

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
TOWNSHIP BOARD REGULAR MEETING - **APPROVED** -  
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198  
853-4000, Town Hall Room  
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2014 **6:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Supervisor LeGoff, Clerk Dreyfus, Treasurer Brixie, Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra  
(6:01 P.M.), Wilson  
ABSENT: None  
STAFF: Township Manager Frank Walsh, Police Chief David Hall, Fire Chief Fred Cowper,  
Fire Inspector Tavis Millerov

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

A. Introduction of Promoted Fire Department Team Members – Fire Captain Bill Richardson, Fire Lieutenant Rudy Gonzales, and Full-Time Firefighter Trevor Baker  
Fire Chief Cowper introduced newly promoted fire department team members Captain Bill Richardson, Lieutenant Rudy Gonzales, and full-time Firefighter Trevor Baker.

5. PUBLIC REMARKS

Supervisor LeGoff opened Public Remarks.

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, spoke to what he alleged was an injustice in the Township's enforcement of the forfeiture act. He requested the Board provide an avenue for redress if individuals are found innocent of the crime for which their property was seized.

Don Frank, 5277 Cornell Road, Haslett and President of the Haslett Board of Education, provided background on adoption of their transition plan to hold elections in even years which led to the unusual configuration of the length of terms for the Haslett school board members elected November 6<sup>th</sup>. He introduced the following school board members: Christine Coady who won reelection and will serve a six-year term, Karen East who was elected to a six-year term, Cami Wheeler and Dan Kohler who were both elected to four-year terms.

Leonard Provencher, 5824 Buena Parkway, Haslett, expressed disappointment with Board action to renew the Meridian Asset Resource Center (MARC) lease. He voiced concern with the Township's use of a third party for ambulance billing, one which he believed was costly and is not physically located within Meridian Township.

Treasurer Brixie clarified ambulance billing works with medical insurance codes and this highly specialized process is handled through Medical Management Services, whose owner lives in Meridian Township.

Supervisor LeGoff closed Public Remarks.

6. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

Manager Walsh reported on the following:

- Okemos Road Pathway Bridge design has been completed – bridge expected to be finished by April 1, 2015
- Final meeting of the fire station ad hoc committee held today

- Fire station process will be brought to the Board (and community) within budget and all features intact
- Boards and Commissions Appointments – on December 2<sup>nd</sup> and possibly December 9<sup>th</sup> agendas
- Completion of the Local Roads Projects
- Williamstown Township two-year Police Services Contract has been approved by Williamstown Township

Trustee Veenstra addressed changes in the frequency of the information compiled in a report provided by the departments.

#### 7. BOARD COMMENTS & REPORTS

Clerk Dreyfus reported his attendance, as the Board representative, at the last Economic Development Corporation (EDC) meeting where discussion ensued regarding policy changes (e.g., Grand River Corridor redevelopment) and the EDC's role in moving the process along. He noted Associate Planner Menser visited all public accessible businesses within Meridian Township over the past year. Clerk Dreyfus listed the 2014-2015 EDC goals. He attended the Friends of Historic Meridian's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration.

Trustee Scales also reported his attendance at the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the Friends of Historic Meridian. He expressed appreciation for the display of school art in the Town Hall Room. Trustee Scales announced there are three receptacles in the Municipal Building lobby for programs taking place: (1) Be a Santa to a Senior; (2) St. Luke Coat Bank and (3) Toys for Tots. He noted the Meridian Township's Farmers' Winter Market will be located in the Meridian Mall on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays of each month from December through April.

Trustee Styka reported HOMTV received seven (7) first place awards from the Philo Festival of Media Arts and a third place award from the National Association of Telecommunication Officers and Advisors (NATOA).

Trustee Veenstra reported on the untelevised special Board meeting held on Thursday, November 13<sup>th</sup> beginning at 10:00 A.M. He agreed with earlier public comment regarding the need to return the money paid pursuant to a settlement agreement under the forfeiture act in the event there is no conviction. Trustee Veenstra suggested the Township investigate in-house ambulance billing.

