



AGENDA
MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP
COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
April 7, 2021 6:00 PM

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
2. ROLL CALL
3. PUBLIC REMARKS
4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
 - A. February 3, 2021 Regular Meeting DRAFT Minutes
6. COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER REPORT
7. COMMISSION MEMBERS REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS
 - A. Chair's Report
 - B. Township Board Liaison's Report
 - C. Commissioner Reports
8. ACTION ITEMS
 - A. Communications Commission 2021 Goals
 - B. Letter of Support for Meridian Township Broadband Goal
9. DISCUSSION ITEMS
 - A. CAMTV Policies & Procedures Manual Revisions
 - B. Broadband Access in Meridian Township Work Group Updates
 - C. Communications Commission Rules & Procedures Revisions Work Group Updates
10. COMMUNICATIONS
 - A. Compliments/Complaints
11. REPORTS
 - A. Video Service Provider(s)
 - B. Programming
 - i. Program Totals and Video On-Demand Analytics
 - C. Website & Social Media
 - i. Website Analytics
 - ii. Social Media Analytics
 - D. Promotions/Publications
 - i. Winter/Spring 2021 Prime Meridian Magazine
 - E. Finance
 - F. HOMTV Internship/Alumni
 - i. Golden Tape Awards 2021 Virtual Ceremony Overview
12. PUBLIC REMARKS
13. ADJOURNMENT

All comments limited to 3 minutes, unless prior approval for additional time for good cause is obtained from the Commission Chair.

Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Meridian Township Communications Department; Communications Manager, Brandie Yates, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 or 517.853.4208 - Ten Day Notice is Required.
Meeting Location: 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 Administrative Conference Room



CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING **DRAFT** MINUTES
Virtual via Zoom Conferencing
Wednesday, February 3, 2021 6:00 pm

PRESENT: Chair, Tunga Kiyak; Vice Chair, Walter Benenson; Commissioner, Mike Nevells;
Commissioner, Leslie Charles; Commissioner, Brian Seipel; Alternate
Commissioner, Riti Adhi

ABSENT: N/A

STAFF: Brandie Yates, Communications Manager

TOWNSHIP: Deborah Guthrie, Township Board Liaison and Patricia Herring Jackson,
Township Trustee

COUNSEL: N/A

COMCAST: John Gardner, Comcast Regional Director, External Affairs; and Yvette Collins,
AT&T

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Kiyak called the meeting to order at **6:02 pm**.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Vice Chair Benenson moved **TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS SUBMITTED**. Seconded by
Commissioner Charles.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice Chair Benenson moved **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER
2, 2020 REGULAR MEETING**. Seconded by Chair Kiyak

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

6. COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER REPORT

Updates on Communications Goals for 2021 and the Township Goals, which include the
Communications Manager assigned to the Township Brand Sign Committee to work on
Township wayfinding signs; entrance signs to the community, building & campus signs and
park/trail signs.

The Township website is getting a refresh. The Township Board assigned a committee led
by the Communications Manager. The refresh is a 6 month process. It is recommended that
websites should be updated every few years. Design elements will change with user
functionality and ADA compliance as the priorities. Currently the Communications Manager
is working with departments to review the content for their department pages.

The Communications Department is working on re-evaluating the equipment in the noise
room and the control room.

The Census is still collecting data through April.

7. TOWNSHIP BOARD LIAISON

Small Business Grant checks signed for approximately 105 businesses and approximately \$500,000. A special study session meeting was added to discuss recreational marihuana. The Village of Okemos project is moving forward. Buildings have come down ahead of schedule, the developer will submit new plans and Consumer Energy lines are planned to be buried. A new restaurant, Anna’s House had its grand opening. Buddy’s Pizza Detroit is interested in the Burger King property to level the old building and build new. A family bought the property where the Walnut Hills Club is located. They are planned to tear down the club and build seven homes for the family members. Haslett Village Square plans have been approved and still moving forward. The Marathon Gas Station has been approved for Brownfield money and will soon see development moving forward. The Lake Lansing Trail Connector agreements have been signed and clean-up is being done along the easements. The Township Board is assessing the possibility of having broadband throughout the community, a committee has been assigned to work with the Communications Commission for a recommendation and plan to implement.

COMMISSION REPORT

Commissioner Seipel attended the Virtual Township Volunteer Appreciation event. The Township Annual Report was shared. Township was acknowledged for Okemos being the #6 Best Places to Live in America, #1 for Best Places to Live in Michigan, #1 for Best Small Town to Raise a Family in Michigan and #6 for Best Suburbs to Live in America. Haslett was selected as the #10 Best Places to Live in Michigan and #10 Best Suburbs to Live in Michigan and previously Haslett and Okemos Public Schools received high rankings as the Best Schools in Michigan.

8. ACTION ITEMS

N/A

9. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Communications Commission Draft 2021 Goals

Determine how the Communications Commission can assist the Communications Dept. with the Township goals. The Communications Manager drafted a few goals; to assist with the Township’s Broadband goal, revisit a Communications Needs Assessment Survey, and assisting with outreaching and finding additional revenue sources (grants, etc.)

The Commission Chair stated that the goals make sense and all should be on the Commission’s radar for the year. The Chair’s recommendation is to move the draft goals to an action item for the April meeting. Communications Manager will send a follow up before the April meeting to check on any additional goals to add.

B. Broadband Access in Meridian Township

Broadband Access is a Township Board goal with an appointed committee to work with the Communications Commission. There has been no Township Board discussion yet, but some members have looked into what other communities have done. The Township Clerk has reached out to the organization PROTEC to ask for insight about other

municipalities and findings will be shared with the work committee. The Township Clerk and Trustee Jackson have been assigned to the work committee.

A proposal was made to identify commissioners interested in working with the Township Board and committee on the Broadband goal. To put some goals to paper and begin research. The Township Board is looking for Broadband across the Township with no spots left without access. Commission Chair Kiyak volunteered himself and asked for the support of one other commissioner.

There are many organizations and businesses trying to help community members gain internet access during COVID because of virtual school and parents working from home. For instance, the Capital Area District Libraries is offering checkouts of Chromebooks and Hot spots. There is an opportunity to partner with these organizations and community groups.

Commissioner Nevells works with the Bikes to Books program and would volunteer to be the liaison to connect the group. Clerk Guthrie is on the Friends of the Okemos Library Board and has mentioned the Broadband goal of the Township.

Chair Kiyak mentioned that in order to make progress the working group would need to meet more frequently than just during regular Commission meetings. A question was asked whether PROTEC will provide information about barriers & legalities.

AT&T representative spoke about State & Federal programs available and funding to assist with broadband in communities. There are programs and plans already out there and she can provide any information requested. The Commission stated that they would appreciate the information.

The main goal is to address the gaps within the Township that the providers don't currently cover. There are other staff members on the committee; it isn't just for the Communications Commission to figure out. Commissioner Seipel said he would assist Chair Kiyak with goals and recommendations for the Township Board.

C. Communications Commission Rules & Procedures Revisions Update

Need to focus on what needs to be changed. Highlighted areas recommended to be updated or language changes. Items need to be reformed. Commissioners Nevells and Charles are working on a draft to present at the next meeting and hope to have a better product in the end. The next step after changes are presented and agreed upon will be to take to the Township Board for final approval.

The language is still about managing cable franchise agreements, etc. The revisions should reflect being a Communications Commission and not just Cable. Should include marketing, communications, etc. Also, need to meet the goal of the Township Board. What does the Board expect from the Commission?

10. COMMUNICATIONS

An ongoing complaint about not having access to Internet service at a home within the Township. Staff had assisted with helping resident find alternative company to provide access. Resident has stated that other companies do not offer services either. Multiple options have been provided. A thank you was given to AT&T and Comcast providers for their fast responses and follow-up.

Resident is currently using a hot spot for service. Comcast stated that they would love to provide service to everyone, however there are costs associated with making an extension to an individual home, especially if there aren't other houses or businesses in the same area.

11. REPORTS

A. Video Service Provider(s)

AT&T subscriber numbers (u-verse) have been dropping with new OTT services being provided. Send any complaint questions to Yvette Collins. AT&T offers Access program for low income families. Must be new subscriber

Comcast Essentials program has extended two month free offer for new internet essentials customers through June 2021. Will also waive past due bill requirement. Speeds have doubled for the program, recognizing that families have multiple kids and parents working from home all needing internet access. One qualification that hasn't changed is that you cannot have been a Comcast customer within the last 90 days.

Both providers offer solutions for existing customers having difficulties paying their bill. Must call company and ask for assistance.

B. Programming

C. Website & Social Media

D. Promotions/Publications

E. Finance

A PEG and Franchise Revenue update was provided. Revenues are down about \$22,000 from 2019 to 2020 through 3rd quarter. A decrease of approximately 4%.

F. HOMTV Internship/Alumni

- i. 10 new interns for the new semester. Internship program has been reconfigured to evolve with current times and technology
- ii. Save the Date – Intern Appreciation Night & GTA – different this year, will be held virtually with mock awards – Golden HOMies Awards. Testimonials from Alumni and a LIVE speaker.

12. PUBLIC REMARKS

N/A

13. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Kiyak moved **TO ADJOURN THE MEETING**. Seconded by Commissioner Charles.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously

Chair Kiyak adjourned the meeting at 7:24 pm.



Communications
Commission

Action Items



To: Communications Commission
From: Brandie Yates, Communications Manager
Date: March 23, 2021
Re: Communications Commission 2021 Goals

At the February 3, 2021 Communications Commission meeting, staff requested the Communications Commission discuss and consider adopting the suggested goals listed below for the Commission to pursue in 2021.

These goals also support the Communications Department's 2021 goals.

- Assist the Township Board and staff with developing a comprehensive plan to facilitate access to affordable Broadband across the entire Township as stated in Goal F. of the Township Board's 2021 Goal Action Plan.
- Revisit an external Communication Needs Assessment to survey and analyze if the television programming, marketing and communications efforts from the Department is meeting the needs of Township residents.
- Assist with outreach efforts and pursuing additional revenue sources to support the functions of the Communications Department including grants and fundraising efforts.

Staff is requesting the Commission **MOVE TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED 2021 COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSIONS GOALS AS LISTED ABOVE.**



8.B

To: Communications Commission
From: Brandie Yates, Communications Manager
Date: April 2, 2021
Re: Letter of Support for Meridian Township Broadband Goal

Developing a comprehensive plan to facilitate access to affordable Broadband across the entire Township is Goal F. of the Meridian Township Board's 2021 Goal Action Plan.

The Communications Commission has supported the idea of Township-wide broadband for years. The COVID-19 pandemic has shed light on connectivity issues and made broadband a Township Board priority to facilitate access.

Digital equity for all community members continues to be a priority of the Commission, representing the entire community as part of the responsibilities and authority to;

Evaluate, research and advise the Township Board in the implementation, and expansion of, broadband and Internet connectivity in Meridian Township.

Staff is requesting the Commission **MOVE TO APPROVE THE DRAFT LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR THE MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP BROADBAND GOAL TO BE SENT TO THE MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP BOARD.**



Meridian Township
5151 Marsh Road
Okemos, MI 48864

P 517.853.4000
F 517.853.4096

Township Board:

Ronald J. Styka
Township Supervisor

Deborah Guthrie
Township Clerk

Phil Deschaine
Township Treasurer

Patricia Herring Jackson
Township Trustee

Dan Opsommer
Township Trustee

Kathy Ann Sundland
Township Trustee

Courtney Wisinski
Township Trustee

Frank L. Walsh
Township Manager

April 5, 2021

Subject: Letter of Support for Meridian Township Broadband

Township Board Members,

We are writing in support of Meridian Township's 2021 Goal F. proposed by Trustee Patricia Herring Jackson and adopted unanimously by the Board;

F. Develop a comprehensive plan to facilitate access to affordable Broadband across the entire Township.

Modern life is dependent on fast, reliable and affordable internet service; the pandemic further exposed internet costs, lack of service and latencies in Meridian Township. While the Communications Commission has supported the idea of Township-wide broadband for years, we recognize the pandemic has shed light on connectivity issues and made broadband a board priority to facilitate access.

As Communications Commissioners, we expect digital equity for all community members. We represent the entire community as part of our responsibilities and authority to;

Evaluate, research and advise the Township Board in the implementation, and expansion of, broadband and Internet connectivity in Meridian Township.

