

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
TOWNSHIP BOARD REGULAR MEETING - **APPROVED** -  
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198  
853-4000, Town Hall Room  
TUESDAY, January 16, 2018 **6:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Clerk Dreyfus, Treasurer Brixie, Trustees Deschaine, Jackson, Opsommer

ABSENT: Supervisor Styka, Trustee Sundland

STAFF: Township Manager Frank Walsh, Director of Public Works and Engineering Derek Perry, Director of Community Planning & Development Mark Kieselbach, Economic Development Director Chris Buck, Senior Planner Peter Menser

**COMMUNITY RESOURCES COMMISSION:**

PRESENT: Suzanne Brouse

**TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

PRESENT: Chris Hackbarth, Tim Potter, Steve Vagnozzi, Trustee Deschaine

**PLANNING COMMISSION**

PRESENT: Dante Ianni, John Scott-Craig, Ken Lane, Dave Premoe, Jerry Richards, Emily Stivers

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

PRESENT: Shawn Dunham, Mikhail Murshak, Kimberly Thompson, Director of Economic Development Chris Buck

**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**

PRESENT: Brian Beauchine, Carol Ohlogge, Ken Lane Trustee Jackson,

**COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION**

PRESENT: Walter Benenson

**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

PRESENT: Susan Fulk, Renee Korrey

**LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD**

PRESENT: John Mayes, Treasurer Brixie

**PARK COMMISSION**

PRESENT: Mike McDonald, Mark Stephens, Courtney Wisinski, Amanda Lick, Annika Schaetzl

**BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

PRESENT: John Scott-Craig, Frank Walsh, Ned Jackson, John Matuszak

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

PRESENT: Bill McConnell, Ned. Jackson, Marina Ionesco, Kirk Lapham

**CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY**

PRESENT: Bruce Peffers, Todd Huhn, Barry Goetz

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

**Treasurer Brixie moved to approve Trustee Jackson as Supervisor Pro Tem. Seconded by Trustee Opsommer.**

VOICE VOTE: YEAS: Clerk Dreyfus, Treasurer Brixie, Trustees Deschaine, Jackson, Opsommer

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Pro Tem Jackson called the meeting to order at 6.04 P.M.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS

Supervisor Pro Tem led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

The secretary called the roll of the Board.

4. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Supervisor Pro Tem Jackson opened Public Remarks.

Supervisor Pro Tem Jackson closed Public Remarks.

5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**Treasurer Brixie moved to approve the agenda as submitted. Seconded by Clerk Dreyfus.**

VOICE VOTE: YEAS: Clerk Dreyfus, Treasurer Brixie, Trustees Deschaine, Jackson, Opsommer

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

6. JOINT MEETING WITH TOWNSHIP BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

- A. Reports of Activity in 2017
- B. Significant Matters Ahead in 2018

Pro Tem Jackson reviewed the 2017 Action Plan.

- Redevelopment of Core Commercial Areas
- Improve ISO Fire Rating
- Long-Term Road Funding
- Solar Array and Climate Sustainability Plan
- Medical Marijuana
- Redevelopment of Ready Communities
- Diversity
- Outdoor Warning Sirens
- Website
- Public Transportation
- Resolutions passed by the Township Board

## Community Resources Commission Reported:

- Community Needs Fund - Meridian Cares
- 933 requests from 435 households, rent and utility assistance
- \$8475 from needs fund, leveraged \$34,744 from community partners
- Kept 39 households from crisis situations
- Worked with local churches and service organizations providing food baskets for Easter, back to school, Thanksgiving, Christmas and December Holidays serving over 200 households

## Transportation Commission Reported:

- First year, mission, costs, service, Board recommendations
- Township assets available; non-motorized, public transit, roads & bridges, trails, RR system
- Redi-Ride work group and working with CATA
- Met with Michigan Public Transit Association and discussed public transit options
- Plans with Parks Commission for non-motorized access to the trail system
- Discussed pedestrian safety issues with Police Department
- ICRD project reviews / public hearing
- Railroad Quiet Zone
- In 2018, focus on Redi-Ride, exploring collaboration with other Township Boards

## Planning Commission Reported:

- Reviews of Land Preservation purchases and park donations
- Rezoning of Golf Courses as Open Space in PUD and PRD
- Various development project vetted
- Developed 2018 Planning Commission Goals

## Economic Development Corporation Reported:

- Continuing to foster development of the Corridor Improvement Authority
- Foster entrepreneurship with Tinker Lab at Mall, 3D printers in Okemos and Haslett Schools
- Working to redevelop and expand the Meridian Township Farmers' Market
- Collaborate with other entities in the Township and Lansing to remain competitive with regional development initiatives