Trustee Wilson announced additional school art work will be displayed soon in the Municipal Building lobby. She introduced each art piece hanging in the Town Hall Room and the artist. Trustee Wilson noted the Community Resources Commission (CRC) has had many demands on its resources to help disadvantaged residents and contributions are essential to replenish its Needs Fund. She also reported her attendance at the Friends of Historic Meridian 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration.

Treasurer Brixie reported winter tax bills will be mailed December 1<sup>st</sup>. She offered an update on the Township resolution to preserve the Cornell Road oak tree where members of the Ingham County Services Committee gave a positive response to the Township's request and is working on specific language to meet county approval. At the last Capital Area Transportation Authority (CATA) meeting, Treasurer Brixie reported she was appointed to the Policy Committee. She corrected a comment made at the last Board meeting relative to the lane configuration on Grand River Avenue for the bus rapid transit system being considered, noting the BRT would have a combination of lane configurations and positions throughout the corridor.

Trustee Styka urged residents to contact Congressman Rogers relative to preventing the closing of the US mail distribution center in Lansing.

Trustee Veenstra requested the proposed resolution to oppose closing of the mail distribution center in Lansing previously provided by a representative from the postal workers union be placed on the next Township Board agenda.

#### 8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**Treasurer Brixie moved to approve the agenda amended as follows:**

- **Add Agenda Item #13B: Board of Water and Light Appointment Process**
- **Add Agenda Item #15A: Closed Session: Confidential Legal Opinion**

**Seconded by Trustee Styka.**

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.

A. Communications

**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 November 6, 2014 Regular Meeting as amended. Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, 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              | \$ 115,516.17        |
| Public Works             | \$ 275,030.29        |
| Total Checks             | \$ 390,546.46        |
| Credit Card Transactions | \$ 12,006.39         |
| Total Purchases          | <u>\$ 402,552.85</u> |

|              |                      |
|--------------|----------------------|
| ACH Payments | <u>\$ 264,445.46</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. Resolution to Open New Account

**Trustee Veenstra moved to adopt a resolution entitled "Authority to Open an Account" at Fifth Third Bank. 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

- Q. Could you tell us if televising meetings is something that is required under the Open Meetings Act?  
 A. I don't believe so. It has to be open; you have to notice it; it has to be in a public place. There is no requirement for it to be televised.

11. HEARINGS (None)

12. ACTION ITEMS

Supervisor LeGoff opened and closed Public Remarks.

A. 2012 International Fire Code – **Introduction**

**Trustee Veenstra moved [and read into the record] NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, INGHAM COUNTY, MICHIGAN, that the Township Board hereby INTRODUCES FOR PUBLICATION AND SUBSEQUENT ADOPTION Ordinance No. \_\_\_, entitled “Ordinance Amending the Code of the Charter Township of Meridian, Chapter 26, Article II, Sections 26-26, 26-27, and Adding Section 26-28, to Adopt and Incorporate by Reference the 2012 International Fire Code with Meridian Amendments.”**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Charter Township of Meridian is directed to publish the Ordinance once prior to the next regular meeting of the Township Board.**

**Seconded by Trustee Scales.**

Board and staff discussion:

- Maker of the motion's language does not include “including all amendments thereafter made” from Section 26-26
- Maker of the motion's language in Section 111.4 states (in part): “shall be liable for a fine of \$500.00.”
- Boilerplate legislation is provided and included in the front of each edition of the International Fire Code
- Language referenced by the maker to be excluded in Section 26-26 refers to Section 26-27 where Meridian Township specifics are inserted

**Treasurer Brixie moved to amend the motion by adopting language as written by staff. Seconded by Supervisor LeGoff.**

Continued Board and staff discussion:

- Board member concern with prospective adoption of language which does not yet exist
- Proposed language was written by the Township's legal counsel
- Request for legal counsel present at the meeting to clarify the language

**TOWNSHIP ATTORNEY COMMENT:** Your attorney is going to punt, because I was not involved in drafting that language. I would agree with Trustee Styka that we can iron out the differences. There may be a specific reason why that language is written the way it is, especially in light of the comments by staff that is saying there aren't going to be any amendments. Before I “willy nilly” said let's do this, let's do that or change the language, I'd like to discuss that with my partner who was involved in drafting it.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Wilson, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus  
 NAYS: Trustee Veenstra  
 Motion carried 6-1.