The Meridian Township Communications Commission believes that affordable, high-speed broadband services are essential to support the needs of our residents, businesses and community anchor organizations throughout the community. The Commission also has historically been in favor of removing any statutory barriers to pursue supporting expanded broadband services, directly or indirectly.

Specific challenges include lack of access in rural areas of Meridian Township that do not fall under the definition of rural by the federal government in regards to grant applications, lack of speeds, high cost and signal loss. We have heard several complaints from community members with lack of connectivity, lack of competition and access. With children learning virtually from home and adults working from home, access has only become more difficult with online education or work from home. Have you had problems communicating with family members and attending meetings via video platforms during the pandemic? Would you/your family like to be able to download entertainment?

Without quality internet services, we are not keeping up with the world around us. All over the United States, we have begun to experience the journey to greater innovation, economic development and improved social interaction on the platform of all fiber networks.

We are now at a remarkable tipping point, where access to power has been replaced by access to bandwidth, the infrastructure of the 21st Century knowledge economy. We support the Township Board funding a survey and seeking proposals that will improve our life and well-being. Communicating online is crucial for our community.

We are highly in support of the Meridian Township Broadband initiative.

Respectfully,

Meridian Township Communications Commission



Communications
Commission

Discussion Items



To: Communications Commission
From: Samantha Diehl, Multimedia Production & Operations Specialist
Date: March 23, 2021
Re: CAMTV Operating Policies & Procedures Manual Revisions

One of the Communications Department's 2021 Goals is to re-evaluate the CAMTV Community Access Channel and work to strengthen programming and participation of community producers and organizations. As part of this endeavor, staff is looking to revise the CAMTV Operating Policies & Procedures Manual, which has not been updated since April 18, 2012.

Major areas within the policies that are outdated include, but not limited to:

- Social media and Regional Television Coordinator
 - There is no longer a CAMTV Video on Demand website or Twitter account.
 - Former Communications Director is still listed
- Technical Requirements
- Program Preparation & Scheduling
 - All files from producers are received digitally instead of in a DVD format.
- Programming Content Requirements

Staff also wishes to integrate Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) language into the CAMTV Operating Policies & Procedures, to coincide with recent changes to the HOMTV Operating Policies and the DEI efforts within Meridian Township.

Once the revised CAMTV Operating Policies & Procedures have been approved, staff requests the Communications Commission review content from current CAMTV producers to assess if programming submitted still meets requirements and do not violate any of the new policies.

Staff is asking the Communications Commission to review and discuss additional suggested revisions to the current CAMTV Operating Policies & Procedures Manual (Attachment A).



CAMTV Policies and Procedures

Originally approved by the Cable Commission on August 4, 2010

Approved by the Township Board on August 17, 2010

Revised and approved by the Cable Communications Commission on February 1, 2012

Revised and approved by the Cable Communications Commission on April 18, 2012

Introduction by the Communications Director

Out of the results of The Michigan Uniform Franchise Agreement; Public Act 480, local municipalities are beginning to provide great opportunities for the region.

When Public Act 480 was enacted on January 1 2007, Comcast subsequently closed public access studios across the state because housing a public access studio on the part of the video service provider was no longer a requirement of the act. In fact, there are also no requirements for video service providers to schedule and play programming on public access channels. Comcast, however, continues to do so as a service to their subscribers across the state. However, at any time, Comcast could choose not to provide this service.

As a result of this act and looking into the future, Meridian Township saw a grant opportunity which could pay for the costs to have the technical capability to play back programming on the public access channels for the Lansing region (Comcast Channel 30 in Meridian Township and East Lansing areas, and Comcast Channel 16 in the Lansing viewing area). Currently, because of the monies awarded to Meridian Township through the Centers for Regional Excellence program, that technical capability is in place, and housed at the Meridian Township government offices. If Comcast were to choose to discontinue providing playback services on the public access channels across the region, Meridian Township would be able to pick up the service. Starting July 7, 2010, this technical capability also allows Meridian Township to play programming on the AT&T U-verse system across 17 communities.

On top of this effort, the Meridian Township Communications Department is coordinating efforts with area Non-profit organizations and qualified residents to provide programming about the region and for the region. Meridian Township is taking the lead in this programming effort because of their long standing HOMTV programming tradition of excellence. The Meridian Township facilities and staff are not sufficient to house additional production capabilities and do not intend and has never intended to provide a facility for the general public to produce programming.

In support of these efforts, The City of Lansing is planning to build a public access facility where local producers will have the ability to create programming. Not only will they be able to produce programs, but they will be able to attend workshops to further advance their production skills, make use of studio space, and have access to equipment to create programs for channel 30 and channel 16.

Another result of Public Act 480 was also that it disenfranchised the general public from having access to equipment and facility's for the creation of programs. According to local producers, this is one of the main reasons some access producers have not been able to provide programming to the channel. Thanks to the efforts by the City of Lansing to build a regional community media center, users will be able to have those resources, and once again, supplying programming to the channel.

It is the intent of CAMTV, under the policies and procedures that are set in place, to provide programming to a channel that is under utilized and without regional focus. The

Meridian Charter Township government access channel, HOMTV will continue creating informational programs with a township focus while taking the lead in working with municipalities and organizations to provide regionally focused programs for CAMTV. It is the mission of CAMTV to form a Consortium that supports programming supplied by 'residents' and organizations from the region to provide subscribers of the Lansing regional COMCAST and AT&T U-verse systems greater access to information stretching across communities.

I would like to acknowledge the following for making the financial capabilities of broadcasting programs on the access channel possible:

Financial Contributors: Funding for the purchase of equipment to playback programs on the channel was made possible through a 2008 CRE (Centers for Regional Excellence) grant of up to \$25,000. Funds were made available through MSHDA (Michigan State Housing Development Authority).

Centers for Regional Excellence

Maxine Berman
Director of Special Projects
Office of the Governor
(313)456-0025 P
bermanm@michigan.gov
219 S. Main St., Suite 300
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(313)456-0025
www.michigan.gov/cre

Equipment Donation: PEG Central software, equipment, and training donated by Leightronix.

Leightronix, INC.

Jeff Possanza
Director of Marketing
(800) 243-5589, ext. 108
jpossanza@leightronix.com
www.leightronix.com

Meridian Charter Township Board: Leading the way for sustainability of the channel by approving in 2010 that the cable division be allowed to allocate 2% of 3.36% PEG funds received through the AT&T franchise agreement to be used for CAMTV purposes.

CAMTV Purpose: Provide programming relevant to the region and its local communities with the most technically sound playback operating system and programming at the lowest reasonable cost.

CAMTV Vision: Capital Area Media Television will be the regional television source for Non-profit and municipal information.

CAMTV Mission: Capital Area Media Television will form a Consortium that supports programming supplied by residents and organizations across the Lansing region, providing greater access to relevant information stretching across communities.

CAMTV Goal: Collaborate resources to create sustainability of the channel, to maximize services and technology, to promote efficiency and sustainability, and to save dollars by pooling resources.

Video Service Providers:

- **Comcast Channel 30:** East Lansing, Meridian Charter Township
- **AT&T U-Verse Channel 99:** Alaiedon Township, Bath Township, DeWitt Township, Delhi Township, Delta Township, East Lansing, Jackson, Lansing, Lansing Township, Leoni Township, Liberty Township, Rives Township, Sandstone Township, Summit Township, Tompkins Township, Watertown Township, and Williamstown Township.

Video On Demand: Beginning June 23, 2010 camtv.pegcentral.com

Social Media:

- **Twitter:** www.twitter.com/CAMtv30and99
- **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/CAMtvCapitalAreaMedia
- **Website:** Under development.

Playback Operations/Office Location:

Meridian Township Municipal Building
5151 Marsh Road
Okemos, MI 48864

Regional Television Coordinator:

Deborah Guthrie
Meridian Charter Township Communications Director
517-853-4380
guthrie@meridian.mi.us
5151 Marsh Road
Okemos, MI 48864

Program Playback Requests and Submissions:

Meridian Charter Township has the technical capability of sending CAMTV on Comcast across the region. In order for CAMTV to be seen in your municipality, your government which holds a franchise agreement contract with Comcast, must submit a letter to Meridian Charter Township agreeing that CAMTV can play back programs supplied by residents in their community and that their community receive the CAMTV channel in said municipality.

Residents of Delhi Township, Delta Township, City of Dewitt, Dewitt Township, Eaton Rapids, Oneida Township, City of Lansing, Lansing Township, and Watertown Township need to continue sending programming to Comcast until such time as their municipality signs a letter of agreement with Meridian Charter Township.

Residents meeting the resident qualification as defined in the CAMTV Policies and Procedures can submit programming for playback on the CAMTV channel.

Subscribers of AT&T U-verse automatically receive the CAMTV channel because no such letter of agreement is required. In order to submit programming for play back, you must be a qualified resident as defined in the CAMTV Policies and Procedures.

For more information, contact the Communications Director.

Resident Qualification

It is the purpose of Capital Area Media Television (CAMTV) and its municipal partners to provide programming regional in scope and provide its local communities with the most technically sound playback operating system and programming at the lowest reasonable cost. In order to financially operate a Capital Area Media Channel, any person and/or entity wishing to supply programming to air on the channel must first be a qualified resident in Meridian Charter Township as defined below:

- Reside within Meridian Charter Township;
- Owns property or a business within Meridian Charter Township;
- Is employed by a business within Meridian Charter Township;
- And/or those affiliated with an organization within Meridian Charter Township who is sponsored by that organization.

Proof of eligibility, such as a driver's license or utility bill may be required upon request. In the case of sponsorship, proof of sponsoring organization's address may be required upon request.

To air programming on the channel, the following criteria must be met:

1. You must sign and complete all CAMTV forms;
2. All programs submitted must be accompanied by all signed CAMTV forms;
3. A \$50.00 annual fee must be paid prior to programming being aired;
4. Programming must meet minimum standards as described under the Programming Content Requirements section and Compliance/Waiver form;

The following payment requirements must be met:

1. Start Up Costs: All producers agree to contribute funds to finance start up costs of the Capital Area Regional channel. Each resident shall submit, upon submittal of a program or program series, a \$50 annual fee;
2. This annual fee contribution is non-refundable.

Payment is to be made payable to:

Meridian Charter Township - Communications Department

Payment, along with forms and DVD is to be sent to:

Meridian Charter Township

5151 Marsh Road

Okemos, MI 48864

Programming Content Requirements

Please read carefully the Programming Content Requirements including all terms and conditions. Thoroughly fill out the Application for Playback Form, before signing and submitting your request for playback.

The Cable Communications Commission oversees and assures that the content requirements, waiver and compliance agreement, and contractual obligations have been met in order for programming to air on the channel.

The following programming criteria must be met:

Programming content **must not include** the following:

1. Commercial time or Commercial Content- No commercial content is allowed. Commercial content includes, but is not limited to product placement, solicitation, advertising, bartering or promotion of commercial advertisement and service descriptions provided in exchange for value of any kind or nature. Commercial content also includes promotion of any individual business, partnership or corporation by direct or indirect reference or testimonial for the purpose of commercial exploitation
2. Political Campaigns or content that is political campaigning in nature
3. Obscenity, indecency, slander, libel, defamation as defined:
 - Obscenity- A cable program is obscene if a) the average person, applying contemporary community standards for the cable medium, would find the material, taken as a whole, appeals to prurient (sexual) interest; b) the work depicts or describes, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct specifically defined by applicable state law; and c) the work, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value.
 - Indecency- The FCC describes indecency as "any program that describes or depicts sexual or excretory activities or organs in a patently offensive manner as measured by contemporary community standards for the cable medium."
 - Slander- The speaking of false and malicious words concerning another person whereby injury results to his reputation.
 - Libel- A false and unprivileged publication in print, writing, pictures or signs of defamatory material.
 - Defamation- The unprivileged publication of false statements which result in injury to another (injure reputation, diminish the esteem, respect, goodwill or confidence, or to excite adverse, derogatory or unpleasant feelings or opinions against another).
 - Adult Language- a program that includes profanity, vulgarity, cursing, or is otherwise inappropriate.
 - Violence- a program that includes actual or depicted acts of violence or physical abuse.

