

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
TOWNSHIP BOARD VIRTUAL REGULAR MEETING **-APPROVED-**  
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos MI 48864-1198  
517-349-1232, Virtual Meeting via Zoom  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2021 **6:00 pm.**

PRESENT: Supervisor Styka, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Jackson, Opsommer, Sundland, Wisinski

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Township Manager Walsh, Director of Public Works Perry, Fire Chief Hamel, Police Chief Plaga, Community Planning and Development Director Kieselbach, Information Technology Director Gebes, Parks and Recreation Director Maisner, Finance Director Mattison, Human Resources Director Tithof, Economic Development and Neighborhoods Director Clark, Communications Manager Yates, Principal Planner Menser

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Supervisor Styka called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS

Supervisor Styka led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Clerk Guthrie called the roll of the Board.

4. PRESENTATIONS

- A. Introduction of New Police Officers – Chief Plaga introduced Sierra Alvarado and Megan Heinemann
- B. Form Based Code Initiative – Scott Hendrickson, Planning Commission Chair, reviewed the Form Based Code Initiative and outlined the proposed next steps in the approval process. The Planning Commission will be submitting the Initiative to the Board for review. Chair Hendrickson suggested a subcommittee be formed with members from the Township Board, Planning Commission and others to reach a shared vision.
- C. Redi-Ride Update – Steven Vagnozzi, Transportation Commission Chair, offered an overview of the Redi-Ride Program.

5. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Supervisor Styka opened public remarks at 7:01 pm.

David Pierson, 1142 S. Washington, Lansing, spoke in support of applicant's request and conditions offered for Rezoning #20050 (DTN 2013 LLC).

Phyllis Vaughn, 6100 Balog Court, Haslett, asked the Board to consider a policy for board members to be paid for only one board meeting absence a year and all other missed meetings are unpaid. She also spoke in opposition to recreational marihuana.

Raji Uppal, 6133 Cottage Drive, Haslett, spoke in support of Rezoning #20050 (DTN 2013 LLC).

David Straub, 1650 Tendale Blvd. East Lansing, representing Mayberry Homes, stated he was available to answer questions on agenda item #13C Powell Road Paving Public Road Improvement SAD.

Marvin Karana, DNVK 2, LLC, 29500 Telegraph Road, Ste. 250, Southfield; stated he represented a medical marihuana provisioning licensee at 1614 E. Grand River and spoke in favor of recreational marihuana.

Alan Shamoun, The Cured Leaf TC, 108 S. Main St. Suite A, Royal Oak; stated he represented is a medical marihuana provisioning licensee at 3520 Okemos Road and spoke in support of opting in for recreational marihuana.

Benjamin Joffe, Haslett Gallery LLC, 229 Depot Street, Ann Arbor; spoke in support for opting in for recreational marihuana.

Supervisor Styka closed public remarks at 7:21 pm.

6. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

Manager Walsh reported

- Deer Management Program – enhanced deer cull has received DNR approval and will begin later this month. The program has harvested 176 to date
- Small Business Grant Relief Program – received 128 applications and the committee will review the applications this Friday
- Village of Okemos – a public hearing has been scheduled for this Thursday at 6 pm and the meeting information is on website
- Annual Report – will be available on January 29
- Deputy Manager Perry's department assisted the City of Eaton Rapids with a major sewer line issue
- Congratulated Robin Faust on receiving the Archie Virtue Excellence Award
- Thanked Clerk Guthrie on her seamless and positive approach in rejoining the Township Team

7. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**Trustee Opsommer moved to amend the Agenda to add item #13E, Discussion on Adult Use of Recreational Marihuana. Seconded by Trustee Jackson**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Clerk Guthrie, Trustees Opsommer, Sundland, Jackson, Wisinski

NAYS: Supervisor Styka, Treasurer Deschaine

Motion carried: 5-2

**Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Trustee Opsommer**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Jackson, Opsommer, Sundland, Wisinski, Supervisor Styka, Clerk Guthrie

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

9. CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor Styka reviewed the consent agenda.

**Treasurer Deschaine moved to adopt the Consent Agenda as presented. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski.**

