

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
TOWNSHIP BOARD JOINT MEETING - **APPROVED** -  
ASSESSING BOARD OF REVIEW  
CABLE COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
COMMUNITY RESOURCES COMMISSION  
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION  
LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD  
PARK COMMISSION  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198  
853-4000, Town Hall Room  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 6, 2015 **6:00 P.M.**

**TOWNSHIP BOARD**

PRESENT: Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus, Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra  
(6:05 P.M.), Wilson  
ABSENT: None

**ASSESSING BOARD OF REVIEW**

PRESENT: Member Durand-Hollis  
ABSENT: Members Federau, Hagen, Spengler

**CABLE COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION**

PRESENT: Member Seipel, Trustee Styka  
ABSENT: Chair Benenson, Vice-Chair Crowley, Members Kiyak, Lathrop

**COMMUNITY RESOURCES COMMISSION:**

PRESENT: Commissioner Brouse  
ABSENT: Commissioners Ahlbrand, Friedland, Hanna, Langhals, Lincoln, Theroux

**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

PRESENT: Member Korrey, Supervisor LeGoff  
ABSENT: Chair Dale, Members Cawood, Hagen, Kreft, Lewis, Raynak, Spanos, Weaver

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

PRESENT: Chair Madle, Member Buck, Manager Walsh, Clerk Dreyfus  
ABSENT: Members Barr, Carlson, Ledebuhr, Olson, Rowlee, White

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

PRESENT: Chair N. Jackson, Members Kielbaso, McConnell, Sarver, Scherbarth, Schools  
ABSENT: Member Searl

**LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD**

PRESENT: Members Harmes, Kielbaso, Treasurer Brixie  
ABSENT: Members Hatfield, Mayes, Rusch, Smith, Commissioner Stephens

**PARK COMMISSION**

PRESENT: Chair Wilson, Vice-Chair McDonald  
ABSENT: Commissioners Jaramillo, Stephens

**PLANNING COMMISSION**

PRESENT: Chair Jackson, Vice-Chair Deits, Commissioners Ianni, Scott-Craig, Tenaglia

ABSENT: Commissioners Cordill, DeGross, Honicky, Van Coevering

**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**

PRESENT: Chair Beauchine, Members Hershiser, Jackson, Ohlrogge, Alternate #1 Deschaine,  
Supervisor LeGoff

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Township Manager Frank Walsh, Director of Community Planning and Development  
Mark Kieselbach, Police Chief David Hall

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Supervisor LeGoff called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS

Supervisor LeGoff led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

The secretary called the roll of the Board.

4. SPECIAL PRESENTATION (None)

5. PUBLIC REMARKS

Supervisor LeGoff opened Public Remarks.

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, offered several comments on Rezoning #14070. He also spoke to the issue of standing relative to the proposed new central fire station. Mr. Bowlby reported on the statistics regarding November, 2014 sewer cleaning as it relates to the five (5) year plan.

Patrick Cannon, 1769 Pinecreek Circle, Haslett, Chair of the Capital Area Transportation Authority (CATA) Board, addressed the role CATA plays in public transit service for the Lansing region. He spoke to the potential development of a bus rapid transit along the Grand River Corridor.

Leonard Provencher, 5824 Buena Parkway, Haslett, addressed disparity between an ad printed in the Lansing State Journal regarding cost of Christmas tree recycling/disposal and the information in Meridian Township's *Green Gazette*.

Supervisor LeGoff closed Public Remarks.

6. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

Township Manager Walsh reported the following: (yielded the floor until the end of the meeting)

- Retirement of the Director of Public Works and Engineering in June, 2015
- Director of Public Works and Engineering will continue on a part time basis for the remainder of 2015
- Township began advertising for a Township Engineer yesterday
- Superintendent of Public Works announced his retirement after 41 years of service which will become effective in three (3) weeks
- Fire station plans will be finalized January 12<sup>th</sup> and the Township will begin seeking bids from all subcontractors
- Okemos Road Pedestrian Pathway Bridge is being worked on, with ribbon cutting scheduled the first week of April
- Part-time code enforcement officer started employment yesterday

- Planning Commission denied the special use permit request for the Jimmy John's drive-through and the applicant has appealed the decision to the Board
- Over \$63 million in new investment in 2014
- Nearly \$150 million in new development over the last 24 months
- New ambulance approved by the Board has been ordered
- Presentations on recycling by Granger and solar energy communities by Consumers Energy at the next regular Board meeting
- Retired Police Officer Gayelord Mankowski will be honored for his many years of work with needy children during the Christmas season

## 7. BOARD COMMENTS & REPORTS

- A. Joint Meeting with Township Boards and Commissions (Cable Communications Commission, Downtown Development Authority, Economic Development Corporation, Environmental Commission, Land Preservation Advisory Board, Park Commission, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals)

Meeting participants discussed 2014 accomplishments, as well as the following goals, objectives, concerns and ideas for 2015:

### Assessing Board of Review

- Two (2) boards of three members hear citizen concerns about assessed value of their property
- Board of Review (BOR) is reactive as they respond to the citizenry
- Cases are heard during the month of April
- Trend from two years ago regarding tax value review have subsided

### Cable Communications Commission

- Franchise fee audit performed in 2014
- Oversight of HOMTV programs
- Open invitation to attend meetings to offer opinions on technical issues
- Suggestion to perform a technical audit
- Commission received few complaints in 2014

### Community Resources Commission

- Commission provides support and finances for the Township's Human Resources Specialist to address acute needs of Meridian residents through the Needs Fund (payment of rent, utilities, etc.)
- Establishment and success of Meridian Care

### Downtown Development Authority

- Continuation of search for available money
- Formation of more volunteer committees to look at items such as streetscapes, art, benches along the side of the road
- Continuation of Celebrate Okemos event
- Douglas J project will springboard other redevelopment in the area
- Appreciation that many DDA business owners also live in Meridian Township
- Redevelopment of the Meridian Asset Resource Center (MARC) and the former central fire station will have a significant impact on the tax capture for the DDA

### Economic Development Corporation

- 2014 accomplishments:
  - Outreach through contact with developers regarding Meridian's business friendly attitude
  - Monthly meetings of the Meridian Leaders Group
  - Involvement in the Michigan Grand River Corridor Study charrette process
  - Ongoing work with staff to evaluate which recommendations that came out of the charrette process can be acted upon
  - Sponsorship of the Michigan Economic Developers Association Annual Meeting
  - Appreciation to the Planning staff member for his written proposal which won an award from the ILAB at the University of Michigan Dearborn for Entrepreneurial Cities

- 2015 Goals:
  - Continue as a pivotal player in the redevelopment of the Haslett Shop Town, Haslett Village Square and the Carriage Hills Shopping Center
  - Continue work on and potential implementation of the Corridor Improvement Authority for the Township's portion of Grand River Avenue
  - Assist in the redevelopment effort of the Okemos downtown corridor, including the old central fire station and eventual relocation of the MARC
  - Assist in researching options for the possible relocation and expansion of the Farmers Market

#### Environmental Commission

- There was an educational focus to many of the Commission's 2014 accomplishments
- Appreciation for efforts to improve communications among the various boards and commissions (e.g., monthly Leadership Meetings)
- Efforts towards making Meridian Township a solar ready community
- Ways to mitigate the tree devastation as a result of the December, 2013 ice storm
- Input on the Master Plan Update, specifically as it relates to the greenspace plan
- Heightened interaction with other boards and commissions
- Visits to permitted sites over the course of the year
- Three board members visited the site of the proposed new central fire station to comment on tree preservation and wetland impacts
- Six (6) recipients of the 2014 Environmental Stewardship Award
- Seven (7) Green Themes presentations hosted throughout 2014
- 2015 Goals:
  - Implementation of a Street Tree Initiative
  - Improve the Commission's web presence
  - Continued review of the greenspace plan, wetland use permits and Green Themes presentation