- Nudity- a program that includes the showing of the human male or female genitals, pubic area or buttocks with less than a fully opaque covering, or the showing of the female breast with less than a fully opaque covering, of any portion thereof below the top of the nipple, or the depiction of covered male genitals in a discernibly turgid state.
- Sexual Content- a program that includes actual depicted, or descriptions of sexual conduct or activity.

Programming must contain the following technical elements:

All material submitted for playback must adhere to the content requirements and will be screened for technical integrity meeting the following:

Technical Requirements:

Programs produced must be preceded by at least 2 seconds of black and submitted on finalized DVD-R/+R media. CAMTV accepts no more than 2 hours of programming per single layer DVD; multiple programs per disc are acceptable as long as they are separate titles and so noted on the face of the disc in permanent ink. Playback may be delayed or denied to submitted programs that have poor technical quality, including but not restricted to:

- Excessive signal dropout, extremely low or distorted audio, audio sync error, or media damage.
- Media that is incompatible with CAMTV playback equipment will not be played.
- Programs that do not meet CAMTV technical requirements may result in the producer receiving an advisory letter, and repeated problem(s) may result in program cancellation.
- All programs should contain the following:

Program Preparation & Scheduling

Preparation:

- Program DVD must be labeled using permanent ink or adhesive label(s) with program title, producer name and total running time. “Half-hour” programs must run no longer than 26:00 minutes. “Hour” programs must run no longer than 56:00 minutes.
- Programs that do not meet these times are not permitted without the expressed approval of the Communications Director.
- Program times are from the start of the program until the end of the program. Running time does not include; slate, bars, or countdown.

Playback Scheduling:

- All programs submitted to the Meridian Charter Township Communications Department offices must be by the program producer, who must also be a ‘resident’ of Meridian Charter Township as defined under the Resident qualification section on page 5.
- A completed Application for Playback Form, and Compliance/Waiver Form must accompany each program submitted, and should be submitted during business hours; or mailed to 5151 Marsh, Rd, Okemos, MI. 48864, two weeks in advance of the requested playback date.

- Approved and pre-scheduled *series programs* are to be submitted to CAMTV *at least two business weeks before the scheduled playback date*. New program series and programs submitted for playback will be considered on a first come, first served basis. Under most circumstances, programs that are time sensitive may be prioritized by CAMTV.
- CAMTV will, to the best of its ability, provide channel time on a first-come, first-served basis, subject to the policies and guidelines herein. CAMTV will schedule programs within the parameters of overall program composition and flow, taking into consideration audience building and the representative diversity of programming on the channel.
- Determination of the program schedule is at the discretion of CAMTV staff and the Cable Communications Commission.
- CAMTV will also exercise scheduling discretion to ensure access for new channel users, single programs, series of limited duration, and special events.
- Single and Series programs will be played up to four times per episode after which time it may be removed without notification, and the timeslot will be lost.
- It is the producer's responsibility to keep the rotation current.
- CAMTV reserves the right to remove any program after one airing.
- No timeslot is ever permanently assigned to a producer. All timeslots are subject to change and CAMTV staff may temporarily remove a program from its scheduled timeslot in order to play another program that is time or date sensitive.
- All programs submitted for playback must have been produced within the past three months or have dated relevancy.
- All productions submitted to CAMTV should contain the following credit(s) if applicable:

Sponsorship/Underwriting Policy

Sponsorship and Underwriting recognition may be given to businesses or other organizations that have contributed goods, services or funding supporting program production. Individual credits for such contributions are limited to fifteen seconds. Total recognition for such is limited to sixty seconds. Recognition may include an acknowledgment of the contribution made. Recognition may not contain any advertising information. The following guidelines apply to recognition for such:

- Recognition must appear at either the beginning or end of the program;
- Recognition may be aural, visual or both;
- Recognition may include a logo;
- Recognition may include a name, address, phone number, web address, and email;
- Recognition may include a phrase describing the nature of the contribution;
- Recognition may include a phrase describing the nature of the business or organization;
- Recognition may not contain any qualitative or promotional information;
- Recognition may not contain a call to action.

Program Credits for Contribution of Goods & Services

Programs may contain credit for individuals, businesses or other organizations that have contributed goods or services used in the program production. Individual credits for such contributions are limited to *text only* during a program's *final credits*. Individual credits

may appear on-screen for a maximum of fifteen seconds; total credits for all contributions are limited to sixty seconds. Credits may include text acknowledgment of the contribution made. Credits may not contain any advertising information. The following guidelines apply to all credits for contributors:

- Credit must appear at the end of a program;
- Credit may be textual only;
- Credit may not include a logo or voice-over;
- Credit may include a business or organization name, address, and phone number;
- Credit may include a phrase describing the nature of the contribution;
- Credit may not contain any qualitative or promotional information.

Phone Numbers, Website Addresses and Other Contact Information

Commercial phone numbers and website addresses cannot be shown for more than 30 seconds during any 30-minute segment of a program. This restriction does not apply to studio telephone numbers displayed for the sole purpose of facilitating non-commercial live call-in programs.

Use of copyright

Producers are responsible for securing authorization for the use of any copyrighted content they wish to incorporate in their programs, and proof of such authorization may be required by CAMTV. They must also secure signed talent releases for on-air talent when necessary.

Foreign language programs

Foreign language programs must be accompanied by a written or audio English transcript/translation at the time of submission for playback.

Faith Based programs

Faith based programs submitted must be from facilities located within the municipality who has a signed contractual agreement with Meridian Charter Township to receive the channel.

Political Debate programs

All debates airing on the CAMTV channel shall fall under the HOMTV Meridian Charter Township Communications Department operating guidelines and be produced by Meridian Charter Township Communications Department. HOMTV Operating Policies:

III. The Communications Director shall ensure that all programming featuring registered candidates be fairly balanced with programming featuring their opponents. In cases where balance is not possible due to the lack of participation of one or more candidates, the participating candidates will receive balanced coverage in comparison to the entire field of participating candidates.

IV. Candidates for elected office shall not be included in HOMTV programming during the time period ninety days before an election, with the exception of Township meeting coverage, special election coverage and coverage of incumbents performing official duties which warrant cablecasting. The Communications Director shall decide if equal time for opposing candidates is necessary to balance the coverage of incumbent candidate's performance of official duties.

Sale of programs

If any CAMTV equipment and/or facilities are used to produce any program, that program shall not be reproduced or sold for any commercial purposes.

Sale of Time Slots

Time on the CAMTV channel is available free of charge. Channel users may not require compensation from individuals in exchange for appearing on a public access channel. Furthermore, channel time may not be bartered or sold.

Origin of Programming

CAMTV accepts programming from residents only.

Limits of Liability

CAMTV is not liable for any mistakes, omissions or interruptions in the cablecast and any other means of distribution of programs. CAMTV is also not liable if the program or material submitted is damaged, lost or stolen while in its custody except in the case of gross negligence on the part of CAMTV resulting in damage or loss of submitted media. In cases of gross negligence on the part of CAMTV, liability is limited to the cost of replacing media submitted for cablecast. CAMTV strongly suggests not submitting edit masters.

Purpose and Intent

Any person or entity that wishes to use the Capital Area Media television channel managed by the Communications Department of Meridian Charter Township, under contract with Meridian Charter Township for Capital Area Media Channel shall first provide to the staff and Cable Communications Commission of CAMTV a taped copy of any such programming so that said programming may be reviewed for compliance with the terms, conditions and spirit of this Section.

The policies of this Section are designed to provide programmers and viewers with all the rights and protections afforded by the United States Constitution and to be consistent with the obligations imposed on franchising authorities and their agents by both State and Federal law. The terms, conditions and spirit of this Section, as well as any restriction upon programming imposed under this Section, shall at times be viewpoint, opinion and idea neutral. Any restriction on programming imposed by this Section shall be tailored as narrowly as possible so as to limit the effects on a person or entity's freedom of speech or freedom of expression.

Further, it shall be the intent of this Section to secure programming that the local viewing community considers valuable and to limit and restrict access by children and young adults to programming that is considered obscene, patently offensive, indecent or adult in content by the viewing community.

The Communications Director may impose, at his/her discretion, sanctions and penalties for failure to comply with CAMTV policies.

CAMTV reserves the right to refuse playback requests to any person who violates any of our stated policies. Individuals who wish to appeal a decision made by CAMTV may do so in writing. The Cable Communications Commission will attempt to respond within 60 days.

Programming Compliance/Waiver Form

CAMTV (Capital Area Media Television) and the Communications Department of Meridian Charter Township require all members sign this form once it is read and understood.

I have read and understood the CAMTV content requirements, resident qualifications, and agreement, and am thoroughly familiar, and agree to abide by them.

I assume full responsibility for the content of all program material produced, created or included, and ensure that such program materials will not violate the rights of any third party.

I agree to indemnify and hold harmless the participating municipalities, CAMTV, and their agents, employees and representatives from any and all liability and injury (including reasonable attorneys' fees and costs incurred in defending claims) arising from, or in connection with: claims for failure to comply with any applicable laws, rules regulations or other requirements of local, state or federal authorities; claims of libel, slander, invasion of privacy, or the infringement of common law or statutory copyright; claims for unauthorized use of any trademark, trade name or service mark; for breach of contractual or other obligations owing to third parties by the producer including union residuals or other payment for any purpose whatsoever, and claim, in law or equity, which may arise or result from this program or the producer's utilization of the Communications Department of Meridian Charter Township and CAMTV services, equipment, facilities and cable access channels. I understand that I may be criminally or civilly liable for producing or presenting such material for transmission.

I will not represent to others that I am an employee, representative or agent of the Communications Department of Meridian Charter Township, CAMTV or its affiliates; nor will I make such representations on behalf of any other person involved with my production.

I agree that use of facilities and equipment is not for public use and is for use only by the Communications Department of Meridian Charter Township employees.

I understand that false or misleading statements or omissions made in this application are grounds for forfeiture of the privilege to submit programming to CAMTV and I will hold the Communications Department of Meridian Charter Township and its affiliates harmless and indemnify such against any loss or claim which results from any false or misleading statements or omissions.

I agree no oral, modification, amendment, extension, or waiver of this agreement will be binding upon me or the Communications Department of Meridian Charter Township and its affiliates.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Township: _____

Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Signature: _____

Application for Playback Form

Please print, sign in ink and return with each videotape submitted
 Incomplete forms may result in a delay of programming for this tape

Print full name:	
Full Street Address:	
Your Email:	
Your Home Phone:	
Your Work Phone:	
Your Cell Phone/Other:	
Proof of Address:	Driver's License/Utility Bill/Other: _____ Please provide a copy of one of the above
Program Title:	
Program Description:	
Program Length:	_____ 29:00 minutes or _____ 59 minutes
Circle One:	One time special or series: regular weekly/bi-monthly/or monthly series
Organization if Non-Profit:	
Non-Profit address:	
Non-Profit Tax ID (501c3):	
Signed Legible:	

*DVDs will not be returned

1. I have read and am thoroughly familiar with the programming content requirements of the Communications Department of Meridian Charter Township;
2. I have read and am thoroughly familiar with the compliance/waiver form;
3. I understand that violation of the terms of this statement is grounds for forfeiture of the right to use CAMTV channel time.
4. I agree to pay an annual fee of \$50; included with this form and made payable to: Meridian Charter Township.

Signed: _____ Date: _____



9.B

To: Communications Commission
From: Brandie Yates, Communications Manager
Date: March 23, 2021
Re: Broadband Access in Meridian Township Work Group Updates

Developing a comprehensive plan to facilitate access to affordable Broadband across the entire Township is Goal F. of the Meridian Township Board's 2021 Goal Action Plan. A designated work group for this goal involves Township Board members and staff including Communications Manager Brandie Yates and Communications Commission Board Liaison/Clerk Deborah Guthrie.

At the February 3, 2021 meeting, the Communication Commission approved the formation of its own work group to discuss the scope and plan of action of how the Communications Commission can support the Township Board and staff in this endeavor.

The work group consists of Commission Chair Tunga Kiyak, Commissioner Brian Seipel and Commissioner Mike Nevells.

The work group will provide an update to the Commission on the progress of this project and begin the discussion of next steps.



To: Communications Commission
From: Brandie Yates, Communications Manager
Date: March 23, 2021
Re: Communications Commission Rules & Procedures Revisions Work Group Updates

At the December 2, 2020 meeting, the Communication Commission approved the formation of a work group to revise the Communications Commission Rules & Procedures document. The Commission Rules & Procedures were last revised in 2018.