Discussion:

- It was the consensus to reduce the minutes to an overview since the meetings are recorded.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Opsommer, Sundland, Wisinski, Supervisor Styka, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Jackson

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

A. Communications

**Treasurer Deschaine moved that the communications be received and placed on file and any communications not already assigned for disposition be referred to the Township Manager or Supervisor for follow-up. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Opsommer, Sundland, Wisinski, Supervisor Styka, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Jackson

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

B. Approval of Minutes – November 23, 2020 Virtual Special Meeting; December 8, 2020 Virtual Regular Meeting; and December 18, 2020 Virtual Special Meeting

**Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve and ratify the minutes of the November 23, 2020 Virtual Special Meeting; December 8, 2020 Virtual Regular Meeting; and December 18, 2020 Virtual Special Meeting, as submitted. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Opsommer, Sundland, Wisinski, Supervisor Styka, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Jackson

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

C. Bills

**Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve that the Township Board approve the Manager's Bills as follows: Seconded by Trustee Wisinski**

<b>Common Cash</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>362,691.32</b>
<b>Public Works</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>292,394.17</b>
<b>Trust &amp; Agency</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b><u>373,606.32</u></b>
<b>Total Checks</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>1,028,691.81</b>
<b>Credit Card Transactions</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>21,133.92</b>
<b>12/02/2020-12/23/2020</b>		
<b>Total Purchases</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b><u>1,049,825.73</u></b>
<b>ACH Payments</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b><u>1,054,833.81</u></b>

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Opsommer, Sundland, Wisinski, Supervisor Styka, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Jackson

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

10. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY – NONE

11. HEARINGS - NONE

12. ACTION ITEMS

A. Township Board Liaisons to Boards and Commissions

**Trustee Jackson moved to approve the Board Member Assignments among the Boards and Commissions made by Supervisor Styka. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Sundland, Wisinski, Supervisor Styka, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Jackson, Opsommer

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

B. Proposed Zoning Amendment for Car Dealerships

**Trustee Opsommer moved to initiate a zoning amendment to Section 86-404 (C-2 Commercial District) and Section 86-405 (C-3 Commercial District) requiring a special use permit subject to Township Board approval and refer the proposed zoning amendment to**

**the Planning Commission to hold a public hearing and make a recommendation to the Township Board. Seconded by Treasurer Jackson**

Discussion:

- The recommendation is based on previous auto dealership requests and the proposed changes offer greater flexibility and oversight in the future

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustee Wisinski, Supervisor Styka, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Jackson, Sundland, Opsommer

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

C. Appointment of Supervisor Pro-Tem

Supervisor Styka offered a history regarding this appointment recommendation.

**Trustee Wisinski moved that the Board appoint, through December 31, 2021, Trustee Opsommer to act as Supervisor Pro Tem at any meeting of the Township Board wherein the Supervisor is absent. Seconded by Clerk Guthrie**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Opsommer, Sundland, Wisinski, Supervisor Styka, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Jackson

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. Rezoning #20050 (DTN 2013 LLC) rezone 31.63 acres east of Central Park Drive and north of Grand River Avenue from RA (Single Family-Medium Density) to RD (Multiple Family-maximum eight units per acre)

Principal Planner Menser provided a brief introduction on the rezoning request.

Discussion:

- The concept plan submitted with the rezoning request illustrates both regulated and unregulated wetlands; the concept plan will require a wetland use permit because of the wetland setbacks. Several concerns were raised regarding the wetlands and wetland setbacks
- Staff outlined the four proposed conditions that had been offered with the rezoning request and stated the conditions run with the land
- Applicant offered a new condition based on the length of time for the approval process of two years.
- Applicant stated they would work on a plan to reforest the area along Powell Road subject Road Department approval

- The current concept plan devotes the eastern third of the project for single family detached units
- It was requested that staff investigate if the density shown on the concept plan would work for the site

**Board consensus to place this item on the next Board meeting agenda.**

B. Procurement Policy

Finance Director Mattison presented an update to the Procurement Policy

Discussion:

- The auditors have not been consulted on the new limits but outside research was conducted for the policy
- All purchases require director approval
- This is a draft policy and the next step would be Township Board approval
- The current policy states any item purchased over \$5,000 requires an RFP; it is proposed to increase the amount to \$25,000; Manager Walsh does review large purchases with Directors prior to entering the approval process; all purchases are approved by the Finance Director

**Trustee Opsommer moved to suspend the rules to consider this item during the meeting. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine.**

VOICE/HAND VOTE: Motion carried 7-0.

