

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, APRIL 20, 2021; 6:00 pm.

PRESENT: Supervisor Styka, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Jackson (arrive at 6:40 pm), Opsommer, Sundland, Wisinski

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Township Manager Walsh, Director of Public Works Perry, Fire Chief Hamel, 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, Parks and Land Management Coordinator Greenway, Land Stewardship Coordinator Campbell, Department of Public Works Utility Worker Ellis

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Supervisor Styka called the meeting to order at 6:02 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. Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH)

Edwin Taylor, Housing Services Mid-Michigan summarized the Path/Homelessness Outreach Team program that covers Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham Counties. He offered the presentation to outline the program and services, to introduce himself and his staff, and had left information cards for individuals in need of assistance that the Police Department may encounter.

B. 2020-2021 Deer Management Final Report

Parks and Recreation Department Director Maisner summarized the overall Deer Management Program and the 2020 Deer Archery Program and to celebrate the success of the partnerships between Meridian Township, Michigan Sportsmen Against Hunger, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, and resident volunteer hunters. Police Chief Plaga summarized the extended 2021 Police Deer Cull Program. State Representative Julie Brixie presented a certificate of appreciation to the Michigan Sportsmen Against Hunger.

5. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Supervisor Styka opened public remarks at 6:30 pm

Lynn Page, 3912 Raleigh Drive, Okemos, stated residents have initiated a referendum to oppose recreational marijuana businesses in the Township. Volunteers have gathered over 700 signatures and hope to place this initiative on the ballot for the residents to decide. They will be submitting the required documentation to the Township Clerk to insure that any decision made on this request represents the community as a whole.

Peter Glendenning, 2654 Linden Street, East Lansing, stated he participates in the Deer Management Program. It is a good group of friends and thanked staff and the Board for their support of the program. He has heard enthusiasm from his fellow hunters, the appreciation from the surrounding properties owners where they hunt and the donations from the hunt. He looks forward to continued participation in the program.

Matt DeLong, 2192 Belding Court, stated he and his wife participate in the Deer Management Program and thanked the Board for putting the program in place. It is a great opportunity to volunteer while doing something you enjoy outdoors and get to help feed people in the Township. He thanked the staff for dealing with the concerns of everyone who participates in the program and plans to continue participating in the program.

Thomas Potter, 1514 Downing Street, thanked staff for the opportunity to participate in the program. It was very successful this year and glad to assist in feeding the hungry. He plans to continue participating in the program.

Supervisor Styka closed public remarks at 6:20 pm.

6. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

Manager Walsh reported

- Thanked everyone who participated and was involved in the Deer Management Program
- Last four weeks have been recruiting for the new director for Community Planning and Development. He thanked the interview committee participants, have interview the top candidates and extended an offer. He will update the Board soon
- Buddy's Pizza has submitted their building permit for the former Burger King Restaurant property.
- Will be meeting with Joe's on Jolly Road to discuss development issues
- Thanked the Township's 18 Administrative Professionals for Administrative Professionals Day on April 21.
- Township is being challenged on a Prevailing Wage Policy and staff is addressing it
- Congratulated John Heckaman, Chief Building Official, who on April 14 celebrated 24 years with the Township
- Next Township Board Meeting is on Thursday, May 6 due to the Special Election on May 4. Agenda items include the rezoning on Jolly Road where the Midwest Power Company is located
- Food Pantry Update: thanked the Clerk for taken on this project; the Township Supervisor for the legislation passed quickly, Director Kieselbach for administering the program and getting it quickly through his office. Deputy Township Manager Perry stated a pantry has been placed at the Okemos and Haslett Libraries and volunteers are stocking them. He is currently working on the location for the third party and asked for location ideas. Manager Walsh stated this was great team work and thank Cecelia Kramer who has been active in getting this program started
- Thanked Clerk Guthrie for addressing parking, accessibility and other issues voters may have at polling locations with Deputy Township Manager Perry and his staff. Actions such as this will make for better elections

7. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Trustee Opsommer:

- Offered an updated on recent legislation from Attorney Harkness to Representative Brixie on fixing an Operating While Intoxicated (OWI) issue. A public act was passed last year stating officers could make an arrest for OWI offenses resulting in personal injury or property damage; however for a basic OWI, the statute required the officer to issue an appearance ticket and release the individual which is not standard practice. During discussions with parties involved, it was discovered this was a drafting oversight and there not an intent to distinguish between these OWI offenses. Representative Brixie introduced a bill, Attorney Harkness testified, and the new bill will allow law enforcement to provide for public safety without having to give cause.

