

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
REGULAR MEETING TOWNSHIP BOARD 2022 **-APPROVED-**  
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos MI 48864-1198  
853-4000, Township Hall Room  
TUESDAY, May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022 **6:00 pm**

PRESENT: Supervisor Jackson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski

ABSENT:

STAFF: Township Manager Walsh, Assistant Township Manager and Director of Public Works Opsommer, Chief of Police Plaga, Fire Chief Hamal, Community Planning and Development Director Schmitt, Director of Economic Development Clark, IT Director Gebes, Finance Director Garber, Parks and Recreation Director Maisner, Clerk's Assistant Zachary Lemaster, Multimedia Staff Samantha Diehl

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

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

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS

Supervisor Jackson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLLCALL

Clerk's Assistant Lemaster called the roll of the Board. All Present.

4. PRESENTATION

A. Introduction of New Police Officers

Chief Plaga introduced two new police officers Isabella Acker and Jack Akers to the board.

Officers Acker and Akers introduced themselves and thanked the board.

B. Brightline Technologies

Director Gebes introduced Joel Kolodsick and James Cabalam from Brightline technologies.

Mr. Kolodsick gave a presentation on their assessment of the townships Information and Technology system.

Treasurer Deschaine asked if the township has been doing enough to train staff to safely use available technology.

Mr. Cabalam replied that additional development could be useful and suggested implementing formal training.

Director Gebes stated part of the cost shown today includes the formalized training program.

Trustee Hendrickson asked what the current annual recurring cost is, and if this is new cost.

Director Gebes replied there is a low cost of ownership currently as the township hasn't bought into current licensing scheme.

Trustee Hendrickson asked if there will be a phased approach for the purchase.

Director Gebes replied it's been considered and covered the pros and cons of both approaches.

Trustee Hendrickson asked if another \$730,000 bill should be expected in 2028.

Director Gebes replied that it depends on licensing purchases, but that the township will have to purchase new switches at some point.

Mr. Kolodsick stated that it's hard to gauge that far as technology is always changing and improving.

Mr. Cabalam stated that replacing all at once makes things easier as platforms will be consistent, but that it's hard to guess what things will look like in six years.

5. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Supervisor Jackson opened Public Remarks at 6:21 pm

NONE

Supervisor Jackson Closed Public remarks at 6:22 pm.

6. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

Manager Walsh reported last week that Chief Plaga, Director Maisner, Treasurer Deschaine and himself spoke about several issues with the Indian Hills Neighborhood where Trustee Wilson is a board member. He reported the local road program is continuing under Assistant Manager Opsommer and the solar project is moving forward at the Public Safety Building. The Juneteenth event has been scheduled for Monday June 20<sup>th</sup> and the office will be closed at noon. The township audit is moving forward. He also went to Mount Pleasant for a site visit at the Broadway Lofts project with Supervisor Jackson, Trustee Sundland, Treasurer Deschaine, Director Schmitt and Director Clark. He noted contract negotiations are continuing with four bargaining groups.

Director Maisner gave an overview of Celebrate Meridian explaining that children's activities will be available on site, the farmers market will be active from 8 am to 2 pm, live music will playing from 4 pm to 10 pm, then a fireworks display at 10:20 pm. Residents who wish to volunteer for Celebrate Meridian may do so though the township website.

7. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS OF ACTIVITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Treasurer Deschaine

- Attended Economic Development Corporation meeting on May 4<sup>th</sup>
- Attending swearing in of new police officers on May 9<sup>th</sup>
- May 12<sup>th</sup> was the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of CATA
- Attended Meridian Area Business Association meeting May 13<sup>th</sup>

8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**Trustee Sundland moved to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Trustee Wilson.**

VOICE VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Jackson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

9. CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor Jackson reviewed the Consent Agenda.

Trustee Hendrickson noted the minutes had a small adjustment and item 9.G has been substituted .

**Trustee Hendrickson moved to approve the Consent Agenda with amendments and substitutions. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine.**

Treasurer Deschaine asked if Clerk Guthrie had any concern on having four polling locations in one precinct and why precincts are moving out of schools.