The work group consists of Commissioner Leslie Charles and Commissioner Mike Nevells with input from Communications Manager Brandie Yates and Communications Commission Board Liaison/Clerk Deborah Guthrie.

At the February 3, 2021 meeting, the work group presented suggested areas of the current document to change. The work group will provide an update to the Commission on the progress of these revisions.

Attached is the most recent draft of the revised document. The work group is requested the rest of the Commission review and discuss any other changes before moving to Action at the next meeting.



COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION RULES AND PROCEDURES

RULE 1: AUTHORITY

These rules are adopted by the Charter Township of Meridian Communications Commission (hereinafter referred to as the Commission) pursuant to Title XV, Chapter 115 of the Code of the Charter Township of Meridian.

RULE 2: MEMBERSHIP

2.1 Members. The Commission shall consist of five regular members and two alternate members appointed by the Township Board of the Charter Township of Meridian. The Commission may recommend names of suggested appointees to the Township Supervisor. Members must be residents of the Township. No Commission member may:

1. Be employed by a locally franchised cable company.
2. Hold a contract with a locally franchised cable company.
3. Have ownership interest in a locally franchised cable company.

2.2 Alternate Members.

1. An alternate member shall be called to serve in place of a regular member by the chairperson or vice chairperson if:
 - a) a regular member is absent from or will be unable to attend two or more consecutive meetings of the Commission; or,
 - b) a regular member is absent from or will be unable to attend meetings for a period of more than thirty consecutive days; or,
 - c) a regular member will be abstaining from participating in consideration of a case in which the regular member has a conflict of interest.
 - d) When called to serve, an alternate member has the same voting rights as a regular member.
 - e) Alternate members may be called in any order.

RULE 2: MEMBERSHIP (cont'd.)

2.3 Conflict of Interest. A regular member or alternate member shall disqualify themselves from the discussion and decision in any case where the member has a conflict of interest due to financial

considerations or other issues of significance. Failure of a member to disqualify themselves shall constitute misconduct in office.

2.4 Attendance. Members of the Commission who are absent from more than three consecutive, regularly scheduled Commission meetings and work sessions or more than thirty percent of the regularly scheduled Commission meetings and work sessions in a calendar year, shall be subject to review and possible recommendation for removal by the Township Board. Exceptions may be made if absences are due to the conduct of other business as authorized by the Commission.

RULE 3: TERMS OF OFFICE

3.1 Terms of Service. Terms of service for Commission members shall be three years or until a successor is appointed.

3.2 Vacancies. A successor shall be recommended to the Township Board for appointment not more than thirty days after the term of the previous member has expired.

3.3 Removal from Office. Members of the Commission shall be removable from office by the Township Board for nonperformance of duty or misconduct in office.

RULE 4: OFFICERS

4.1 Selection. At the first regular meeting in a calendar year, the Commission shall select from its members a chairperson and vice chairperson.

4.2 Terms. Term of office shall commence from the date of selection for a period of one year, or until a successor has been selected. Officers shall be eligible for re-election, but shall not serve more than three successive full terms in one office.

4.3 Duties of the Chairperson. The chairperson shall preside at all meetings, appoint committees and official representatives to other groups with concurrence from the Commission, authorize calls for special meetings and perform such other duties as may be specified by the Commission.

4.4 Duties of the Vice Chairperson. The vice chairperson shall act in the capacity of the chairperson in the chairperson's absence. In the event the office of the chairperson becomes vacant, the vice chairperson shall succeed to that office for the unexpired term and the Commission shall select a successor to the office of vice chairperson for the unexpired term.

RULE 5: RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITY

The Commission shall assume the following responsibilities and authority pursuant to the Meridian Charter Township Code of Ordinances, Title XV, Chapter 115, Section 115-20, subsection (a), numbers 1-12:

1. Discuss franchises and franchise applications.
2. Advise the Township Board on franchise applications.
3. Advise the Township Board on revocation of franchises.
4. Make recommendations to the Township Board on resolution of disputes between franchisees, subscribers, and access users.
5. Advise the Township Board on rate regulation for municipal owned broadband, when applicable.
6. Make recommendations to the Township Board on operational policies of local access channels.
7. Encourage the use of access channels.
8. Encourage and supervise the interconnection of systems.
9. Review and report to the Township Board on franchise compliance.
10. Make recommendations to the Township Board for video equipment and maintenance purchases from PEG fee funds.
11. Conduct system evaluations and make recommendations to the Township Board regarding franchise amendments and ordinance amendments.
12. Evaluate, research and advise the Township Board in the implementation, and expansion of, broadband and Internet connectivity in Meridian Township.

The Commission shall assume the following responsibilities and authority pursuant to the Uniform Franchise Agreement:

1. To hear informal complaints by subscribers and advise them to contact the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) for pursuing the informal or formal complaint process. (Exhibit F)
2. To designate the use of Public, Education and Government (PEG) Access Channels by franchisees.

3. To approve rules for usage of PEG channels.
4. To direct franchisees to construct or repair parts of the cable system.
5. To review financial reports of the franchisees.
6. To recommend the percentage of franchise fees and PEG fees on new services or non-subscriber revenues.

The Commission shall assume the following responsibilities and authority pursuant to the Operating Policies of HOMTV:

1. To advise the Township Manager when carrying out aspects of the Township Personnel Policy with Communications Department/HOMTV staff.
2. To recommend to the Township Board expansion or limitation of the meeting coverage responsibilities of HOMTV.
3. To hear appeals of program decisions made by the Communications Manager.

RULE 6: COMMISSION MEETINGS

6.1 Procedures. The chairperson shall preside over all meetings of the Commission. Robert's Rules of Order, newly revised, shall govern all questions of procedure not otherwise provided for in these rules or by state or federal law.

6.2 Quorum. Three members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at all meetings of the Commission. In the event a quorum is not present at any meeting, a majority of the Commissioners in attendance may reschedule the meeting providing proper advance notice is given to the public.

6.3 Motions. All motions of a substantive nature shall be made in writing. The name of the originator and seconder of the motion, the findings of fact and the rationale for action shall be recorded in the minutes.

6.4 Voting. Voting shall be by voice except that a roll call vote will be taken and recorded for all proposals requiring a public hearing or when requested by a member of the Commission. When a question is put by the chairperson, every Commissioner present shall vote either "yes" or "no", except that a Commissioner may abstain from voting if excused by unanimous consent of the other Commissioners present.

6.5 Decisions. Providing a quorum is present, a simple majority of those present and voting shall be

required for Commission action.

6.6 Meeting Schedule. The Commission shall meet in regular session according to a schedule adopted at the beginning of the calendar year or as subsequently revised. Special meetings shall be called by the chairperson or shall be called at the request of three members of the Commission.

6.7 Meeting Locations. Meetings shall usually be held at the Township Municipal Building. Meetings shall be open to the public, except where closed sessions are permitted by the Michigan Open Meetings Act.

6.8 Notice of Meetings. Notice of meetings and the agenda for business shall be posted according to existing Township procedure. Commission members shall be notified at least 24 hours in advance of any change in meeting schedule or location.

6.9 Meeting Agenda. An agenda shall be established for each meeting of the Commission by designated Township staff and the chairperson, and shall be made available to Commission members and the public in advance of the meeting (Exhibit A). The chairperson shall determine the order of business, subject to amendment by the Commission.

6.10 Public Participation. A member of the public may speak at public meetings of the Commission in accordance with the following procedures:

- a. Time for public comment shall be provided at the beginning of a regular Commission meeting. Additional time shall be scheduled at the end of such meeting. Time limits for comments or presentations at Commission meetings by persons in the audience may be established by the Commission in accordance with the number of requests to speak, providing such limits shall not be less than three minutes per speaker.
- b. Persons shall be recognized by the chairperson before speaking.
- c. Persons addressing the topic of a scheduled public hearing are encouraged to present their remarks during the public hearing portion of the meeting.
- d. During a public hearing, the following order shall be used:
 1. Township staff review;
 2. Comments by the public or other interested parties;
 3. Discussion and action by the Commission.
- e. A member of the public may speak at public meetings of the Commission during the public remarks session of the meeting or at other appropriate times if allowed by a

majority of the Commissioners present.

RULE 7: RECORDS

7.1 Meeting Records. The Township Communications Manager (or designee) shall be responsible for minutes of each meeting of the Commission and for maintaining the official record, including all Commission actions. An audiotape recorder shall be used whenever possible to improve the accuracy of meeting minutes.

7.2 Meeting Minutes. Minutes shall include all motions made, the names of the mover and seconder, the method and outcome of votes taken. Comments by a Commissioner may be placed in the official record upon the members' request. Minutes and records of the Commission meetings shall be made available to the public in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Open Meetings Act.

7.3 Closed Sessions. Minutes of closed session shall be maintained separately by the Meridian Township Clerk's Office and not disclosed to the public except upon court order. Minutes of closed sessions may be destroyed one year and one day following their approval.

RULE 8: COMMITTEES

8.1 Standing Committees. Standing committees of the Commission shall be appointed by the chairperson and approved by the Commission to assist in the ongoing responsibilities of the Commission and the operation of the Township government. The Standing Committee members will elect their own chairperson. Standing committees shall serve to review, study and propose Commission actions related to operations which are the responsibility of the Commission. Committees shall be assigned specific areas of concern and shall work with the Township Communications Manager.

8.2 Special Committees. The Commission may establish and appoint special committees to meet the needs and objective of the Commission. The Commission may authorize the chairperson to appoint members to these committees, including the chairperson. Permission may be granted to a special committee to designate its own chairperson.

8.3 Quorum. A majority of committee members shall constitute a quorum for committee meetings. A Standing Committee shall open its meetings to the public in compliance with the Open Meetings Act.

8.4 Notice of Meetings. Notice of meetings shall be made available for the public at least eighteen hours in advance of such meetings as required by state law to be considered an official committee meeting. Each committee shall provide a written record of its meetings to the Township Communications Manager which shall constitute its public record. A separate file shall be kept in the Township Cable Television Office for each committee. Minutes of committee meetings shall be sent to all Commissioners.

8.5 Reports. Standing Committees will report their recommendations to the Commission during the committee report portion of Commission meetings. Minority reports may be offered at that time.

8.6 Dissolution. The Commission may discharge a committee from further consideration of any matter upon approval of a majority of the Commission.

RULE 9: APPEALS OF PROGRAMMING DECISIONS

9.1 Filing. Appeals may be filed with the Commission by any person aggrieved by a programming decision made by the Township Communications Manager.

9.2 Procedures. Appeals shall be filed in accordance with the following procedures, deadlines and regulations:

- a. **Application:** An appeal of a programming decision made by the Township Communications Manager shall be filed within thirty days of the date of the decision being appealed.
- b. **Hearing:** A hearing on said appeal shall be held at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission.
- c. **Presentation:** The order of presentation during the appeal is included as "Exhibit E" in the appendix of this document.

9.3 Decisions. The Commission shall issue a decision within a reasonable time from the filing of an appeal.

9.4 Reconsideration. The Commission may consider a petition for reconsideration if substantial new information warrants such reconsideration and if such petition is made prior to the Commission's next regularly scheduled meeting following the meeting at which the decision was made.

RULE 10: PUBLIC HEARINGS

10.1 Purpose. Public hearings shall be held prior to recommending approval by the Township Board of any amendment to the Township Cable Ordinances or for other matters as required by statute, federal law, or Township Ordinance. Public hearings may also be held for informational purposes. (Exhibit C)

10.2 Notice. Notice of public hearings, including time, place and purpose shall be made in conformance with requirements of P.A. 285 (1931, as amended) and the Township Code of Ordinance, and such other procedures as may be adopted by the Commission or Township Board.

10.3 Format. Public hearings shall be part of regular Commission meetings and shall be conducted

according to established written procedures.

10.4 Complaint Hearings. The Commission will hear informal and formal complaints of municipally owned systems.

RULE 11: RESCISSION

A motion to rescind or amend something previously adopted may be brought pursuant to Section 34 of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

RULE 12: SUSPENSION OF RULES

A motion to suspend these rules may be brought pursuant to Section 25 of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

RULE 13: AMENDMENTS

These Rules may be amended or repealed by a majority of the members of the Commission at any regular meeting or at any properly called meeting provided that a copy of the proposed changes shall be filed with the chairperson at least ten days prior to the meeting at which action therein is to be taken and copies of the proposed changes are provided to each Commissioner at least five days prior to said meeting, together with written notice of the time and place of such meetings.