## Zoning Board of Appeals Reported:

- Tackle any variances - unbiased - that would veer from Meridian Township ordinances
- Make difficult decisions by ensuring that Ordinances are followed and supported
- Follow 8 criteria in order to grant a variance, can be difficult to discern
- Encouraged Applications for Public Service for new ZBA members

## Communications Commission Reported:

- DAS- Distribution Antenna Systems analysis
- 175<sup>th</sup> Celebrate Meridian Anniversary event
- New Township brand and redesigned website
- Future sources of revenue
- Broadband access for all residents

## Downtown Development Authority Reported:

- Looking forward to redevelop the downtown areas
- Tax capture to repay the loan for streetlight project – all revenue goes towards loan payment
- Removing barriers developers claim are keeping them from developing the Four Corners
- Supports unlimited density to promote development
- With development comes tax capture to improve infrastructure to the aging downtown area
- Renew and revitalize the pride of living and doing business in Okemos

## Land Preservation Advisory Board Reported:

- Millages passed in 2000 and 2010 for funding Land Preservation in Meridian Township
- 2017: 800+ acres and 22 Land Preserves across the Township, 4 acquisitions in closing

- New acquisitions discussed
- Stewardship throughout the township to make the habitat even better
- Prescribed burns reduces invasive species and helps bring back native species
- Working on native restoration, tree planting and removal of invasive species
- Research project, 45 people participated, and sampling vernal pools that are home to threatened Ferry Shrimp

Park Commission Reported:

- Park Acquisition and Development Millage
- Towner Road Park development
- "Disco Fish" sculptures repaired and reinforced installed at Wonch Park, Community Mural installed at Hillbrook Park
- Farmers Market Relocation
- Grants for infrastructure improvements and acquisitions from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, Land and Water Conservation Fund, Ingham Parks and Trails Millage
- Central Meridian Regional Trail Connector

Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BRA) Reported:

- New Board, April 2017, getting organized and ready to do the jobs ahead
- Brownfields are real property in Township that have environmental challenges such as; contamination, lead, asbestos, cleaned up in order to be developed or redeveloped
- Look at applications from developers and to make an assessment of these applications and pass a recommendation onto the Township Board
- Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act of 1996, tax increment financing, community has to be behind it in order for it to work
- Finance, science, legal issues are all a part of the Brownfield proposals

Environmental Commission Reported:

- Mandate for community education, communication and regulation/policy recommendations
- Assisted in development of Climate Action Plan, recommendation to the Board
- Experts in the community on natural resources, water, wetlands forests, urban forests
- Implementation of the Master Plan and the Climate Sustainability Action Plan
- More Green Theme presentations planned
- Regulatory: Wetlands Protection Ordinance and recommendations to the PC commission or the Township Board on applications brought to do work in wetlands, timeline challenges
- Look at Ordinance with an eye towards improvements, in relation to the Climate Action Plan, the Master Plan, MUPUD and environmental amenities
- Connect with other boards and the business community
- How to protect the environment when developing
- Extending Lansing River trail from MSU into Meridian Township
- Interurban Trail and the signage in Ted Black Woods

Corridor Improvement Authority Reported:

- New Board, formed March 2017
- Grand River Corridor as prime business and recreation destination with programs and projects that invigorate streetscapes, build partnerships among corridor property owners, business owners and residents
- Promote consistent and pleasing aesthetic style, vision for corridor businesses, increase safety and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists
- Smart Growth, in-field development, business recruitment and expansion
- Revisions of the MUPUD ordinance and Form-Based Code development

C. Discussion

Staff and Board Discussion:

- Board members thanked everyone who serves on boards and commissions, discussed the importance of public service, and how they serve an essential role in the Township
- Fluidity of Boards and Commissions working together, excitement about the accomplishments by all of the Township public bodies
- Appreciation to Board and Commission members for providing creativity to the Township, and the ability to stand up and present divergent viewpoints

7. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Supervisor Pro Tem Jackson opened Public Remarks.

Supervisor Pro Temp Jackson closed Public Remarks.

8. ADJOURNMENT

**Clerk Dreyfus moved to adjourn. Seconded by Trustee Deschaine.**

VOICE VOTE: YEAS: Clerk Dreyfus, Treasurer Brixie, Trustees  
Deschaine, Jackson, Opsommer

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Pro Temp Jackson adjourned the meeting at 7:31 P.M.

9. POSTSCRIPT –DAN OPSOMMER

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RONALD J. STYKA  
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

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BRETT DREYFUS,  
TOWNSHIP CLERK

Maggie Rodgers-Sanders, Secretary