ROLL CALL VOTE ON THE MAIN YEAS: Trustees Scales, Styka, Wilson, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus  
 MOTTION: NAYS: Trustee Veenstra  
 Motion carried 6-1.

B. Resolutions of Intent to Participate in Regional CGAP (Competitive Grant Assistance Program)

**Treasurer Brixie moved [and read into the record] NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, adoption of this resolution by all six agencies will provide for the training and equipment needs of the region to better prepare and respond to active violence incidents;**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT THE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN hereby supports and directs the Fire and Police Departments to participate in the State of Michigan Department of Treasury Competitive Grant Assistance Program and the associated active violence training and equipment purchases. Seconded by Trustee Styka.**

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

**Trustee Wilson moved [and read into the record] NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, adoption of this resolution by all six agencies will enhance the training and formation of the Lansing Metro Command Team further enhancing training and safety in the region;**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT THE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN hereby supports and directs the Fire Department to participate in the State of Michigan Department of Treasury Competitive Grant Assistance Program and the associated Lansing Metro Command Team training and formation. Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.**

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

13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

Supervisor LeGoff opened Public Remarks.

Leonard Provencher, 5824 Buena Parkway, Haslett, believed scheduling Board meetings during working hours and no HOMTV coverage lacks transparency.

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, believed comments made by the Supervisor during previous meetings gave the impression a recording of the November 13<sup>th</sup> meeting would be available. He requested if an audio transcript of that meeting is available, it should be posted for the public. Mr. Bowlby believed quarterly reporting lacks transparency and is not timely. He expressed his continued support for making Meridian Township a solar ready community as an objective.

Trustee Wilson believed holding Board meetings at times other than Tuesday night provides an opportunity for different individuals to attend and does not lack transparency.

Supervisor LeGoff closed Public Remarks.

#### A. 2015 Goals and Objectives

Board and staff discussion:

- Board member preference to add “Making Meridian a solar ready community” to the list of objectives
- Suggestions by members of the public who attended the meeting are being incorporated into the Goals and Objectives document
- Board has nine (9) goals and 140 objectives
- Four (4) Board meetings have been scheduled to vet the Goals and Objectives which have been online for nearly a week
- List of 2015 Capital Project Funding will invest in Township facilities
- 10% additional goals and objectives were added to the list at the November 13<sup>th</sup> meeting
- Board consensus achieved on most of the goals and objectives
- State legislative endeavor to change funding of roads by increasing the fuel tax
- Caution that when the county receives more road funding from the state, one method to leverage the additional funds could be to increase match money and the Township would need to have funds available
- Concern with the number of staff hours needed to overhaul and dramatically change the Township website (estimated by the Township Manager at 15 hours per department for a total of approximately 180 staff hours)
- Concern with changing internal shared and external software at the same time
- Up to \$30,000 is a small investment for the website as it is the face of the Township
- Website as a tool used by prospective business owners and possible residents
- Website needs to be accessible by search engine
- Concern with creating a new website without ascertaining who we are and what we offer
- Website is an organic digital creation and a living document which can change
- Majority of the website money will be spent on technical changes and design features
- Content on the current website is valid and can be migrated over into the new look
- Lump sum merit pay increase of \$400 per team member
- Board changes increased the number of objectives to 150
- Preference to have money available to invest in our local road system if pending state legislation passes relative to an increase in fuel tax
- Importance of maintaining Township buildings and appreciation to staff for bringing this issue forward
- Assurance from staff the remaining repavings and concrete replacement on the 2015 Capital Project Fund list can wait another year

#### B. Board of Water and Light Appointment Process

Trustee Scales spoke to the need for a process to appoint a Township representative to the shared seat on the Board of Water and Light (BWL).