Trustee Wisinski:

- Environmental Commission did unanimously supported the recommendation of two green infrastructure grants. \$3,000 for an outdoor learning lab at Haslett Middle School and \$4,750 for the pathway to discovery and nature trail at Montessori Rademoor School. There was a \$1,000 pledge from Grainger. This leaves \$3,000 in the budget for either grant applicant to increase their grant budget or the Commission could find for another project to fund.
- Two new commissioners on the Environmental Commission and Kendra Grasseschi has been appointed as the Environmental Commission representative on the Land Preservation Advisory Board.

Treasurer Deschaine:

- Deputy Treasurer MaryAnn Group will celebrate 33 years of service this week. She has served a majority of her time in Utility Billing and the Treasurer's Office. Much of the success of Department is due to MaryAnn's hard work and dedication. She was also one of the original winners of the Archie Virtue Excellence Award instituted by Manager Walsh.
- Thanked the citizens for volunteering, being engaged, well-informed and generous and are fortunate to serve them

Clerk Guthrie:

- Thanked Manager Walsh for his kind comments. She also thanked the Meridian Company for building the pantries, buying the materials and foods. Thanked Thomas Moore, from Haslett Library, for assisting her in separating the food for the pantries and delivering to the Haslett Library site. She received a kind note from CADL on the food pantries.
- Thanked Manager Walsh for the kind words regarding addressing the accessibility issues at the polling locations. She also thanked the Okemos School District staff and Director Perry and his staff for addressing the polling location and the needs of the voters.
- Special Election on Tuesday, May 4 with polls opening at 7 am. Precincts 7 and 15 are both located at Kinawa Middle School and Precinct 10 and 12 are located at Wardcliff School.
- Attended the Community Resource Commission meeting and they are drafting a letter of support for broadband
- Attended the Friend of Okemos Library meeting and they are planning an outdoor book sale and discuss the possible location of Central Park Pavilion with staff

8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve the revised agenda as presented. Seconded by Trustee Opsommer

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

9. CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor Styka reviewed the consent agenda.

Trustee Wisinski moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Seconded by Trustee Sundland

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

A. Communications

Trustee Wisinski move the communications not already assigned for disposition be referred to the Township Manager or Supervisor for follow-up. Seconded by Trustee Sundland

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

B. Approval of Minutes – March 16, 2021 Virtual Regular Meeting

Trustee Wisinski moved to approve and ratify the minutes of the March 30, 2021 Virtual Regular Meeting, as submitted. Seconded by Trustee Sundland

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

C. Bills

Trustee Wisinski moved to approve that the Township Board approve the Manager’s Bills as follows: Seconded by Trustee Sundland

Common Cash		\$	242,146.02
Public Works		\$	549,700.74
Trust & Agency		\$	<u>20.00</u>
	Total Checks	\$	791,866.76
Credit Card Transactions		\$	5,936.18
04.08.2021 – 04.14.2021			
	Total Purchases	\$	<u>797,802.94</u>
ACH Payments		\$	<u>488,721.82</u>

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

D. Lake Lansing Advisory Committee Re-Appointments

Trustee Wisinski move that the following property owners be re-appointed to the Lake Lansing Watershed Advisory Committee for terms expiring April 30, 2023: Susan Andrews, 6076 Columbia; Ronald Rowe, 6247 E Lake Drive; Larry Wagenknecht, 6097 Partridge. Seconded by Trustee Sundland

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

10. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY – NONE

11. HEARINGS - NONE

12. ACTION ITEMS

- A. Zoning Amendment #21010 (Township Board) amend the Code of Ordinances to require Township Board approval of a special use permit for motor vehicle sales and service establishments and automobile dealerships in the C-2 and C-3 (Commercial) zoning district-
Introduction

Trustee Opsommer move to adopt the resolution approving Zoning Amendment #21010 to amend the Code of Ordinances to require Township Board approval of special use permits

for motor vehicle sales and service establishments and automobile dealerships in the C-2 and C-3 (Commercial) zoning districts. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

B. Resolution in Celebration of Earth Day and Arbor Day

Deputy Manager Perry outlined the resolution honoring Earth Day and Arbor Day in April.