Clerk Guthrie explained the precincts were split to avoid having two or more ballot styles and that schools wanted to see polling locations moved to avoid people carrying firearms into schools when voting. She further stated each location has been reviewed, and when multiple precincts are in one location the Voter Assist Terminal may be shared across those precincts, saving the township money.

Trustee Hendrickson stated that jurisdictions have seen the ratio of in person and mail in votes flipped, and about 75% of voters now vote absentee.

Supervisor Jackson asked about sending voter ID cards to each voter in the township.

Clerk Guthrie stated by law each voter must receive a new ID due to redistricting.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Jackson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

A. Communications

**Trustee Hendrickson moved that the communications not already assigned for disposition be referred to the Township Manager or Supervisor for follow-up. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Jackson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

B. Approval of Minutes – May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022 Regular Meeting

**Trustee Hendrickson moved to approve and ratify the minutes of May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022 Regular Meeting as amended. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Jackson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

C. Bills

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

Common Cash		\$	291,652.76
Public Works		\$	39,991.45
Trust & Agency		\$	<u>935.75</u>
	Total Checks	\$	332,579.96
Credit Card Transactions		\$	6,250.54
04/28/22 to 05/11/2022			
	Total Purchases	\$	<u>340,221.09</u>
ACH Payments		\$	<u>550,458.39</u>

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Jackson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

D. Outdoor Gathering Permit-Celebrate Meridian

**Trustee Hendrickson moved to approve the outdoor assembly license for the Celebrate Meridian festival to be held on June 25, 2022 in Central Park and Marketplace on the Green. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Jackson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

E. Waiving Sec. 50-84, Subsection (4) for the Grand River Ave Construction Project

**Trustee Hendrickson moved to waive section 50-84, subsection (4) in our code of ordinances to permit MDOT and its contractor and subcontractors working on the Grand River Ave. (m-43) construction project to conduct construction work between the hours of 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. on Sundays until Sunday, December 11, 2022. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Jackson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

F. Township Mileage Rate

**Trustee Hendrickson moved to retain the township's mileage reimbursement of 62.5 cents per mile. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Jackson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

G. Establishing Polling Places for August Primary

**Trustee Hendrickson move to approve the abolishment of current precinct locations and establishment of NEW precinct locations as substituted and directs the Clerk to update the state qualified database as soon as possible AND mail updated voter ID cards to every voter**

in the township and change notices as required by MCL 168.499(3)). **Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Jackson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

10. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY – NONE

11. HEARINGS-NONE

12. ACTION ITEMS

A. Village of Okemos LLC, Meridian Redevelopment Fund Request No. 2

Director Clark outlined Village of Okemos LLC, Meridian Redevelopment Fund Request No. 2.

**Trustee Sundland moved to adopt the attached resolution authorizing Township Staff to create a Development Agreement with the Village of Okemos, LLC for the use of the Meridian Redevelopment Fund; and set the terms of the funding request with the developer not to exceed \$1,250,000. Seconded by Trustee Wilson.**

Trustee Sundland spoke in support of this item.

Trustee Wilson spoke in support of this item as the money being spent is for public infrastructure.

Treasurer Deschaine stated if this is not approved the money would not be spent and the infrastructure would not be fixed.

Manager Walsh stated these roads are in horrible condition and will be repaired regardless. Approving this request will fix the roads and the township will be reimbursed, saving the residents tax dollars.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski, Supervisor Jackson

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

B. Ordinance 2022-05 – Nonresidential Fence Height – **Final Adoption**

Director Schmitt outlined Ordinance 2022-05 – Nonresidential Fence Height for Final Adoption.

**Treasurer Deschaine moved to adopt the resolution approving for final adoption Zoning Amendment 2022-05 to amend Section 86-506 of the Charter Township of Meridian Zoning Code, an ordinance to update the maximum height of fences, walls, and screens in non-residential zoning districts. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski.**

Treasurer Deschaine stated this came from the Zoning Board of Appeals and asked Director Schmitt to explain more.