RULE 14: ANNUAL REPORT

The Commission shall, on or before March 1 of every year, submit a written report to the Township Board, which report shall contain a statement of the activities of the Commission during the preceding calendar year.

EXHIBIT B: EXAMPLES OF PURPOSES FOR INFORMATIONAL HEARINGS

1. To provide additional time to give all interested parties an adequate chance to present evidence.
2. To provide additional discussion or presentation time because of the complexity of the proposal or issues.
3. To provide for public comment as a result of making major changes in a proposal following an initial hearing.
4. To introduce and discuss new evidence, external to changes in a proposal, not available at the time of the initial hearing.
5. To seek citizen input on any appropriate subject.
6. To educate the public on selected issues or proposed actions and enhance public understanding or acceptance.

EXHIBIT C: GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. When scheduling meetings, the Commission may limit the number of hearings to be placed on the agenda of any meeting. Each hearing shall be identified on the agenda.
2. Unless otherwise indicated, the following format will be used:
 - a. Introduction by the chairperson (announcement of procedures, time limits and protocols for public participation, applicants and defendants.)
 - b. Summary of subject matter.
 - c. Presentation by interested members of the public.

- d. Discussion and questioning by Commission members.
- e. Final remarks by applicant.
- f. Adjournment.

EXHIBIT D: PROCEDURES FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT MEETINGS

1. The number of persons admitted to a meeting room will be in keeping with public safety requirements and availability of space. Efforts will be made to provide adequate room to accommodate those in attendance.
2. Established protocols for public participation will be announced at the beginning of the meeting.
3. Opportunity to speak will be granted either under Public Remarks, during old business or during a public hearing, as most appropriate.
4. Reasonable time limits may be allotted for public comments, in keeping with other business which must be considered at a particular meeting.
5. A member of the public will be provided no less than three minutes to speak.
6. Those completing a request form in writing shall be called upon first to speak.
7. Members of the public will identify themselves by name and address prior to presenting their comments.
8. Written communications will be read into the record during a meeting when requested by the author. All written communications will become part of the Commission record.
9. The chairperson, without objections from the Commission, may invite members of the public to participate in informal discussion on all or selected agenda items during Commission work sessions.

EXHIBIT E: FORMAT FOR PROGRAM APPEALS

1. Presentation by the Communications Manager.

2. Presentation by appellant.
3. Questions from the Commission to the Communications Manager.
4. Questions from the Commission to the appellant.
5. Closing comment by the Communications Manager.
6. Closing comment by the appellant.
7. Discussion by members of the Commission.
8. Decision by vote of the Commission.

EXHIBIT F: FILING A TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND VIDEO COMPLAINTS TO THE MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION (MPSC)

All informal electric, natural gas, telecommunications and video complaints received at the MPSC will be processed in accordance with the appropriate rules and laws.

When you contact the MPSC with a complaint, it will be sent to the company for an investigation. The company has up to 10 business days (2 weeks) to investigate and work towards a resolution. During this time the company may be in touch with you. At the conclusion of the company's investigation, they will provide the MPSC with a thorough and detailed response at which time the MPSC will conduct a review to ensure that it is in accordance with all enforceable rules and regulations. The MPSC will then communicate the findings of the informal complaint with you.

Filing Complaints Online:

www.michigan.gov/mpsc

Filing Complaints by Phone:

1.800.292.9555

Filing Complaints by Mail:

MPSC Customer Assistance
P.O. Box 30221
Lansing, MI 48909



Communications
Commission

Communications/ Announcements



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE**
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. Census Bureau
Chicago Regional Census Center
Chicago, IL 60604-2948

January 13, 2021

Dear Trusted 2020 Census Partner:

Thank you for your valuable partnership during this Decennial Census. With your support, the Region exceeded the National Self-Response Rate of 67% and had the highest self-response rate among all Regions, of 69.8%.

In collaboration with more than 50,550 partners, that collectively held nearly 64,750 events and made more than 70,450 commitments, you exhibited enormous dedication, creativity, and support in developing outreach and marketing activities that engaged, educated, and encouraged households to complete the 2020 Census, particularly in historically underserved communities.

Working alongside more than 2,015 Complete Count Committees, you and our many valuable partners hosted thousands of recruiting events to hire census workers that spoke the languages, understood the cultures, and lived within the communities they were tasked to count. Your efforts also ensured a successful Mobile Questionnaire Assistance (MQA) program across our Region, with more than 12,819 MQA events that assisted low-responding communities in completing their census questionnaires online and by phone.

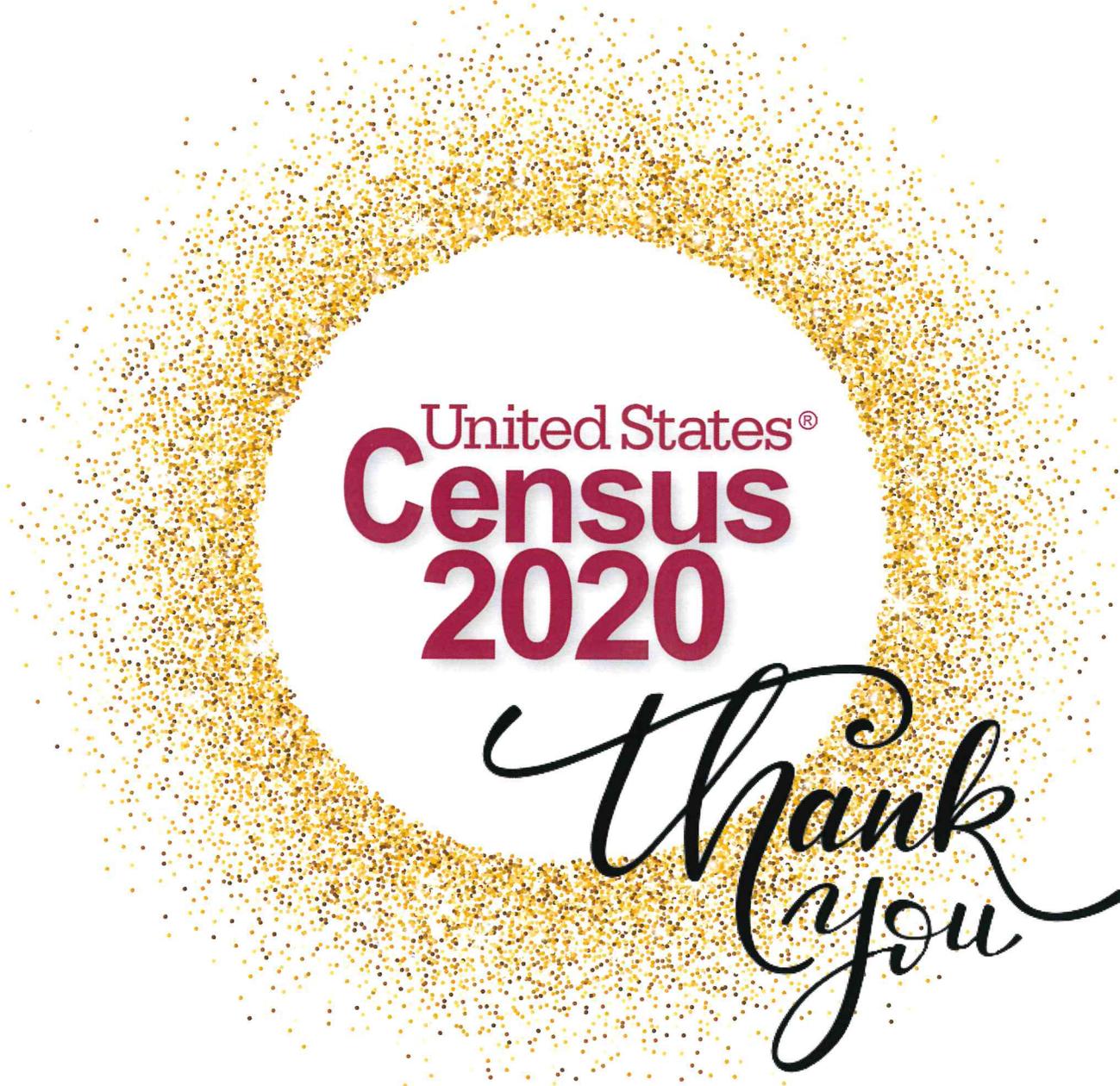
Together, we ensured the Census had the most up-to-date address file, delivered paper questionnaires to rural areas, recruited workers during one of the lowest periods of unemployment, took on a global pandemic through unique virtual engagement, and engaged communities through Get Out the Count (GOTC) efforts that brought Census staff to historically undercounted neighborhoods.

Your valuable contributions will ensure critical planning over the next decade.

Thank you for Making It Count!

Sincerely,

Marilyn A. Sanders, Chicago Regional Director
U.S. Census Bureau



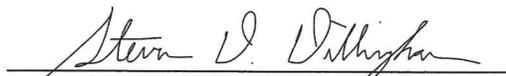
United States®
Census
2020

*Thank
you*

THE U.S. CENSUS BUREAU HEREBY RECOGNIZES

Ingham County - Meridian Charter Township

as an invaluable member of the 2020 Census Community Partnership and Engagement Program. We appreciate the efforts you made in making the Partnership Program a success and helping achieve a successful 2020 Census.



Dr. Steven D. Dillingham, Director
U.S. Census Bureau





January 29, 2020

Ms. Brandie Yates, Communications Manager
Meridian Township
5151 Marsh Road
Okemos, MI 48864

Re: Programming Advisory

Dear Ms. Yates:

We are committed to keeping you and our customers informed about changes to Xfinity TV services. As part of that ongoing commitment to keep you informed, we wanted to update you on the following:

- Effective February 25, 2021, Reelz HD will be added in areas where previously not available.
- Effective March 16, 2021, ESNE TV (El Sembrador Nueva Evangelización) will be launched on the Multi Latino tier.
- Effective March 23, 2021, FS2 will be available as part of the Digital Starter and Sports & News packages.
- Effective April 6, 2021, HD programming subscriptions and compatible equipment will be required to view the Revolt and Aspire channels. To learn more visit www.xfinity.com/HowItWorks.
- Effective April 13, 2021, Cartoon Network will no longer be available with Digital Starter or Kids and Family. It will be available with the Preferred package. To learn more visit www.xfinity.com/HowItWorks.

Please feel free to contact me at 734-359-2077 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

John P. Gardner
Director, External Affairs
Comcast, Heartland Region
1401 E. Miller Rd.
Lansing, MI 48911



Communications
Commission

Programming



To: Communications Commission
From: Samantha Diehl, Multimedia Production & Operations Specialist
Date: March 23, 2021
Re: Program Totals and Video On-Demand Analytics

Program Totals (Year to Date): 49

- Meridian Live: 21
 - Township Board: 8
 - Planning Commission: 5
 - Environmental Commission: 3
 - Zoning Board of Appeals: 2
 - Park Commission: 3
- Meet Your Elected Officials: 2
- Special Features: 3
 - Risk Limiting Audit Live Coverage
 - Girl Scout Troop 451
 - Virtual Golden Tape Awards Ceremony
- Promos: 10
- Virtual View (Zoom Interviews): 13
- Online Articles: 114

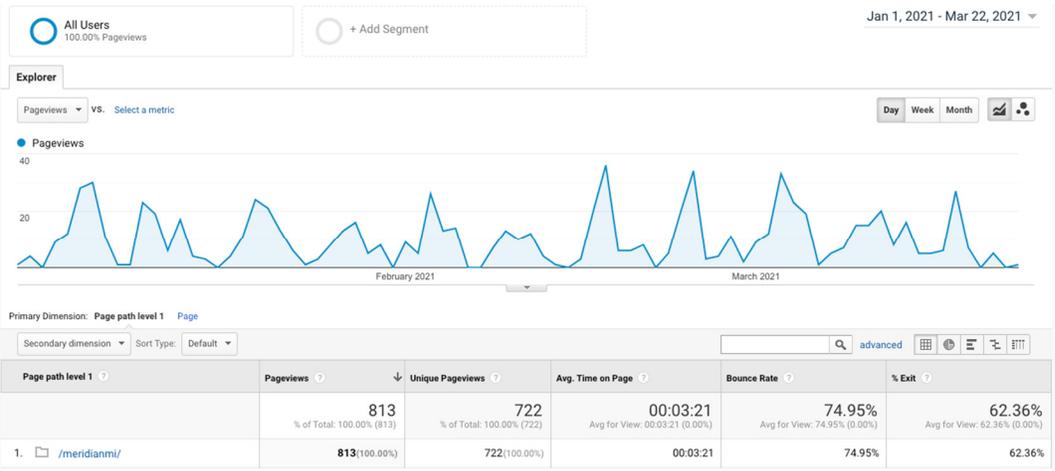
In addition to what is listed above, staff and interns are also conducting 4 interviews for Women's History Month, as well as 2 Your Choice 2021 interviews for the upcoming May 4th Special Election in Meridian Township.

