

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MINUTES
Meridian Municipal Building – Town Hall Room
May 3, 2017 - APPROVED**

REGULAR MEETING

PRESENT: Chair Bill McConnell, Commissioners Ben Holland, Susan Masten, John Sarver, Jim Kielbaso, Kirk Lapham, and Marina Ionescu

ABSENT: Vice-Chair Ned Jackson

STAFF: Assistant Planner Jennifer Quinlivan

OTHERS: NONE

1. CALL REGULAR MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Bill McConnell called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

2. GREEN THEMES PRESENTATION:

Ingham County Drain Commissioner, Pat Lindemann presented on the historical and the current status of the Ingham County Drain system. The Drain Commission manages approximately 180 drains within Ingham County based on laws written in 1838. Today's approach to drain management incorporates a proactive philosophy. Based on this approach the Drain Commission has overseen the implementation and management of a variety of projects, such as, Towar Gardens, which was designed to reduce the flow rate of water into the Looking Glass River. The Smith Drain is an adjusted wetland complex built utilizing wetland plant materials and creating natural habitat. The Drain Commission partnered with developers, and the Township Land Preservation Advisory Board on the Ember Oaks Subdivision project to establish a recreational area and fix issues with runoff and erosion into a neighboring natural area. The newest project is the Nemoka Drain, which was built over 100 years ago. The project will address flooding and runoff in the Nemoka neighborhood and will begin construction in summer of 2017. The Environmental Commission questioned what the Drain Commission has observed as impacts to the drain system due to climate change. Commissioner Lindemann responded that a possible impact of climate change is the increasing rate of microburst rainfalls which increase pressures on drain infrastructure. However, the Drain Commission is proactively working to reduce impact through increased maintenance of drainage infrastructure and improving the natural ecosystems within drainage areas.

3. APPROVAL OF THE REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER KIELBASO TO APPROVE THE AGENDA. SUPPORTED BY COMMISSIONER SARVER. MOTION APPROVED 7-0.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM APRIL 5, 2017 MEETING

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER SARVER TO APPROVE THE MINUTES. SUPPORTED BY COMMISSIONER MASTEN. MOTION APPROVED 7-0.

5. PUBLIC REMARKS

NONE

6. NEW BUSINESS

NONE

7. OLD BUSINESS

NONE

8. CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair McConnell reported he was in the process of reviewing previous Green Themes presentations to extract key points and was preparing to relay those to the public through Township social media.

9. STAFF REPORT

Staff reported on speakers for the upcoming Green Theme presentations and requested speaker suggestions.

Staff reported, based on a request from the Commission, the Township Pathway Master Plan shows a paved shoulder along Lake Drive. The Commission requested staff to send them a link to the Township Pathway Master Plan.

10. COMMISSIONER SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Planning: Chair McConnell reminded the Commission of the ongoing Township Master Plan review and noted May 5, 2017 was the deadline for comments.

Land Preservation: Commissioner Kielbaso reported that 245 trees were planted on four preserves within the Township. At Lake Lansing, more than 90 students volunteered to plant 34 trees.

Energy Team: Commissioner Sarver reported the Township's Energy Team was completing the final draft of the Sustainability and Climate Action Plan. Commissioner Sarver suggested staff contact Michigan Energy Options for a potential Green Themes speaker.

Student Engagement: NONE

Parks: Commissioner Masten commented on the recent Friends of the Park presentation. The Park Commission is also in the process of applying for grants for future projects.

Transportation: NONE

11. PUBLIC REMARKS

NONE

12. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m. without objection.