#### Land Preservation Advisory Board

- Meridian Township was the first community to publicly support and fund obtaining open land for public preservation
- Acquisition of 755 acres and 20 properties over the last 14 years
- Commencement of restoration of five (5) acres in the Northwest Land Preserve
- Monitoring of the large drainage restoration project at the end of Red Cedar Glen in cooperation with the Ingham County Drain Commissioner
- Worked with 100 Murphy Elementary School students to install native plants along the edge of the pond in the Historical Village
- Worked with 100 Haslett school children to plant 200 white pines on the David Foster Preserve
- Treatment of the invasive grass on Towner Road Wetland Preserve, the Hubbell Preserve, and the Lake Lansing North conservation easement
- Japanese knotweed control at the Northwest Land Preserve
- Maintenance of the deer enclosure in Lake Lansing North as a result of controlled burns
- One site visit for possible acquisition
- Thirteen (13) of the 20 preserves were opened for the deer management harvest season
- Prescribed ecological burns on Lake Lansing North and Davis Foster Preserve
- 2015 Goals:
  - Completion of land acquisitions currently under consideration
  - More community engagement to energize stewardship activities around the land preserves
  - Work towards obtaining grants and other environmental organization support
  - Federal grant to replant the Southwest Meridian Uplands
  - Complete signage bollard placement and stewardship plans at all preserves in the program
  - Continuation of the deer management program with Township Board and DNR approval
  - Continue site restoration projects at the southwest Meridian and Northwest Land Preserves
  - Implementation of the Davis Foster Preserve overlook
  - Continue to develop the Mary Helmbrecht Butterfly Garden in the Historical Village

- Move into a stage of intense management of existing preserves

#### Park Commission

- Continuation of work on the Central Park Master Plan to give the park identity as a destination in the heart of the Township
- Turf established at Newton Road for use as a practice field for youth sports
- Receipt of grant from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund for construction of an accessible loop pathway in Wonch Park
- Completion of the accessible loop pathway in Wonch Park connects with the existing pedestrian bicycle pathway system
- Van Atta Road bridge replacement resulted in the loss of the canoe launch livery on west side of Van Atta, but new launch established on the east side adjacent to the Harris Nature Center
- Repaving of the entrance to Legg Park
- Completion of three (3) Eagle Scout projects
- Approval of a new park millage in 2014 will bring improvements/repairs to existing parks
- Comprehensive plan for maintenance of existing parks
- Appreciation for the Park Commission's excellent volunteer base
- 2015 Goals:
  - Safety improvements to Nancy Moore and Hartrick Parks
  - Installation of covered benches at Hartrick Park
  - Replacement of playground equipment at Hillbrook Park
  - Several paving, parking and drive improvements throughout the park system
  - Amendments to the existing play structure at Orlando Park
  - Rework of the center island at the Harris Nature Center
  - Replace the pavilion at Wonch Park
  - Towner Road, Phase 1 (grading, scrub elimination, parking improvements, irrigation)
- Appreciation for the hard work performed by the Parks and Recreation staff
- Letter from the Liaison for Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation (LINC) regarding mini dog parks will be an agenda item at a future Park Commission meeting

#### Planning Commission:

- Recommended two (2) zoning amendments in 2014, subsequently approved by the Township Board
- Recommended two (2) rezonings in 2014, subsequently approved by the Township Board
- Approved 11 special use permits (SUP), did not approve (1) SUP
- Recommended approval of one (1) MUPUD
- Recommended revision of one (1) MUPUD
- Review of two (2) Section 61 Reviews
- Engaged in the ongoing review of the Urban Services Management Area (USMA)
- Near completion of the Master Plan Goals and Objectives Update
- Appreciation for recommendations and comments from various boards and commissions relative to the Master Plan Update
- Appreciation for the work of the Planning Department and its staff
- Appreciation to the Board for providing funds in 2015 to speed up the process of the Master Plan Update

