

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
REGULAR MEETING TOWNSHIP BOARD -**APPROVED**-
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos MI 48864-1198
517.853.4000, Township Hall Room
TUESDAY, February 18, 2025, 6:00PM

PRESENT: Supervisor Hendrickson, Clerk Demas, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Lentz, Trustee Wilson, Trustee Trezise and Trustee Sundland

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Manager Dempsey, Chief Grillo, Chief Hamel, Director Gebes, Deputy Manager Opsommer, Director Wisinski, Manager Diehl, Specialist Stohlin, Deputy Clerk Gordon

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Supervisor Hendrickson called the February 18, 2025, Regular Township Board meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS

Supervisor Hendrickson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Deputy Clerk Gordon called the roll of the Board.

Supervisor Hendrickson, Clerk Demas, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Lentz, Trustee Wilson, Trustee Sundland and Trustee Trezise present at 6:01 pm.

4. PRESENTATION

A. Senior/Community Center Task Force Update

Michele Steed gave updates on the taskforce.

B. 2025 Local Roads

Deputy Manager Opsommer gave an overview of the work that has been done and work that is left to do regarding the local roads program.

Supervisor Hendrickson asked if the PASER rating includes State and County Roads. Deputy Manager Opsommer stated that it includes only Local Roads. Supervisor Hendrickson then asked for clarification regarding the presentation of the numbers. Deputy Manager Opsommer clarified that there was a typo in the 2024 numbers and that 2025 number is projected. Supervisor Hendrickson noted that he would like to see a report on roads that are in poor condition currently to know what work is left to be done.

Treasurer Deschaine asked for details regarding the process of determining which roads are paved. Deputy Manager Opsommer gave details regarding who helps to make the decisions and the way roads are chosen. Treasurer Deschaine asked for an estimate of the PASER rating at the end of the project. Deputy Manager Opsommer gave an estimate.

Trustee Lentz asked about the way the Road Department generates PASER ratings based on road use. Deputy Manager Opsommer explained that higher average traffic volumes require thicker roads, but there is an option to stabilize the road base which leads to a cost savings and leads to additional benefits for improving roads. He also explained that road design determines what kind of vehicles can travel them.

C. 2025 Prime Meridian Magazine

Specialist Stohlin presented the Prime Meridian Magazine, noting that it is the second most preferred communication to the community at 31% of residents preferring the magazine.

Trustee Wilson asked if the cost of postage was included in the overall budget of the magazine. Specialist Stohlin stated that postage is included in the budget.

Clerk Demas asked how it is determined who receives the magazine. Specialist Stohlin clarified that the magazine is mailed by a process called every door direct mail, but some residents have said they do not receive it by mail, so the Communications Department offers it at other locations as well as by multiple digital formats.

5. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Supervisor Hendrickson opened comments from the public at 6:35 pm.

Barb O'Kelley, Township resident, spoke about the Senior Center Task Force proposals.

Neil Bowlby, Township resident, spoke about the Senior Center Task Force proposals.

Beth Bechtel, Township resident, read an email she sent earlier in the day, regarding the Senior Center Task Force proposals.

Supervisor Hendrickson closed comments from the public at 6:46 pm.

6. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

Manager Dempsey gave updates on the following:

- Noted a fraudulent credit card purchase that appears on item 9.C. The Township will be credited.
- Cold weather pathway information is available on the Township's website.
- Reminded residents to keep heat on, at least 55 degrees, while they are away to prevent water supply breakage.
- Noted that there are multiple job opportunities posted on the Township's website.
- Assessors' Review will occur next week on February 25 and 26.

- Noted multiple community events that will occur this coming weekend, details on the Township's website.

7. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS OF ACTIVITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Supervisor Hendrickson spoke about the joint board and commission meeting.

8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Trustee Trezise moved to approve the Agenda. Supported by Trustee Wilson.