Treasurer Deschaine move to adopt Resolution in Celebration of Earth Day and Arbor Day 2021. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski

Discussion:

- Director Maisner stated with COVID the Love a Park Month program has been designed for individuals and groups to sign up for volunteer projects in the parks and land preserves. Staff will provide the material at the designated location and volunteers are asked to take and post picture of their clean up and planting activities.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

C. 2021 1st Quarter Budget Amendments

Trustee Jackson moved to approve the 1st Quarter 2021 Budget Amendments with a decrease in Budgeted Fund Balance for the General Fund in the amount of 391,310 which projects a use of Fund Balance of \$1,359,185. Based on 2020 results, the Projected Fund Balance at December 31, 2021 will be \$8,904,600. Seconded by Trustee Sundland

Discussion:

- Director Maisner outlined 1st Quarter Budget Amendments.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

D. Deer Management Resolution of Appreciation

Trustee Wisinski move to approve the attached Resolution of Appreciation to Michigan Sportsmen Against Hunger for their generous support of the Meridian Township Deer Management Program since 2011, and to extend additional appreciation to all 75 volunteer hunters for their efforts in conducting a safe and successful 2020 Deer Management Season. Seconded by Trustee Jackson

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Citizen Climate Commitment

Environmental Commission Chair John Sarver stated the initial concept was developed by the Energy Team, and reviewed and approved by the Environmental Commission. The electric grid is moving primarily to use renewable energy (solar and wind power) in the future. In the State of Michigan, renewable energy is currently at 10-15 percent. Consumers Energy plans to be at 40 percent by 2035. The focus is now on what to do with buildings and transportation. The strategy being discussed is to electrify as much as possible. This initiative will be an educational effort to further the implementation of our Climate Sustainability Plan, to encourage citizens to pre-plan purchases such as furnaces, hot water heaters, etc. and move away from natural gas and gasoline.

Trustee Wisinski stated the State of Michigan is moving toward a more sustainable renewable energy source and many of the electric vehicle recharging stations are solar powered. It is more efficient and a cost benefit to consumers to move toward electric.

Discussion:

- Chair Sarver stated it would be helpful to have the Township Board's endorsement of the Citizen Climate Plan because it will show the citizens that it is a worthy endeavor.

Trustee Opsommer moved to suspend the rules and take action on this item this evening. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski.

VOICE/HAND VOTE: Motion carried 7-0

Trustee Opsommer move to endorse and support the Citizen's Climate Commitment as recommended by the Meridian Township Environmental Commission including the Department of Public Works creating the web page. Seconded by Trustee Jackson

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

14. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Supervisor Styka Opened Public Remarks at 7:37 pm.

None

Supervisor Styka Closed Public Remarks at 7:38 pm.

15. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Treasurer Deschaine reference the inquiry about Meridian Cares and suggested the Board invite members of the Community Resource Commission to make a presentation in May offering an update on their experiences in the community, fundraising efforts, etc.

Director Maisner reported the fund balance in the Meridian Cares Fund is \$187,000.

Clerk Guthrie expressed appreciation to Director Maisner, Park and Land Management Coordinator Greenway and Chief Plaga for a successful Deer Management Program. She recognized the massive organizational efforts and safety precautions the Parks and Recreation Department and Department of Public Works teams and Chief Plaga and his team along with the process of distributing the meat donated safely to people in need.

Trustee Jackson also offered congratulations on what appears to be and serves to be a well-planned, well-organized and very productive Deer Management Program. Thank you.

Director Maisner accepted the kind words and stated it is totally a team effort by her staff, Department of Public Work, the Police Department and the volunteers. This program brings the community together. With the extended hunt, the program runs eight months and although there are hiccups, it is successful program.

Supervisor Styka extended his appreciation to Chief Plaga and his team for participating this year in the extended hunt.

16. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Wisinski moved to adjourn. Seconded by Trustee Jackson

VOICE/HAND VOTE: Motion carried 7-0

Supervisor Styka adjourned the meeting at 7:42 pm.

RONALD J. STYKA,
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

DEBORAH GUTHRIE,
TOWNSHIP CLERK