Board discussion:

- BWL meets twice per month (bi-monthly) on Tuesdays
- BWL’s committee of the whole also meets on Tuesdays
- BWL’s meeting schedule precludes any Township Board member from appointment
- Need for the appointee to have the skill set to ascertain if the investments in clean energy by the BWL are saving money
- During the August 19<sup>th</sup> BWL committee of the whole meeting, regional municipalities were invited to address the committee
- Appointee should live in the area served by BWL
- Request for members of the public to submit applications and/or be nominated to the BWL

- Board member understanding the Supervisor is the key representative for the Township in many functions
- Board member preference for the appointee to ask “probing” questions
- Meridian Township will have the first rotation in a shared seat with Lansing and Delhi Townships
- Appointed member will not have a vote on the Board
- Suggestion to update the Application for Public Service to add this position
- Board member preference for the appointee to provide a written report back to the Township Board after the meetings
- Appreciation to the Lansing voters who approved a change to the charter which allowed Meridian Township to share a seat at the BWL’s table

#### 14. PUBLIC REMARKS

Supervisor LeGoff opened Public Remarks.

Leonard Provencher, 5824 Buena Parkway, Haslett, voiced concern no performance parameters were set for the free rent provided to the Meridian Area Business Association (MABA) for use of the Meridian Asset Resource Center (MARC). He questioned the need for MABA when the Township has the EDC and the Downtown Development Authority (DDA). Mr. Provencher addressed passage of the Ingham County .5 pathway millage and was concerned how much of that money would be returned to Meridian Township. He expressed concern about the \$15 per hour cost for “volunteers” who work at the MARC.

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, voiced concern some of the goals are things which should be done as part of staff’s job. He believed approximately one-third of the goals could be removed. Mr. Bowlby stressed the importance of having a process in place on how to achieve the goals once approved. He also expressed some concerns about the \$15 per hour cost for “volunteers” who work at the MARC.

Township Manager Walsh clarified the two residents who volunteer at the MARC work 60 hours per person and receive approximately \$5.00 per hour in reimbursement for their time. He explained the goals and objectives is a document meant for the vast majority of Township residents who are not actively involved in Township proceedings. Manager Walsh explained that work plans for each department will be created once the goals and objectives are set.

Supervisor LeGoff closed Public Remarks.

#### 15. FINAL BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Trustee Wilson noted MARC will be presenting the Board with a report of its activities. She stated Park Commissioner Teri Banas recently won a seat on the Ingham County Board of Commissioners.

Treasurer Brixie announced MABA will have their holiday meeting on Friday, December 12<sup>th</sup> at Timber Ridge Golf Course at 7:15 A.M. She noted the organization focuses on promoting local businesses and having members promote each other’s businesses.

Trustee Scales reported that Asian Buffet has partnered with the Parkwood YMCA and will donate 10% of their gross from December 1<sup>st</sup> through December 4<sup>th</sup> towards redevelopment of the YMCA. He noted the proposed project was estimated at a cost of \$525,000 and all but \$80,000 has been raised. Trustee Scales stated the Parkwood YMCA will make its facilities available to house out-of-state workers in the event of another power emergency. He indicated the need to formalize this in the Township’s emergency management plan.

Trustee Veenstra addressed the issue of seizure relative to the forfeiture process. He believed there was no need to prioritize the 2015 Goals and Objectives as they are all items the staff should implement.

Trustee Styka spoke to the report from Peter Menser which noted eight (8) new business start-ups in Meridian Township in the month of October.

A. Closed Session

**Clerk Dreyfus moved to go into closed session for the purpose of discussing a confidential legal opinion. Seconded by Trustee Scales.**

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor LeGoff recessed the meeting at 8:26 P.M.

The Board adjourned to the Administrative Conference Room for a closed session.

**Treasurer Brixie moved to return to open session. Seconded by Trustee Styka.**

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor LeGoff reconvened the meeting at 8:48 P.M.

**Trustee Scales moved to deny the appeal from the Fraser Law Firm and authorized the Supervisor to send a letter conveying our position/decision. Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.**

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

16. ADJOURNMENT

Supervisor LeGoff adjourned the meeting at 8:49 P.M.

\_\_\_\_\_  
ELIZABETH LEGOFF  
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

\_\_\_\_\_  
BRETT DREYFUS  
TOWNSHIP CLERK

Sandra K. Otto, Secretary