Director Schmitt stated the Zoning Board of Appeals came across this in a recent case and is looking for more flexibility.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson  
Wisinski, Supervisor Jackson, Clerk Guthrie

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

**C. Ordinance 2022-06 – Deck/Porch Encroachments Into Yards – Final Adoption**

Director Schmitt outlined Ordinance 2022-06 – Deck/Porch Encroachments Into Yards for Final Adoption.

**Trustee Hendrickson moved to adopt the resolution approving for final adoption Zoning Amendment 2022-06 to amend Section 86-564 of the Charter Township of Meridian Zoning Code, an ordinance to update the permitted yard encroachments in residential zoning districts. Seconded by Trustee Wilson.**

Trustee Hendrickson spoke in support of this item.

Trustee Wilson spoke in support of this item.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustee Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski, Supervisor  
Jackson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine,

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

**D. Ordinance 2022-07 – RRR District Deletion – Final Adoption**

Director Schmitt outlined Ordinance 2022-07 RRR District Deletion for Final Adoption.

Treasurer Deschaine asked how RRR is different than RR.

Director Schmitt Explained that RR functions as the most rural district with slightly larger lot sizes, setbacks and lot width requirements than the RRR district

**Trustee Wilson moved to adopt the resolution approving for final adoption Zoning Amendment 2022-07 to amend the Zoning Ordinance of the Charter Township of Meridian at multiple sections to delete the RRR, One-Family Rural Residential Low Density District from the Zoning Ordinance. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski.**

Trustee Wilson spoke in support of this item.

Trustee Wisinski spoke in support of this item.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski, Supervisor Jackson, Treasurer Deschaine, Clerk Guthrie, Trustees Hendrickson

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

E. Brownfield Redevelopment Appointment

Supervisor Jackson outlined the Brownfield Redevelopment Appointment.

**Supervisor Jackson moved to appoint Peter Trezise to the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority for a term ending 12/31/23. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine.**

VOICE VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Jackson, Trustees Wilson, Wisinski, Treasurer Deschaine, Clerk Guthrie, Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Special Use Permit - 22-051- Bickford House Okemos, 3830 and 3836 Okemos Road - Building > 25,000 square feet

Director Schmitt outlined Special Use Permit - 22-051- Bickford House Okemos, 3830 and 3836 Okemos Road, building greater than 25,000 square feet for discussion. He explained the Planning Commission has already reviewed this item and gave unanimous approval.

Treasurer Deschaine asked if the Director Schmitt's department has received complaints from surrounding residents.

Director Schmitt stated no, but some did come up during the Planning Commission meeting that will be addressed during construction of the next phase.

Trustee Hendrickson spoke in support of this item and asked about building security as the facility is a memory care unit on a busy road.

Applicant's Representative, Richard Eby, 13112 W. 126th St., Overland Park, Kansas replied the residents are not allowed to leave the building unsupervised, and wear an item that will alarm staff if a resident is near an open door. The item also shows where residents are at all times. There are two monitored exit doors, and visitors will be given a fob to enter the building. He stated if a resident attempts to leave with a visitor the alarm will still go off.

Trustee Wilson asked how staff will follow up with tree removal and dirt removal from the hill in the back of the building.

Director Schmitt stated the trees on the northern side of the property will remain and a double row of trees will be planted on the east side.

Trustee Wilson asked if there will be protection from construction noise for nearby residents.

Director Schmitt replied the applicant will be held accountable as every other construction project will be.

#### B. American Rescue Plan Funding – 1<sup>st</sup> Round Appropriation

Manager Walsh outlined American Rescue Plan Funding, 1<sup>st</sup> round appropriation for discussion and explained the first \$2,700,000 has been received and this discussion is only on the first half of ARPA funds, \$1,300,000 of which to local roads and \$970,000 for IT.

Treasurer Deschaine spoke about problems with internet in his department and spoke in support of the manager's current plan.

Trustee Hendrickson spoke in support of the current plan and asked about timing for using funding as match money for trails and parks.

