- Board member suggestion of a seven member public body consisting of the Township Manager, a member with engineering expertise, a member with financial expertise, a member with legal expertise and then a member of the EDC, Environmental Commission (EC) and the Planning Commission (PC)
- Board members support for the “cross-pollination” of different Boards and Commissions through the previously offered composition of the BRA
- Board member support for the Supervisor to appoint individual members of the various aforementioned boards

It was the consensus of the Board to place this item on for action at its April 18, 2017 Board meeting.

B. Bennett Village Phase #2 Streetlighting SAD #424

It was the consensus of the Board to place this item on the consent agenda at its April 18, 2017 Board meeting.

C. Recycling Center Operation Agreement

Assistant Township Manager/Director of Public Works Perry summarized the proposed recycling center operation as outlined in staff memorandum dated April 4, 2017.

Board discussion:

- Discussion with the recycling center operator, Reclaimed by Design, regarding their ability to fund trash compactor replacement
- If Reclaimed by Design agrees to fund trash compactor replacement, it would allow the Township to use funds to invest in access road improvements
- Requests renews the agreement and appropriates no more than \$10,000 to regrade and rebuild the access road
- Township payment to Reclaimed by Design of \$2,000 per month remains the same as in the previous agreement
- Winter hours changed to summer hours of operation on April 1st
- Inquiry concerning citizen complaint regarding early closure on April 1st
- Township acknowledged its “error” to the customer who came out and was unable to use the facility and pledged to “make it right” by offering to pick up materials they wanted to dispose of free of charge
- Inquiry about the recycling center location in a “wetland”
- Recycling center has been in its current location for a long time and considerations about a new location include citizen resistance to relocation
- Road bed is in good shape, but the Township doesn’t have the road equipment to properly grade and maintain it
- Township has previously depended upon “favors” from the ICRD to perform some form of grading when feasible
- Township has located a contractor who specializes in gravel road maintenance
- If the Board approves funding, the Township will rebuild the road with crushed limestone, regrade with appropriate ditching and then consistently maintain the road through the contract
- Goal of staff is to obtain better data about who is utilizing the facility
 - Township residents or “outside entities”
- Board member inquiry regarding Granger contract for homeowner recycling
 - Issue will be on for discussion at the April 18, 2017 Board meeting

It was the consensus of the Board to place this item on for action at its April 18, 2017 Board meeting.

14. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Supervisor Styka opened Public Remarks.

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Okemos, commented regarding a Board member statement that four (4) of the letters submitted by the public implied individuals could reject their own raise. He maintained this was not a true statement, as only one (1) of the four letters makes that statement. Mr. Bowlby stated the Board could agree to accept the raises and individuals who felt uncomfortable taking the raise could donate the money back to the township and, even if there were tax consequences, that could be “part of the sacrifice.” He observed that due to the absence of two (2) Board members this evening, the timeframe for rescission is precluded, but he acknowledged he may be wrong about that. Mr. Bowlby stated he spoke with many people (about the LOCC recommendation) and several have indicated they support his position on the issue but are “afraid” to speak before the Board because of “negative repercussions” down the road. He felt it is a “very toxic environment” when people don’t feel free to speak their mind before the Board. Mr. Bowlby listed a number of individuals as examples – Shane Goodale, Ody Norkin, Lynn Hildebrandt, and Tom Dietz – all not reappointed to the Planning Commission, and all had “run-ins with a certain member of this Board.” He requested the Transportation Commission meetings be televised on HOMTV.

Supervisor Styka closed Public Remarks.

15. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Clerk Dreyfus clarified there were three (3) options, as presented by the Township attorney to change the vote on the LOCC recommendation. He indicated at his request, the agenda was modified to allow the ability for Board members to make a motion to change their vote. Clerk Dreyfus noted that three (3) of the Board members present at tonight's meeting who voted to reject the LOCC recommendation chose not to change their vote. He added that after tonight's meeting, the timeline will not allow an opportunity for Board members to change their vote. Clerk Dreyfus explained the total cost to the Township would have been under \$3,000 in 2017 (1.75% increase) and \$3,000 in 2018 (2% increase) and the Township has already spent several hundred dollars in legal fees for the Township attorney to review the decision and deal with its ramifications.

Treasurer Brixie announced the Community Resources Commission is holding a silent auction to raise money for Meridian's Community Needs Fund. She noted tickets are available in the Treasurer's office for \$25.00.

16. ADJOURNMENT

Treasurer Brixie moved to adjourn. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 5-0.

Supervisor Styka adjourned the meeting at 7:47P.M.

RONALD J. STYKA
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

BRETT DREYFUS, CMMC
TOWNSHIP CLERK

Sandra K. Otto, Secretary