VOICE VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Hendrickson, Clerk Demas, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Lentz, Trustee Sundland, Trustee Trezise, and Trustee Wilson

NAYS: NONE

Motion carried: 7-0

9. CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor Hendrickson listed the items on the Consent Agenda.

Clerk Demas proposed an amendment to include communications from Beth Bechtel.

Trustee Trezise noted a typo in the February 4, 2025 Regular Township Board Meeting Minutes.

Clerk Demas moved to approve the Consent Agenda as amended. Supported by Trustee Sundland.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Clerk Demas, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Lentz, Trustee Sundland, Trustee Trezise, Trustee Wilson, and Supervisor Hendrickson

NAYS: NONE

Motion carried: 7-0

10. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY

NONE

11. HEARINGS

NONE

12. ACTION ITEMS

A. Police contract with the Harkness Law Firm

Chief Grillo summarized the discussion that has occurred to date.

Trustee Trezise moved to authorize the township attorney contract for the prosecution of specific crimes and other legal services in Meridian Township with the Harkness Law Firm. Supported by Trustee Wilson.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Lentz, Trustee Sundland, Trustee Trezise, Trustee Wilson, Supervisor Hendrickson, Clerk Demas

NAYS: NONE

Motion carried: 7-0

B. Board Policy Update

Attorney Kuschel reviewed the discussion that has occurred to date, noting changes and clarifications that have been made to the document with respect to the previous discussion.

Trustee Trezise noted items that he would like to have added to roll call vote guidelines to reflect the current practice the Board follows.

Supervisor Hendrickson noted that he would like the language regarding vacancies for appointed positions to account for longer timelines when there are not qualified applicants.

Treasurer Deschaine moved to table the revised Board Policy Manual until the March 4th, 2025 meeting. Seconded by Trustee Sundland

VOICE VOTE: YEAS: Trustee Lentz, Trustee Sundland, Trustee Trezise, Trustee Wilson, Supervisor Hendrickson, Clerk Demas, Treasurer Deschaine

NAYS: NONE

Motion carried: 7-0

13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. DNR Grant Application Resolution

Director Wisinski gave an overview of the application and how the funds will benefit the Township if the Parks Department receives the grant.

Trustee Wilson asked if the grant match would come from the Park Fund. Director Wisinski affirmed that to be correct.

Treasurer Deschaine asked if there was a plan should only a portion of the request be rewarded. Director Wisinski stated that modifications can be made to the project.

Trustee Lentz asked about the funds remaining in the account after the matching funds are used. Director Wisinski indicated those funds would be used for pre-engineering needs and any funds remaining would be allocated to another project.

Supervisor Hendrickson asked if there was a plan for the entrance to Nancy Moore Park. Director Wisinski noted that it is still being discussed.

B. MDOT Extended Work Hours

Deputy Manager Opsommer gave an overview of the request to expand the construction hours for MDOT Red Cedar River Bridge project.

Trustee Wilson noted that a similar proposal for a past project was well regarded.

Trustees indicated that they would support the authorization.

C. Annual Emergency Management Plan Update

Chief Hamel summarized the changes made to update the Emergency Management Plan, noting that it was beneficial for debris removal after the August 2023 storm.

Treasurer Deschaine noted that the name of one of the businesses in the plan has changed.

Supervisor Hendrickson indicated his support for the update.

14. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Supervisor Hendrickson opened public comments at 7:25 pm

Supervisor Hendrickson closed public comments at 7:25 pm

15. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Trustee Lentz invited the community to a nonprofit event for Haven House's Pancake Palooza.

16. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Trezise moved to adjourn. Seconded by Trustee Trezise

VOICE VOTE YEAS: Supervisor Hendrickson, Clerk Demas, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustee Lentz, Trustee Sundland, Trustee Trezise, and Trustee Wilson

NAYS: NONE

Motion carried: 7-0

The meeting adjourned at 7:26 pm



Scott Hendrickson
Township Supervisor



Angela Demas
Township Clerk