Manager Walsh stated extensive work has been done on the pathways over the past few years and sees the current funding plan as a priority.

Trustee Hendrickson stated \$800,000 obligated to roads won't be spent until next year whereas \$800,000 could be better spent now while matching funds are available.

Trustee Wilson stated that receiving matching funds is only available for parks and trails and the money could be better spent elsewhere.

Assistant Manager Opsommer clarified that Consumers Energy has informed him he will be waiting for six months just to hear on preliminary pathways easements, and the matching funds is possibly not even available, however he does need a commitment on road money.

Clerk Guthrie stated the township is good at finding grants and matching funds. If there was an opportunity for better usage of this money the Manager would have mentioned it.

Manager Walsh replied he believes this money should go to roads as he believes they are the residents' biggest complaint. He further stated he would have brought any matching funds to the board.

Treasurer Deschaine also spoke about the township's history of finding matching grants and spoke about the board telling the residents they would fix 155 miles of roads in 2019.

Trustee Hendrickson asked the board to consider the money in its totality so to move forward with other projects immediately while the roads can be funded later with the second round of ARPA funding.

Trustee Wisinski spoke about a previous discussion concerning roads and IT and asked Assistant Manager Opsommer if he needs to know the money will be available soon.

Assistant Manager Opsommer stated he needs to give engineering a list of roads and is in the second round of bonding that needs to be obligated in six months. He further stated he needs to know how much will be obligated to roads so not to spend too much on engineering costs.

Trustee Wilson asked if the board could guarantee to the Manager and staff that some money will be taken from the first round of funding, and the rest will come from the second round.

Manager Walsh stated it can be done that way, but he wants Assistant Manager Opsommer to know the money will be available to him, he also explained if the roads get worse and some money is already spent their may not be enough in the second to cover the rest of the road work required.

Treasurer Deschaine stated this money could be necessary to complete the board's goals with the roads.

Manager Walsh spoke about the list of roads that need to be worked on and suggested adding more roads to the list with the allocated \$1,300,000 of funding.

Trustee Hendrickson stated that if more money can be spent on roads this year that he would have no issue obligating the money now.

Manager Walsh stated it would be cheaper to do the road work this year than next year.

Supervisor Jackson stated the proposal in front of the board is for IT and road spending and asked the manager to bring this back for action at the next meeting.

#### C. Township Signage

Assistant Manager Opsommer outlined the Township Signage plan for discussion. He stated he is currently securing easements for the east, west and south township signs.

Treasurer Deschaine asked if the easement for the Haslett Rd. sign has been granted.

Assistant Manager Opsommer stated the sign was installed in 2013-14 by the Haslett Beautification Association.

Treasurer Deschaine noted the sign is about half a mile into the township.

Assistant Manager Opsommer replied it was intended to be a welcoming sign to downtown Haslett.

Treasurer Deschaine asked where the Haslett Rd. sign would be located.

Assistant Manager Opsommer replied just south of Towner Rd.

Manager Walsh spoke in support of this item, and thanked Clerk Guthrie and former Supervisor LeGoff for the previous work they put into this project.

Clerk Guthrie spoke in support of this item and asked what happens to the old signs.

Assistant Manager Opsommer stated they would be recycled, unless there was a desire to keep them.

Clerk Guthrie asked who would manage the electronic sign.

Assistant Manager Opsommer stated it's planned to change once a day by a computer system.

Clerk Guthrie asked why the back of the sign does not show blue on the tail.

Assistant Manager Opsommer replied the idea was the tail would be hidden and the back of the sign would look like a perfect oval.

Clerk Guthrie asked about putting the whole sign in the oval.

Assistant Manager Opsommer stated there would be a blue border around the logo on the front of the sign.

Clerk Guthrie asked about the Central Park sign using italicized words.

Assistant Manager Opsommer stated that was a mistake.

Treasurer Deschaine asked about the sign on Dobie Rd.

Assistant Manager Opsommer replied those are standard signs by MDOT and will stay.

