



AGENDA
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
June 5, 2024 7 pm

Town Hall Meeting Room, 5151 Marsh Rd, Okemos

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
2. PUBLIC REMARKS
3. CHANGES TO/APPROVAL OF AGENDA
4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

5. NEW BUSINESS

New Application from Cynthia Peterson. High School Science Teacher in Haslett.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Proposals for Climate Sustainability-Related Funding

7. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Staff, Liaisons, Teams (Energy, Green, Food, etc.), Okemos High School, etc. invited to share updates.
Staff update can be found at <https://sites.google.com/view/staff-update/home>

8. PUBLIC REMARKS

9. ADJOURNMENT

May 2024 Environmental Commission Minutes: Draft

Attending: Bill McConnell, John Sarver, Yu Man Lee, Anna Colby, Amelia Saffron, Tom Frazier, Peter Trezise, Andrea Paul, LeRoy Harvey **Absent:** Graham Diedrich

Changes to/Approval of Agenda: McConnell suggested that the Climate Sustainability Plan funding discussion include a brief overview before discussing details.

Approval of Minutes: Frazier suggested correcting Mid-Michigan Environmental Action Council's name.

NEW BUSINESS

Climate Sustainability Funding: McConnell invited citizens attending to share proposal and projects. A representative/volunteer with the Meridian Gleaners spoke.

Meridian Gleaners: Dave Batten provided an overview of the Gleaning Initiative. Batten gave an overview of the program. There was 6900 pounds collected last year and distributed to seven area pantries. A primary goal is to expand the initiative and the ability to serve those in need. Another goal is to expand the interaction between the agencies, the community, and the vendors. Agencies will be invited to attend the market (once per season) to share information about their organization and shop for their pantry. Trezise asked about how the \$ would be distributed. Batten mentioned the possibility of coupons, potentially valued at \$100 per season per entity. Trezise voiced support for the idea and appreciated the clarification, so as to better describe the initiative to the Board of Trustees.

Wetland Education: Yu Man Lee described the items in the wetland education proposal which includes wetland signs for parks and preserves (information on buffer strips, wetland plants, etc.), residential signs, and a mailing to residents and property owners on or adjacent to wetlands. Colby asked for clarification on the budget estimates. Lee suggested that there is still uncertainty on the of signs and final quotes. McConnell asked about social media. Lee mentioned working with Emma Campbell and Rachael Stohlin (Meridian Communications Dept) about some additional videos or social media promotion. Trezise suggested that there may be some no cost options for promotion as well as mailings to realtors. McConnell asked about targeting new owners/residents that may not have received the initial mailing. There was some discussion about measuring success. Tracking citations was mentioned as an option.

Composting at the Market: Frazier gave an overview of this proposal which he helped draft. The goal is to encourage residents to compost food scraps by underwriting the cost for the food composting before a full transition to a subscription-based service. Lee asked about popularity of the program. Frazier mentioned that approximately 1000 compostable bags were distributed last season. Saffron asked about how many bags were returned? Trezise mentioned that many folks use their own containers/buckets. Frazier mentioned that we currently have two 65 gallon bins that are serviced every two weeks. Colby asked if the intent is shift to a subscription. Frazier mentioned that funding would help reduce dependency on subscriptions. Colby asked about how the Market is funded. Trezise mentioned partial support from Vendor Fees. Harvey mentioned that subscriptions and donations are up to \$600 and growing. Lee suggested some publicity \$ for outreach.

Signage for the Meridian Recycling Center: Frazier spoke with Trevor Hoover who manages the Recycling Center (www.reclaimedbydesign.com added by Harvey). A Green Team member has expressed the need for better signage in the drop-off area. The goal is to make it clearer to residents and reduce contamination. Ten signs are proposed for \$635 to make it easier for residents to navigate the Center. Harvey mentioned that there may be other improvements we'd like make to the recycling center with CSP funding.

Greenspace Plan Update: McConnell is enthusiastic about the proposal and feels this will be very appropriate at a future time, yet to be determined.

Green Burial: The Green Burial Team has spoken to the EC in the past. There is some interest in getting clarity about the feasibility study that has been proposed. Lee asked about whether the Township Board

has requested this. Trezise mentioned that green burial is mentioned in the Master Plan.