Video On-Demand Analytics

HOMTV Website Video On-Demand (Swagit)

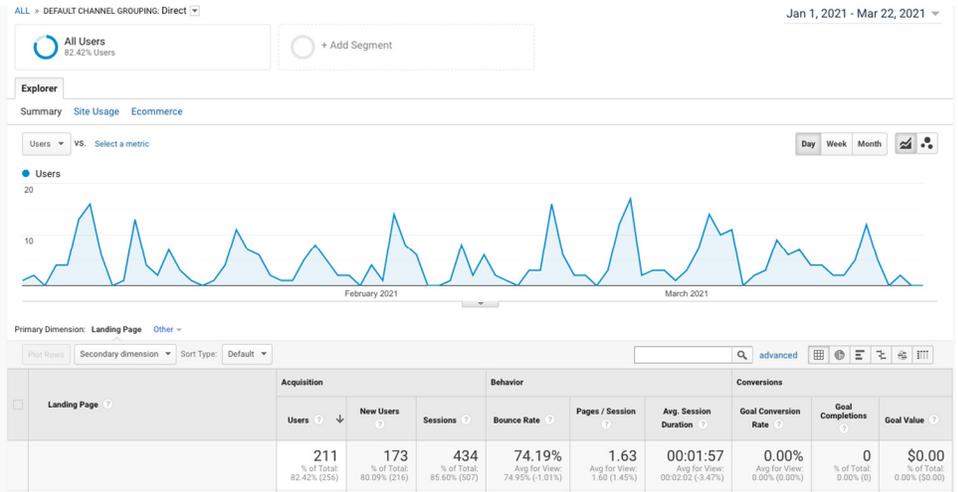
The graph below reports that there have been 813 on-demand views to HOMTV's website from January 1, 2021 – March 22, 2021. The average amount of time spent on the page was 3 minutes and 21 seconds.

Memo to Communications Commission
March 23, 2021
Re: Program Totals and Video On-Demand Analytics



HOMTV Website Live Video (Swagit)

The graph reports that of the 813 on-demand views, 211 viewed the live feed. Of those 211 views, 173 were new users and they stayed on the page for about 2 minutes.



HOMTV Facebook Video Analytics

Year to date stats for the HOMTV Facebook video analytics show that there was 5.7 thousand minutes viewed for all videos posted during that time period.

Memo to Communications Commission
March 23, 2021
Re: Program Totals and Video On-Demand Analytics



HOMTV YouTube Video Analytics

Year to date stats for the HOMTV YouTube video analytics show that there were 8.2 thousand views, with 380.4 hours of watch time, and 30+ subscribers gained.

In the selected period, your channel got 8,186 views





Communications
Commission

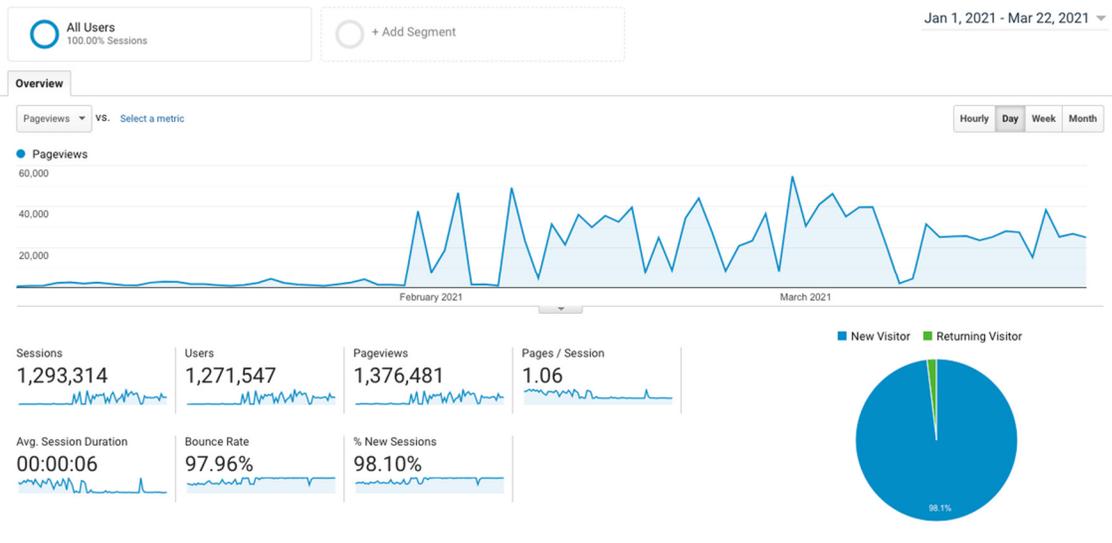
Website/Social Analytics



To: Communications Commission
From: Samantha Diehl, Multimedia Production & Operations Specialist
Date: March 23, 2021
Re: Meridian Township & HOMTV Website Analytics

Meridian Township Website

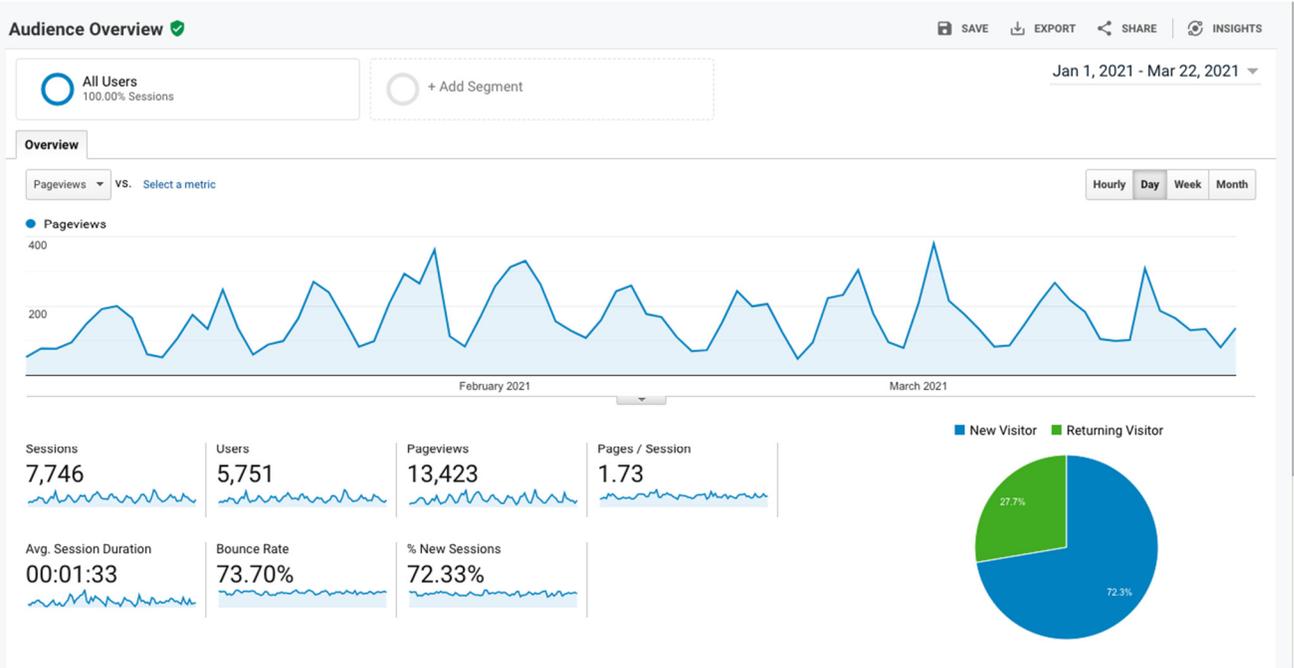
Year to date stats for the Meridian Township website show that there were 1,376,481 pageviews. Of those views, 98% were new visitors.



HOMTV Website

Year to date stats for the HOMTV website show that there were 13,423 pageviews. Of those views, 72.3% were new visitors with 27.7% being returning visitors.

Memo to Communications Commission
March 23, 2021
Re: Meridian Township & HOMTV Website Analytics
Page 2





To: Communications Commission
From: Andrea Smiley, Social Media & PR Specialist
Date: March 29, 2021
Re: Social Media Performance Summary

New Social Media Strategy

At the beginning of 2021, a new social media strategy was started for both Meridian Township's and HOMTV's social platforms. We also have an MSU Statistics Major student that is analyzing the platform stats, preparing reports and making recommendations as part of a class. Our social platforms were becoming stagnant because of the quantity of information being posted. The new strategy and recommendations have been to post less but with better content that will create more engagement. The goal is to group content, post what the community would like to see and increase engagement. We are also looking at our top posts and continuing to post similar content. The Communications Department has so many outlets to share information that not all content has to be posted to Social Media.

Facebook

Meridian Township: Total Facebook likes YTD 2021 are 6451. Total Facebook followers YTD 2021 are 7307. While it is important to have additional likes, followers are the most important number to increase because it means that a person has chosen to receive updates that are posted to their personal news feed. Total Facebook reach for the month of March is 24,766. The post with the greatest reach in March (1.6K) was International Women's Day post featuring the Women Leaders on the Township Board.

HOMTV: Total Facebook likes YTD 2021 are 2054. Total Facebook followers YTD 2021 are 2390. Total Facebook reach for the month of March is 5,983. The post with the greatest reach in March (810) was Happy #NationalGirlScout day post featuring a special interview with Girl Scout Troop 451.

Twitter

Meridian Township: Total Twitter impressions for the month of March equals 16K with 878 profile visits. The top tweet, which earned 610 impressions during the month of March, recognized CADL Okemos Library Assistant. The top mention, during the month of March, earning 28 engagements, was a tweet from Ground Water Management Board thanking the essential water utility workers. The top media tweet, which earned 599 impressions, was about National Reading month at CADL.

HOMTV: Total Twitter impressions for the month of March equals 18.3K with 1045 profile visits. The top tweet, which earned 516 impressions, was about #NationalGirlScoutDay recognizing Troop 451. The top mention, during the month of March earning 8

Memo to Communications Commission
March 29, 2021
Re: Social Media Performance
Page 2

engagements, was a tweet from Small Talk Children's Advocacy thanking HOMTV for being an amazing partner for Small Talk over the years. The top media tweet, which earned 395 impressions, was a tweet about LCC welcoming new students eligible for free or reduced tuition as part of the Michigan Reconnect program.

Instagram

Meridian Township: Total Instagram followers for Meridian Township YTD equals 1750, an increase of 2.2% since February YTD. During the month of March 1,115 accounts were reached with a 9.4% increase when compared to February. There were 399 post interactions, which was an increase of 20.8%. Interactions can be likes, comments, saves and shares.

The recommendation last month was to decrease the amount of postings to Instagram and pay attention to content. We will continue to track engaging posts and post similar content.

HOMTV: Total Instagram followers for HOMTV YTD equals 411, an increase of 1.2% since February YTD. There were 150 content interactions and 149 post interactions, which were an increase of 45.6% and 67.4%.

The recommendation is to continue to focus on the content and track how the audience of followers reacts to different posts, while keeping the quantity of posts around the same as in the previous month.

LinkedIn

Meridian Township: Total LinkedIn followers are up to 525, an increase of 40%. Post impressions is at 1.6K which is an increase of 8%.

HOMTV: Total LinkedIn followers are up to 1198, an increase of 4 new followers, which is a decrease of 33% compared to the previous month. Post impressions equal 961, which is an increase of 13%.