#### Zoning Board of Appeals

- Reactive Board when applicants request variances from Township ordinances
- Seriousness of requests as a variance remains with the property forever
- Future request for the Township Board and the Planning Commission to look at backyard property easements to Lake Lansing

#### Board discussion:

- LINC suggestion relative to mini-dog parks throughout the community
- Appreciation for those who provide public service on the various Boards and Commissions
- Commencement of the implementation of the Michigan Avenue/Grand River Corridor Study which will bring economic activity to Meridian Township

- Michigan Avenue/Grand River Corridor improvement will require work by the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)
- Primary goal of the Land Preservation Advisory Board (LPAB) from its inception has been to preserve lands in their native state
- Use of the Communications Department for outreach to the public to facilitate education of stewardship, best practices and presentations by the Environmental Commission and the LPAB
- Providing minimal primitive pathways on LPAB property would enhance public enjoyment of the preserves for Township residents
- Inquiry to the various Boards and Commissions as to how the Township Board can assist them in better serving the community
- Prevailing theme from Board and Commission members regarding their positive interaction in working with staff members
- USMA is a tool and philosophy of the Township over the last 20 years and the plan needs to be implemented
- Goal of the Board to have the Communications Department receive grass roots rebranding and placemaking input
- Board member request to increase publicity of Green Theme presentations
- Board will be working closely with the various Boards and Commissions to accomplish its 2015 Goals and Objectives

[Supervisor LeGoff recessed the meeting at 7:26 P.M.]

[Supervisor LeGoff reconvened the meeting at 7:49 P.M.]

8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**Treasurer Brixie moved to approve the agenda. Seconded by Trustee Veenstra.**

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

9. CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor LeGoff reviewed the consent agenda.

**Trustee Veenstra moved to adopt the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Wilson, Supervisor LeGoff,  
Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

The adopted Consent Agenda items are as follows:

A. Communications

(1) Board Information (BI)

BI-1 Eckhart Dersch, Liaison for Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation, PO Box 40, Okemos; RE: Dog Park-A Fresh Look

BI-2 John P. Gardner, Senior Manager, External Affairs, Comcast, Heartland Region

BI-3 Matthew M. Hagerty, Myers & Myers, PLLC, 915 N. Michigan Avenue, Howell; RE: Notice of Appeal of Denial of Special Use Permit #14111-MF Okemos, LLC

(2) Staff Communications (SC)

SC-1 Jane Greenway, Parks & Lands Management Coordinator; RE: Thank you letter from the Haslett Food Bank for 500 pounds of venison

**Trustee Veenstra 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 Treasurer Brixie.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Wilson, Supervisor LeGoff,  
Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus  
NAYS: None  
Motion carried unanimously.

B. Minutes

**Trustee Veenstra moved to approve and ratify the minutes of the December 23, 2014 Special Meeting as submitted. Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Stykla, Veenstra, Wilson, Supervisor LeGoff,  
Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus  
NAYS: None  
Motion carried unanimously.

C. Bills

**Trustee Veenstra moved that the Township Board approve the Manager's Bills as follows:**

Common Cash	\$	780,321.49
Public Works	\$	162,498.74
Retainage		
CK 1080-Raica Excavating/concrete repair	4,727.63	
CK 1081-Mike & Son Asphalt/park impr.	3,355.00	
CK 1081-J Ranck/Wildwood LS upgrades	<u>4,386.75</u>	12,469.38
Total Checks	\$	955,289.61
Credit Card Transactions	\$	23,408.17
Total Purchases	\$	<u>978,697.78</u>
ACH Payments	\$	<u>918,700.69</u>

**Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Wilson, Supervisor LeGoff,  
Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus  
NAYS: None  
Motion carried unanimously.