Next Steps: McConnell outlined general procedures inviting motions. Harvey suggested that department directors (Parks, Public Works, Planning) manage projects that are generally approved by the Environmental Commission. Trezise mentioned that funds can be carried over to the next Fiscal Year. He also suggested that we need more information about the Green Burial Feasibility Study. A community survey will be conducted and interest in green burial might be included as a question. Saffron moved that we approve the signage at the Recycling Center (Unanimously approved). Colby moved that the Composting at the Market budget be increased to \$2500 to include some dollars for promotion (Unanimously approved). Lee moved to support the Gleaning initiative and Wetland Education projects be funded at the requested maximum amounts (Unanimously approved). Colby suggested we that we might want more information about what's included in the Green Burial Feasibility Study. Trezise suggested we can table the proposal. McConnell that we do not have to take action. Trezise reminds us that this can be considered "unfinished business."

REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Green Team: Frazier provided an update on the successful recycling event.

Energy Team: Sarver mentioned that the Team met. The next Solarize Meeting will be held on May 21 in Williamstown Township. There was discussion about electrical vehicle charging.

Brownfield Redevelopment Authority: Sarver reported that the BRA did not meet.

MSU: McConnell mentioned that there may be some grant funding related to anaerobic digester research and outreach along with a major expansion of the cattle herd.

Okemos High School: Saffron reported that Action was heavily involved in the recycling event. The Earth Club has been involved with cleaning up the student greenhouse. There will be a horticulture class at the high school next year.

Planning Commission: McConnell mentioned that the Township revised its Special Use Permit process which will include concept plans before full site design review. This is occurring for the downtown Okemos redevelopment. Another is the Village of Nemoka.

Meridian Township Board: Trezise reported that the Board has been consumed with the Township Manager transition. McConnell asked about the timeline for budget requests. Trezise also suggested some discussion about priorities for 2025 that might be included in the budget. Harvey mentioned that we may voice support for

Staff: Harvey reported that there's a link to an application for the Ingham Solid Waste/Material Management Board membership in the staff update. The compost bin and rain barrel sale is underway. The Green Team will be at the Farmers Market for "Planting a Native Meridian" table. There will be a special discussion with Dr. Katherine Alaimo about the "Earth is My Home" initiative at the next Green Dialogue. (See staff updates here: <https://bit.ly/update-leroy>).

Land Preservation Advisory Board: Lee reported that the LPAB met in April. There will be a ribbon cutting session at Foster Davis preserve. There have been some issues with dogs off-leash and dog poop so there may be LPAB will be reviewing Land Acquisition Screen Process. Trustee Wilson will be joining the LPAB. Also, there was a "beautiful" burn at the Foster Davis Preserve recently.

Adjournment: 8:28pm

* 1. I am interested in service on one or more of the following public bodies as checked below:
Environmental Commission

*** 2. Summarize your reasons for applying to do this type of service**

As an individual with a degree in Sustainable Community Development and a Chemistry Teacher, I am very interested in the environmental activities that take place in our community. I also serve as the advisor for the Sustainability club at Haslett High School and would like to continue to get the students in our school involved in environmental activities in Meridian Township.

*** 3. Describe education, experience or training which will assist you if appointed.**

I have a degree in Sustainable Community Development, a degree in Chemistry education and have operated a non-profit that served rural communities in Haiti.

(Attach resume if available)

SKIPPED

* Full Name

Cynthia Peterson

* **Occupation**

Teacher

* **Place of Employment**

Haslett High School

* Home Address

6285 Ridge St
Haslett 48840

* Phone (Day)

989.884.1583

* Phone (Evening)

989.884.1583

* **Email**

petersoca@haslett.k12.mi.us

* **Please type your name in the box below as a digital signature**

Cynthia Peterson

* **Date and Time**

05/21/2024

Other than the Downtown Development Authority Board, the Corridor Improvement Authority, and the Economic Development Corporation, persons appointed to Meridian Township boards and commissions must be a resident and elector (if of voting age) of the Township during the term of office. Excessive absences may be cause for review of appointment. The policy for appointment of candidates to the various public service positions is based on the following criteria: desire to serve, experience, expertise, availability of time to serve, and maintenance of equitable geographic representation. In most instances it will be desirable to develop further information through a personal interview. This application will be retained in township files for two years.