Trustee Wisinski asked how it was decided which park signs would be worked on first.

Assistant Manager Opsommer replied Director Maisner chose based on need.

#### D. Establishing of a Commercial Rehabilitation District 1655 & 1621 Haslett Road

Director Clark outlined the Establishing of a Commercial Rehabilitation District 1655 & 1621 Haslett Road for discussion. She explained only two businesses exist in the complex at this time and the value of the property is continuously decreasing.

Trustee Hendrickson asked what would happen if the board took no action on this.

Director Clark stated the developer would not buy the property.

Treasurer Deschaine asked if the developer can they extend the 10-year deadline.

Director Clark stated there is no extension.

Trustee Wilson asked how the County will receive this.

Director Clark stated she received positive feedback from the County at this point.

Manager Walsh stated so far talks with the County have gone well.

Trustee Wisinski asked to clarify this type of development will be mixed use and be similar to the current development.

Director Clark replied it is similar.

Treasurer Deschaine spoke about the history of this property and a need for housing in Haslett.

Supervisor Jackson stated the board should indicate if they are interested and set a June 7<sup>th</sup> date for public hearing.

**Treasurer Deschaine moved to suspend the rules and take action on this item tonight.  
Seconded by Trustee Wilson.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Jackson, Treasurer Deschaine, Clerk Guthrie, Trustees  
Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski,

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

**Trustee Hendrickson moved to set a Public Hearing date for June 7<sup>th</sup> 2022 for the purpose of  
creating and Establishing of a Commercial Rehabilitation District 1655 & 1621 Haslett Road.  
Supported by Trustee Wilson.**

VOICE VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Wilson, Wisinski, Supervisor Jackson, Treasurer Deschaine,  
Clerk Guthrie, Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

#### E. Meeting Attendance Accommodations

Assistant Manager Opsommer outlined Meeting Attendance Accommodations for discussion.

Trustee Wilson asked if notices to the public would be changed by this action.

Assistant Manager Opsommer replied yes, virtual meeting information will be promoted.

Trustee Wilson asked who would control the zoom meetings.

Assistant Manager Opsommer replied Director Gebes and staff.

Treasurer Deschaine stated this item should have action soon to keep up with the Attorney General.

Trustee Wisinski spoke about the American with Disabilities Act Title 2 (Is that the right citation?) and not many boards and commissions would be covered by this.

Clerk Guthrie spoke in favor of this item, and if accommodations must be made that it be included in IT budget. She further spoke about not prohibiting seeing eye dogs from entering meetings.

F. Stimulus Inflationary Payment Program

Manager Walsh outlined the Stimulus Inflationary Payment Program for discussion. Payments would go out in June, total cost is just over \$400,000. Treasurer Deschaine, Clerk Guthrie and Manager Walsh will not receive the payment. This will also replace the \$1,000 retention bonus planned for December.

Treasurer Deschaine spoke in support of this item.

Trustee Wilson clarified this is a one-time payment not a permanent pay increase.

Trustee Wisinski spoke in support of this item and would like to look at this again for the next year.

Clerk Guthrie asked if there is a stipulation on the payment.

Manager Walsh stated the only condition is you must be employed by the time of approval.

Clerk Guthrie asked if any action would need to be taken to cancel the \$1,000 retention plan.

Manager Walsh stated by approving this plan, the older plan would be undone.

Trustee Hendrickson stated the Trustees are also not included in the plan.

14. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Supervisor Jackson Opened Public Remarks at 9:14 pm.

NONE

Supervisor Jackson Closed Public Remarks at 9:14 pm.

15. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Supervisor Jackson noted that in 2020 the board voted by resolution to proclaim the first Friday of June to be national gun violence awareness day and she would continue this effort with a moment of silence.

16. ADJOURNMENT

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

VOICE/HAND VOTE:                      Motion carried 7-0

**Supervisor Jackson adjourned the meeting at 9:17 pm.**

  
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PATRICIA H. JACKSON  
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

  
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ROBIN FAUST  
TOWNSHIP DEPUTY  
CLERK