**Trustee Opsommer moved to approve the Procurement Policy as presented in the Township Board packet dated January 5, 2021. Seconded by Clerk Guthrie**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Styka, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Jackson, Opsommer, Sundland, Wisinski,

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

C. Powell Road Paving Public Road Improvement SAD

Deputy Manager Perry outlined the Powell Road Public Road Improvement Special Assessment District by the Silverstone Estates developer Mayberry Homes.

Discussion:

- Total estimated project cost is \$460,000; the developer may recoup up to \$256,000
- The approval process includes five resolutions and two public hearings; and if this item is referred for action at the next Board meeting, then resolutions 1 and 2 will be addressed.

**Board consensus to place this item on the next Board meeting agenda.**

D. Non-Discrimination and Fair Employment Practices Policy

Trustee Wisinski outlined the proposed Non-Discrimination and Fair Employment Practices Policy.

Discussion:

- This is the “ban-the-box” policy with respect to removing wording regarding criminal backgrounds, but a background checks will be conducted if an applicant is offered a position
- This recommendation will also change the question regarding Veterans and their military records
- It was reported that within the next two years, many offenses will be automatically expunged
- Staff supports the goal of the proposed policy
- Language has been included to address applicants who will be handling funds

**Board consensus to place this item on the next Board meeting agenda.**

E. Discussion on Adult Use of Recreational Marihuana

Trustee Opsommer stated he wanted to continue the discussion on opting in for recreational marihuana and summarized the pros and cons.

Discussion:

- A summary was given on the adoption history of the medical marihuana ordinance
- Suggested a community forum be held to hear from residents, public health and safety individuals, schools, etc. before opting in
- Issue is if there is a public benefit for opting in
- Suggested holding a study session on February 16 or 23 with experts on the issues that have been raised
- Staff was directed to review the criteria, scoring, if two separate ordinances will be required as it was for medical marihuana, etc.
- Discussion of legal basis for medical marihuana permit holders being given recreational marihuana permits
- Manager Walsh stated he would reach out to other communities who have opted in for the meeting and ask the Township Attorney to outline the steps that need to be taken if the Township chooses to opt in; materials will be sent out prior to February meeting.

**Board consensus to place this item on a February Board meeting agenda.**

14. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Supervisor Styka Opened Public Remarks at 9:37 pm.

Alan Shamoun, The Cured Leaf TC, 108 S. Main St. Suite A, Royal Oak; spoke in support of opting in for recreational marihuana products in Meridian Township.

Phyllis Vaughn, 6100 Balog Court, Haslett, voiced opposition to recreational marihuana.

Benjamin Joffe, Haslett Gallery LLC, 229 Depot Street, Ann Arbor, spoke in support for opting in for recreational marihuana.

Timothy Hammond, 1801 N Hagadorn Road, East Lansing, asked if there are openings to serve on the Township Board and support the work of the Board.

Supervisor Styka Closed Public Remarks at 9:46 pm.

15. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Trustee Opsommer voiced concern about distributing misinformation on Township projects and topics.

Trustee Jackson reported a public hearing has been scheduled for Thursday, January 7, at 6 pm, to address an amendment to the MPUD and SUP for the Village of Okemos Project. Virtual meeting access is on the Township website

16. CLOSED SESSION - NONE

17. ADJOURNMENT

**Trustee Jackson moved to adjourn. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine**

VOICE/HAND VOTE: Motion carried 7-0.

**Supervisor Styka adjourned the meeting at 9:51 pm.**

---

RONALD J. STYKA,  
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

---

DEBORAH GUTHRIE,  
TOWNSHIP CLERK