



Charter Township of Meridian
Senior/Community Center Task Force
Township Municipal Building, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864
Tuesday, January 28, 2025 – Minutes

Members

Present: Scott Hendrickson, Steve Vagnozzi, Suchir Nagisetty, Michele Steed, Mary Nardo Farris, Josh Robertson, John Hood (arrived 6:20pm), and Patrick Malley (arrived 6:45pm)

Members

Absent: LuAnn Maisner

Staff

Present: Township Manager Tim Dempsey, Community Planning & Development Director Timothy Schmitt, and Parks and Recreation Director Courtney Wisinski

Others

Present: Trustee Kathy Sundland

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Supervisor Hendrickson called the meeting to order and called the roll at 6:00pm.

2. PUBLIC REMARKS

Supervisor Hendrickson opened comments from the public at 6:03 pm.

Suzanne Leialoha, Township Resident, urged the Task Force to consider the phased Senior Center Plan brought by Barbara O’Kelly.

Jim Solce, Meridian Community Band President, spoke in support of a Senior/Community Center that would allow for space for the band to rehearse and storage for instruments and sheet music.

Neil Bowlby, Township Resident, expressed the need for a Senior Center to replace what is at the School now. He shared the size of the local Senior Centers compared to the population size and the average was one square foot per person. He supports Barbara O’Kelly’s plan of a phased Senior Center approach with a facility of 10,000-12,000 square feet for Phase 1.

Jean McDonald, Township Resident and Meridian Senior Center Board Member, shared that the community has many questions on the timeline for development, phases of development, and timely spending of the grant funds received for the project.

Barbara O’Kelly, Township Resident, suggested a three-phase plan for the Center and expressed interest in the Driving Range property on Grand River Avenue because it is large enough to support growth along with outdoor recreation activities.

Supervisor Hendrickson closed comments from the public at 6:17pm.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

**MOTION BY MEMBER FARRIS TO APPROVE THE AGENDA. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER STEED.
MOTION APPROVED 6-0.**

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES-December 10, 2024

**MEMBER ROBERTSON MOVED TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 10, 2024 MINUTES. SUPPORTED BY
MEMBER VAGNOZZI. MOTION APPROVED 6-0.**

5. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Supervisor Hendrickson acknowledged the emails received and placed them in the record. He welcomed new Township Manager Tim Dempsey.

6. PROGRAMMING AND COST DISCUSSION

A. Building Space Planning

Community Planning and Development Director Tim Schmitt stated it is unlikely that the offer we have out for the property on Grand River Avenue will be accepted. It is likely we proceed with the Township owned property next to the Central Fire Station.

Adam Hopkins with Progressive discussed the four space planning options that were developed based on public input. The options included the following:

Options	Square Feet	Estimated Construction Costs
1. Senior Center (no gym)	23,396	\$11,100,000-\$12,500,000
2. Senior Center with indoor pickleball	41,459	\$19,600,000-\$22,200,000
3. Community Center & Senior Center (one gym)	55,809	\$26,400,000-\$29,900,000
4. Community Center & Senior Center (two gyms)	73,400	\$34,700,000-\$39,400,000

The Haslett and Okemos Superintendents confirmed that there are no former school sites available for the project. Discussion regarding the cost increases that go with building a phased project and the spaces needed in the Senior Center. The \$5 million grant received for this project from the State of Michigan has to be expensed by September 2026.

There was consensus that option 1 and option 3 are the best ones to pursue. The Task Force asked Progressive to rework option 1 to reduce the square feet by 10-15% to a total of 15,000 square feet of program space, on the Central Fire Station site, with the option for growth. Discussion was had to be sure to design option 3 in a way that the Senior Center feels separate from the Community Center, possibly with a separate entrance.

Progressive was also asked to bring option 3 designed on the Fire Station site, as well as, a 10-15% reduction in square feet of option 3. These three design options will be presented at the March meeting.

At the February meeting, Staff will discuss operational costs for the three options.

7. PUBLIC REMARKS

Supervisor Hendrickson opened comments from the public at 8:00 pm.

Suzanne Leialoha, Township Resident, urged the Task Force to keep the senior focused exercise equipment in the plan.

Jim Solce, Meridian Community Band President, mentioned there would be opportunities to have shared space that is used different hours of the day.

Barbara O'Kelly, Township Resident, shared the current sized of the spaces at the Senior Center and stated the large room for 120 people, in the proposed plan, is not needed and the current exercise space is 120 square feet. A separate entrance would be appreciated.

Supervisor Hendrickson closed comments from the public at 8:06 pm.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:06 pm without objection.