NextDoor – Meridian Township has an agency account, which is a communication platform for neighborhoods to connect and have conversations about everything from finding a babysitter to learning about what is happening in the Township. The Communications Team continues to post a variety of content to the Nextdoor platform because it seems to be our greatest method for informing and alerting the community. Total members equal 10,239 out of 22,355 households in the Township. It continues to grow at a rapid pace.

Constant Contact – The Communications Team sends out a weekly eNewsletter using Constant Contact.. The Meridian Happenings open rate averages between 41 – 42%.



Communications
Commission

Publications/ Promotions

PRIME MERIDIAN

magazine

WINTER | SPRING 2021



1 ➤

SERVING
our **COMMUNITY**

3 ➤

MARKETPLACE
on the **GREEN**

9 ➤

CADL in
your **COMMUNITY**



A PRIME COMMUNITY
meridian.mi.us

A MESSAGE to the COMMUNITY



The past year has brought challenges and obstacles that most of us have not faced in our lifetime. The COVID-19 worldwide pandemic gave us a direct challenge to protect our staff and the community from the virus, while providing essential services that you depend on as residents. I thank the Meridian Team for their stalwart and unwavering determination and commitment to protect our 42,424 residents.

For this edition of the Prime Meridian Magazine, we have chosen "Serving Our Community" as the theme because it's important to highlight the many positive things that occurred in 2020, while focusing on the Township's vision for 2021.

Together, as we move into 2021, we will continue our customer service efforts

and assist our most vulnerable during this global pandemic.

We will expand and measure our efforts with Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, maintain our unwavering promises made to voters relating to public safety and road improvements, expand our solar footprint, enhance our community signage and complete phases of the MSU to Lake Lansing Trail.

Coming off a successful 2020, we have set the bar higher for 2021. Our united Township Board and Team will deliver. We will serve the public with unbridled passion, performance and pride.

Frank L. Walsh
Township Manager



Best Places to Live in Michigan

- Okemos #1
- Haslett #13



Best Small Town to Raise a Family in Michigan

- Okemos #1

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Township Board Members

Supervisor Ronald J. Styka	styka@meridian.mi.us
Clerk Deborah Guthrie	guthrie@meridian.mi.us
Treasurer Phil Deschaine	deschaine@meridian.mi.us
Trustee Patricia Herring Jackson	pjackson@meridian.mi.us
Trustee Dan Opsommer	opsommer@meridian.mi.us
Trustee Kathy Ann Sundland	sundland@meridian.mi.us
Trustee Courtney Wisinski	wisinski@meridian.mi.us

Park Commission Members

- Commission Chair Amanda A. Lick
- Commissioner Michael McDonald
- Commissioner Mark Stephens
- Commissioner Mary Nardo Farris
- Commissioner Amy Van Antwerp



WATCH exclusive LIVE coverage of Township meetings in your home or on the go only on:



Comcast Channel 21



www.homt.v.net

"Your Source for Community News"

PRIME MERIDIAN MAGAZINE

CONTENTS at a glance

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3 **MARKETPLACE** on the green

5 **HR** diversity, equity & inclusion

7 **GREEN MERIDIAN** sustainability

9 **CADL** in your community

11 **POLICE & FIRE** community safety



PORTABLE OUTDOOR **service centers**

With limited access available to Township Buildings, Portable Outdoor Service Centers were established at the Municipal Building to reduce the spread of COVID-19, while safely serving the public in-person. Although currently closed for the season, the Portable Outdoor Service Centers are expected to be utilized again in 2021. For additional details, visit meridian.mi.us/TownshipReopeningPlan.

HISTORICAL VILLAGE **upgrade**

A new, accessible "Gateway Bridge" and restroom facility was completed in the Meridian Historical Village. This project was made possible through a Land and Water Conservation Fund through the National Park Service and the Meridian Township Park Millage.



OUR COMMUNITY

HNC improvements

The Harris Nature Center has welcomed new additions in 2020 including an observation deck with binoculars, pavilion with a brick patio and a restroom building. For more information, visit meridian.mi.us/HNC.



TREE PLANTING initiative

Community volunteers planted 40 trees at Chippewa Middle School as part of the Township's Tree Team's 2020 Tree Distribution and Planting Initiative. Benefits of the new trees include beautification, shade, habitat improvements and opportunities for environmental education. Contact Environmental Programs Coordinator LeRoy Harvey at harvey@meridian.mi.us if you wish to be involved in future community planting days.



2020 CENSUS #becounted

Special thank you to all Meridian Township residents for shaping their community and being counted in the 2020 Census. The Township's self-response rate surpassed the Michigan state average by 5%. Data from the Census is expected to be released by the end of April 2021. For additional information, visit meridian.mi.us/Census2020.

LOCAL ROAD program

2020

- 1st year of Township's 10-year plan to fix the roads
- Over 26 miles of local roads were improved
- 10.24 miles of neighborhood streets were reconstructed
- 16 miles of local roads received crack seal treatment

2021

- 8.87 miles of rehabilitation work
- 7.61 miles of preventative maintenance crack sealing work
- 1.5 miles cape seal work

For the 2021 Local Road List and construction updates, visit meridian.mi.us/TownshipProjects

HVAC overhaul

The Municipal Building's heating and cooling system which was originally installed in 1971, was completely overhauled in 2020.



The new system has improved energy efficiency and air filtration.

MARKETPLACE on the GREEN



MARKET days
1st & 3rd Saturday
February - April
11:00 am - 1:00 pm
meridian.mi.us/FarmersMarket

FARM FOOD CRAFTS

Enjoy the new home to Meridian Township's Farmers' Market! Marketplace on the Green officially opened in October 2020. The new facility consists of a large 14,650 sq. ft. pavilion complete with restrooms, a music stage, playground, patio area with seating, a courtyard with site furnishings and more. The Marketplace is equipped with LED lighting, solar panels, rain gardens, landscaping and a shared parking area for energy efficiency.

In addition to the Farmers' Market, this social and economic centerpiece will provide a community gathering space for Township-wide events, craft fairs, adult and youth sports, LIVE music and more. Pavilion rental is also available through the Parks & Recreation Department.



JOHN VEENSTRA memorial

This special place in the Marketplace is dedicated to former Township Trustee and Ingham County Commissioner John Veenstra. The Liaison for Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation (LINC) funded a park bench, bike rack and repair station and memorial plaque in honor of Veenstra's legacy.



LARGE dog park

Across from the Marketplace, large dogs now have a new space to call their own. The park features a natural walking path, control gate, dog fountain, open grassy and shaded areas. Local dog lovers are invited to visit both of the Township's Prime Dog Parks! Visit meridian.mi.us/DogParks for rules and registration.



EXPLORE nature

The Harris Nature Center is hosting Chipmunk Story Time each month virtually. Registration includes a craft kit and link to a Naturalist reading the monthly story online. Self-guided and private-guided nature programs are available upon request. Email hnc@meridian.mi.us or call 517.349.3866 for details.



PAVILION & brick patio

The Harris Nature Center now features a pavilion with a brick patio and outdoor restrooms.

The restrooms will be open year-round and the pavilion will be available for use by school groups, private groups, HNC's summer camp program and the general public. You can still help to enhance the brick patio by purchasing a personalized engraved brick through the HNC Foundation at hncfoundation.org.

SENIOR community

The senior community found ways to stay fit and engaged during COVID-19. The Meridian Senior Center continues to offer virtual fitness and educational classes for members.

meridianseniorcenter.weebly.com

Approximately 50 seniors also gathered three times a week for exercise and socialization in Township parks during the Senior Stretch Program.



PARKS & recreation

DEER management

Meridian's Deer Management efforts continue into 2021. Under a special permit from the Michigan DNR, the Police Department is conducting a deer cull through March 2021. The purpose of the cull is to reduce deer-related incidents and support biological diversity in natural areas. Contact MTPD at 517.853.4800 with questions.



October - December 2020 DEER ARCHERY program

- 75 Returning Hunters
- 176 Deer Harvested
- 2,400 lbs. Venison Donated to Food Banks
- 9,600 Meals Provided
- \$26,376 Worth of Venison
- 75 Roadkill Deer Removed (not donated)

meridian.mi.us/DeerManagement

COMING SOON...

2021 park projects

- Develop Community Ice Rink at Marketplace on the Green
- Expand and Improve Central Park South Parking
- Expand and Improve North Meridian Road Park Parking
- Complete Central Meridian Regional Trail Connector



Harris Nature Center

3998 Van Atta Road
Okemos, MI 48864
517.349.3866



Parks & Recreation

Service Center
2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court
Haslett, MI 48840
517.853.4600



Meridian Senior Center

4000 Okemos Road
Okemos, MI 48864
517.706.5045

HR diversity, equity & inclusion

DEI task force

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) remains a vital and motivating element of the Township's work. The Township's DEI Task Force views this as a process that brings staff and leadership together, improves internal and external communication and unites the Township with those they serve. The Township Board recently adopted the Non-Discrimination and Fair Employment Practices Policy to remove questions that could inadvertently limit the ability to see job-related strengths of applicants. Contact the Human Resources Department at 517.853.4210 with questions regarding the Township's DEI efforts.

Township **WELCOMES** New Human Resources Director



“ It is a pleasure serving the people who serve our Township and community. Our dedicated employees and first responders work with the clear intention of contributing to a better experience for the collective, making our daily work and interactions feel more rewarding, connected and meaningful. I am grateful to be a part of the team, providing HR guidance and support. ”

Abigail "Abby" Tithof joined the Meridian Team in August 2020. She brings over 20 years of experience in HR and has been a Meridian Township resident for over 10 years.

WELCOME to meridian township



Kamic Jok
IT Technician



Megan Heinemann (left)
Sierra Alvarado (right)
Police Officers



Christine Cassidy
Administrative Assistant
Fire Department



JOIN OUR TEAM



Police Officer Paramedic/Firefighter

meridian.mi.us/Careers

START YOUR MEDIA CAREER TODAY



HOMtv

www.homtv.net

We're Hiring!

- Full-Time
- Seasonal
- Part-Time
- Internships



meridian.mi.us/Careers



Human Resources
5151 Marsh Road
Okemos, MI 48864
517.853.4210

ECONOMIC development

SMALL BUSINESS grants

The Township Board and Meridian EDC continue to provide ways to support the Township's small business community. Through a Small Business Relief Grant Program, the Township was able to award grant opportunities to small businesses affected by COVID-19. Two rounds of grants were distributed with 42 small businesses receiving \$4,000 each in June 2020 and 105 small businesses receiving up to \$7,000 each in January 2021. A full list of awardees can be found on the Township website, meridian.mi.us/SmallBusinessReliefGrant.



DEVELOPMENT updates

Two major development projects will begin in 2021: Pine Village at Haslett Village Square and the Village of Okemos. The Pine Village Development will be the first keystone piece in bringing new life to the Haslett and Marsh Road intersection. This intersection will see a lot of activity as the Haslett Marathon also begins renovations.

The Village of Okemos reimagined kicked off the new year with demolition and construction is expected to begin in the spring. We encourage the public to keep their eyes on the progress as we continue through the year and crown this moment as we look to new beginnings.

Follow updates at meridian.mi.us/DevelopmentProjects.



“

My time with Meridian Township proves that not only did I pick a great community to live in, but also to serve. The more I engage with neighborhood leaders and business owners, the more I am aware of how special our community truly is; we are a Prime Community!

”

Amber Clark was welcomed as the new Neighborhoods & Economic Development Director in September 2020.

With this new position, the Township is looking to enhance relations with the neighborhoods and strengthen its economic development efforts.



Economic Development
5151 Marsh Road
Okemos, MI 48864
517.853.4568



Community Planning & Development
5151 Marsh Road
Okemos, MI 48864
517.853.4560

GREEN MERIDIAN sustainability



Launched in 2020, the Meridian Conservation Corps (MCC) is designed to increase community involvement in the parks and preserve areas.



The program will help to build awareness of volunteer opportunities involving the care and conservation of the Township's expansive local green spaces.



2020 Stewardship accomplishments

- 498.5 hours of habitat restoration completed
- 263 pounds of litter removed from 12 parks
- 135 corps members
- 65 volunteers actively working across 7 parks
- 22 native plant species cultivated in preserves
- 10 different species of invasive plants removed
- 15 Stewardship Workdays at 10 different parks
- 4 conservation programs launched
- 1 sentinel tree adopted by Forest Watch volunteers

Learn more about the Meridian Conservation Corps at meridian.mi.us/MCC.