[Bill list in Official Minute Book]

D. 2014 Order to Maintain Sidewalks, Special Assessment District (SAD) No. 15, **Resolution #4**  
(Set Public Hearing Date for February 3, 2015)

**Trustee Veenstra moved to approve the 2014 Order to Maintain Sidewalk Special Assessment District #15-Resolution#4, which files the proposed final special assessment roll with the Township Clerk and sets the date for a public hearing on February 3, 2015. Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Wilson, Supervisor LeGoff,  
Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus  
NAYS: None  
Motion carried unanimously.

10. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY (None)

11. HEARINGS (None)

12. ACTIONS ITEMS/ENDS

Supervisor LeGoff opened and closed Public Remarks.

- A. Rezoning #14070 (Township Board) former Central Fire Station, 2150 Clinton Street, from RB (Single Family-High Density) to C-2 (Commercial) – **Introduction**  
**Trustee Wilson moved [and read into the record] NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN hereby INTRODUCES FOR PUBLICATION AND SUBSEQUENT ADOPTION Ordinance No. \_\_\_\_\_, entitled “Ordinance Amending the Zoning District Map of Meridian Township Pursuant to Rezoning Petition #14070” to rezone approximately 0.48 acres located at 2150 Clinton St. from RB (Single Family, High Density) to C-2 (Commercial). BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the Charter Township of Meridian is directed to publish the Ordinance in the form in which it is introduced at least once prior to the next regular meeting of the Township Board.**

**Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.**

Board discussion:

- Rezoning request is consistent with commercial properties surrounding the subject site
- As the property owner, the Township has control over the sale of the property and development of the site
- MUPUD would prohibit some types of commercial redevelopment
- Rezoning will aid in the redevelopment of the downtown Okemos area
- Size of the site will preclude many of the concerns expressed for possible development of the subject property
- Rezoning the property to commercial will increase its selling price

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Wilson, Supervisor LeGoff,  
Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS (None)

14. PUBLIC REMARKS

Supervisor LeGoff opened and closed public remarks.

15. FINAL BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Trustee Scales announced that, as a result of a house fire, a gofundme page (Owen Family Fire Support at [www.gofundme.com](http://www.gofundme.com)) has been established by neighbors of the Nathan and Karen Owen Family on Bayonne in Haslett.

Trustee Veenstra announced the next scheduled meeting of the Township Board will be held Saturday, January 10, 2015 at 10:00 A.M. to discuss possible changes to Policy Governance.

Board discussion:

- Board recently adopted 162 objectives during a meeting in November
- Purpose of this informal meeting is to determine if the Board wishes to make any changes to the Policy Governance Manual
- Board member desire to compare the objectives with the Policy Governance Manual to see if the adopted objectives necessitate any amendments to the Policy Manual
- Board member belief the Policy Governance Manual was cross checked with the approved goals

**Trustee Scales moved to cancel the January 10, 2015 meeting. Seconded by Trustee Veenstra.**

Continued Board discussion:

- Main purpose of the meeting has been to develop a list of goals and a process for what is going to be accomplished in the coming year
- Whatever slight changes a Board member desires to make to the manual could be addressed during a regular Board meeting

- Preference to marry the goal setting and Policy Governance processes together for 2016

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Wilson, Supervisor LeGoff,  
Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus  
NAYS: None  
Motion carried unanimously.

Continued Board and staff discussion:

- Township review of the possible capture of gasoline price savings
- Newly selected Township Engineer and Public Works Director will receive a car allowance and the Township fleet will be reduced accordingly
- Development over the last two (2) years has been in the desired portion of the township and is consistent with the overall development plan
- Township Manager to review policy on recognition of retiring employees

16. ADJOURNMENT

Supervisor LeGoff adjourned the meeting at 8:20 P.M.

---

ELIZABETH LEGOFF  
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

---

BRETT DREYFUS  
TOWNSHIP CLERK

Sandra K. Otto, Secretary