RENEWABLE energy systems

Meridian's solar footprint continues to expand. In 2020, two solar arrays were installed:

- 3.84 kW solar array located on the south-facing roof of the restrooms at the Marketplace on the Green producing approximately 4,906 kWh/year.
- 36.48 kW solar array located on the south-facing roof of the South Fire Station producing approximately 44,260 kWh/year.



Photo Courtesy: Absolute Solar Power

Upon installation of the additional 120 kW panels in 2021, the Township will be at 60% of the required 300kW needed in combination with energy efficiency measures and renewable energy provider purchases to meet the 100% goal.

MSU to lake lansing trail

This project will create a continuous trail system from the Lansing River Trail, through MSU's campus and out to the Ingham County Parks around Lake Lansing.

Once completed, the trail system will provide direct access to several Meridian Township facilities and will provide safe and enjoyable paths for non-motorized commuters between MSU and the Township.



Phases I and II are currently in the process of the final design and layout. Construction of multiple segments will begin in spring 2021.

 Land Stewardship Parks & Recreation
2100 Gaylord C. Smith Ct.
Haslett, MI 48840
517.853.4614

 Environmental Programs
5151 Marsh Road
Okemos, MI 48864
517.853.4466



PROTECT OUR WATERS

STOP THE SALT ASSAULT

De-icing salt dissolves in melted snow and ice, flows into storm drains and is discharged into our rivers and streams. This saline water threatens drinking water supplies and aquatic ecosystems.

- Don't leave salt open to rain and snow.
- Avoid spreading clumps.
- Don't dump grease or oil into a storm drain, catch basin or other stormwater structure.

meridian.mi.us/StormwaterManagement

TOWNSHIP information



“
When I think about the job of, and the role of, a public servant, it is to serve the people, be transparent and communicate information in the best way that we can.
”

Township Residents Elect New Clerk

Meridian Township voters elected Deborah Guthrie as the Township's new Clerk. Deborah has over 20 years of experience of public service with the Township in the Communications Department and will serve the residents in her new role for the next four years.

2021 Election Information

- Tuesday, May 4, 2021 Special Election
Polls open 7:00 am - 8:00 pm
- Local School Proposals:
Okemos Public Schools Operating Millage Renewal Proposal

Okemos Public Schools Sinking Fund Millage Proposal
- March 20 - Absentee Voter Ballots will be available to voters who are on the Permanent Absentee Voter list or who have submitted an Absentee Voter Ballot Application by this date.
- April 19 - Last day to register to vote in any other manner than in-person at the Meridian Township Clerk's Office for this election.

For ballot language, absentee voter information, precinct locations and voter registration information visit meridian.mi.us/Elections.

become an ELECTION WORKER

Election workers are needed in 2021 and are a valuable piece of our democracy, ensuring free and fair elections for all. Serving as an election worker is a paid position which includes training on proper election procedures. Any registered Michigan voter over the age of 18 is eligible to work an election. Serve your community and be a part of the democratic process, apply online at meridian.mi.us/Elections.

Tax Collection Due Dates

- WINTER TAXES
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16
- SUMMER TAXES
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

Tax Bills are due by 5:00 pm on the dates listed above. For more information about taxes or other Township services, visit the Township website, meridian.mi.us.

Tax & Bill Payment Options

Stay safe by paying your taxes and utility bills online. Paying online is fast, accurate and convenient. There is no cost for paying your tax or utility bill online, if you pay with an electronic payment from your checking or savings account.

For easy to use instructions, visit meridian.mi.us/BillPayment.

Payments may be dropped off 24 hours a day at one of the secure white drop boxes located outside the Township Municipal Building, or mailed to the Treasurer's Office.



Phil Deschaine
Township Treasurer



Treasurer's Office
5151 Marsh Road
Okemos, MI 48864
517.853.4140



Clerk's Office
5151 Marsh Road
Okemos, MI 48864
517.853.4300



CADL in Your Community

Two of Capital Area District Libraries' 13 branches are located in Meridian Township. Visit cadl.org for membership information and more.

Visit our website or use the CADL app to enjoy our digital services on any device. Top quality education resources and exciting entertainment options—it's all right here.

LinkedIn Learning

This industry leader offers thousands of high-quality instructional videos on the latest software, creative and business skills. Log on and learn at your own pace.

tutor.com™

A Service of [The Princeton Review](http://www.PrincetonReview.com)

A little rusty on your algebra skills? You can still help with your kids' homework—just connect them with our free online tutoring service, available seven days a week.

pronunciator:

This user-friendly language learning tool lets you choose from 80 languages, including English and ASL. Download it to your computer, tablet or smartphone and get started today.



Books, Movies & More

Stream or download thousands of ebooks, audiobooks, movies, TV shows or albums from CADL's digital collection. Comics and podcasts, too! There's no contact, no fines, nothing to return—just great entertainment whenever you want it.



5 THINGS TO KNOW | CADL Haslett

- I am happy to be back at CADL Haslett, serving as the new Head Librarian. I met many of you in my former position as Library Assistant (2007–2009) and look forward to reconnecting.
- In 2020, despite being closed for several months, we filled nearly 900 Grab & Go requests and checked out over 80,000 items.
- Haslett members have made our Storytime to Go kits a big hit! In an average month we give out over 500 of them, filled with activities to support early literacy.
- We are tapping into your creative talents with some fun community art projects, including a “stained glass” window display. Watch for more creative opportunities throughout 2021.
- Thanks to the Friends of the Haslett Library, we are adding new Picture Book Bins in the youth area. The goal is to make browsing more fun for our youngest readers.

Thomas Moore, Head Librarian
CADL HASLETT
1590 Franklin St. • 517-339-2324

5 THINGS TO KNOW | CADL Okemos

- We are very excited to be working with Okemos Schools to issue a Student Success card to students in grades 5–12. That’s 2,800 students who will have free access to books, digital resources, learning tools and much more.
- Thanks to a grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the help of our Teen Advisory Board, we now have native plants around the building that support natural habitats of birds in the area.
- Each month we checked out over 12,000 library items and filled an average of 200 Grab & Go requests.
- Whether in person or online, our storytimes (led by the amazing Mr. Tom) helped hundreds of local children learn the early literacy skills of reading, writing, talking, singing and playing.
- CADL Okemos is always open, with a digital collection of books, audiobooks, movies and music, available any time. In 2020, members checked out more than 135,000 titles from the comfort of their homes.

Betsy Hull, Head Librarian
CADL OKEMOS
4321 Okemos Rd. • 517-347-2021

Our physical collection is available, too! Call your branch or browse for books, movies and more at cadl.org/catalog. Schedule a pickup by phone or at cadl.org/MyTime.





EMERGENCY warning sirens

The 9th outdoor warning siren was installed in 2020 at Marshall Park on Bliss Street. Warning sirens are used in emergency situations and can be found throughout the Township. Each siren covers a 5,000 ft. radius.

In 2018, the Township Board set a goal to have all Township residents within coverage area of a siren. Six more sirens are expected to be installed by 2026.



NEW FLEET ADDITION meridian fire department

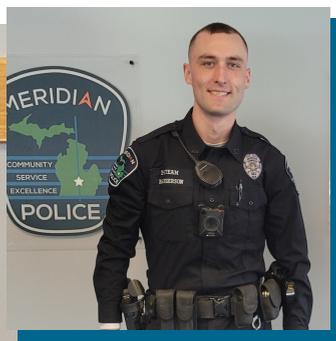
The Fire Department is getting a new Ladder Truck to replace the current Ladder Truck from 1999. The new truck will take up to 14 months to build and is expected to be delivered in February 2022.

The E-ONE 78' Rear Mount Typhoon Aerial Ladder Truck will be built with the ability to be used as a Ladder or Engine depending on the emergency. The Police & Fire Protection Millage, approved by Township voters in 2017, covered all the costs associated with this purchase.

NEW K9 TEAM meridian police department



2020
41 Total Searches
20 Narcotics Searches



“ Being a canine handler has been an extremely rewarding experience for me. No matter if Ares and I are tracking a suspect, meeting people at a community event or helping to find a missing person, I feel like I am making a difference in the community. ”

With the retirement of K9 Officer Yukon in 2019, the Police Department purchased another K9 in 2020. Officer Blaine Anderson and his partner K9 Officer Ares are the new K9 Team. K9 Ares is a 2-year-old German Shepherd imported from Poland and purchased through Mid-Michigan Police K9. The Team is trained in article searches, building searches, narcotics detection and tracking.



AWARDS and recognition

ARCHIE VIRTUE award recipient



Robin Faust

Meridian Township celebrates Robin Faust for her commitment and dedication to the community as the 2020 Archie Virtue Excellence Award (AVEA) Recipient.

Robin celebrated 31 years with Meridian Township in October 2020. She received the award for her hard work and dedication to the Township and to the residents she serves as the Administrative Assistant for the Parks & Recreation Department.

In 2017, Meridian Township began the AVEA honoring Meridian Township employee, Archie Virtue. He was known for his long-term commitment to Meridian Township, his extremely positive attitude and unparalleled work ethic. Archie was an employee of Meridian Township for 57 years, retiring in June 2018. Archie passed away in November 2018. He was beloved by all who knew him and is greatly missed.

BEST OF THE BEST top assistant manager



Derek N. Perry

The Michigan Municipal Executives (MME) held its annual conference to recognize and honor this year's recipients for the "Best of the Best" in Michigan awards. Meridian's Deputy Township Manager Derek N. Perry was selected for the Best of the Best Top Assistant Manager award.

The MME works to provide members' professional development, support their personal growth and promote the municipal executive profession in Michigan. The MME seeks to enhance management excellence, continuous improvement, and high ethical standards by recognizing top executives across Michigan through the "Best of the Best" awards.

The "Top Assistant Manager" award recognizes a deputy or assistant that has demonstrated outstanding performance, particularly with a special project or during a period of unique conditions and circumstances.



Meridian Cares Emergency Needs Fund Supports the Community

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit early in 2020, the Meridian Cares Team provided information on resources available to the community. As the pandemic continued, Township staff worked with community partners to try and ensure that residents could remain safely housed, with their basic needs met. Approximately 400 Meridian households were connected to resources in the community, keeping 29 households from being evicted and providing food baskets to over 200 local households for the holidays.

If you or someone you know needs assistance, please contact Meridian Township Human Services Specialist Darla Jackson at jackson@meridian.mi.us or call 517.853.4204. For information about the Meridian Cares Program or to make a tax-deductible donation, visit meridian.mi.us/MeridianCares.



5151 Marsh Road
Okemos, MI 48664

Connect With Us

#APrimeCommunity

 MeridianTownship

 @meridiantwp

 @meridiantownship

 Meridian Township

 Meridian Township

 517.853.4000

 communications@meridian.mi.us

 meridian.mi.us



Communications
Commission

HOMTV Internship/Alumni



To: Communications Commission
From: Brandie Yates, Communications Manager
Date: March 23, 2021
Re: Golden Tape Awards (GTA) 2021 Virtual Ceremony Overview

On February 25, 2021, HOMTV hosted a Virtual Intern Appreciation and Golden Tape Awards Ceremony to celebrate the commitment and hard work of the 2020 HOMTV Interns. Approximately 48 people joined the live virtual event via Zoom.

2020 was a difficult year, but the HOMTV interns persevered during a pandemic and produced quality work. They continued being a valuable asset to the Meridian Township community by volunteering many unpaid hours to provide residents with hyperlocal news and programming. Although the HOMTV Internship Program looked differently, HOMTV interns were still able to produce more than 200 online articles and videos in 2020.

The event featured 8 “Golden HOMie” specialty awards, 7 HOMTV alumni testimonial videos and 3 HOMTV alumni guest speakers.

Event Guest Speakers:

- Treasure Roberts, 2016 HOMTV Alumni and Reporter for WKMG News 6 in Orlando, FL.
- Bryan (Reynolds) June, 2016 HOMTV Alumni and Senior Digital Media Coordinator for Premiere Digital in Los Angeles, CA.
- Adriana Coterio, 2016 HOMTV Alumni and Weekday TV News Reporter/Anchor for KUAM News in Guam.

The virtual ceremony is available to view online at <http://bit.ly/HOMTVGTA2021>.