

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
JOINT BOARD AND COMMISSION MEETING **-APPROVED-**
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos MI 48864-1198 517.853.4000,
Township Hall Room
TUESDAY, February 11, 2025, 6:00PM

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

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Manager Dempsey, Director Schmitt, Director Gebes, Director Opsommer, Director Wisinski, Manager Diehl, Director Clark

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Supervisor Hendrickson called the February 11, 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. Recapping 2024 and Reviewing 2025 Goals

Supervisor Hendrickson reviewed the 2024 goals and the work done to complete or to make progress on them. He then gave an overview of the 2025 goals.

5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Trustee Wilson moved to approve the agenda. Supported by Clerk Demas.

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

NAYS: NONE

Motion carried: 7-0

6. JOINT MEETING WITH TOWNSHIP BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

A. Reports of Activity in 2024 and Look Ahead to 2025

i. Board of Review – Deborah Federeau

Ms. Federeau complemented Assessing Department staff for their efforts to educate residents because it results in lower requests to the Board of Review.

ii. Planning Commission, Building Board of Appeals – Director Schmitt

Director Schmitt noted that the Planning Commission received fifteen development applications, one text amendment, and two rezoning applications. He noted upcoming projects, highlighting updates to the parking ordinance which will be presented to the Board in 2025.

iii. Zoning Board of Appeals – Director Schmitt

Director Schmitt noted that the ZBA saw twelve cases, nine of which were approved and one still under review.

Additional Item: Building Board of Appeals – Director Schmitt

The Building Board of Appeals did not meet this year because there were no building code or property repair items to be addressed.

iv. Economic Development Corporation – Director Clark

Director Clark noted that the EDC joined Lansing 501 Regional Attraction Program in 2024. For 2025, the EDC is focusing on implementing Meridian Township's Master Plan through the Façade Improvement Program, the Heart Safe Community Program, and fund building to continue to offer grants to businesses.

v. Brownfield Redevelopment Authority – Director Clark

Director Clark noted that there are eight Brownfield locations approved in the township, five of which are active.

Trustee Lentz asked for details about how projects are brought forward. Director Clark stated that the property owner initiates the plan, then the Township begins to be involved.

vi. Pension Board – Treasurer Deschaine

Treasurer Deschaine noted that forty-four retirees drew from the pension funds in 2024. He gave details about the amount of money in the fund and how the fund is invested. No current employees are enrolled in the fund.

vii. Downtown Development Authority – Angela Wright

Ms. Wright stated that in 2024 the first grant was provided through the Façade Improvement Program and new signs were installed. She gave information

about the DDA fund balance and noted that they have added to their funds. Shoe noted that two property owners have applied for Match on Main, and the EDC is in discussions with property owners regarding redevelopment.

viii. Environmental Commission – Bill McConnell

Mr. McConnell noted that the Greenspace Plan is being reviewed to determine how well it has been implemented and the Climate Sustainability Plan has been reviewed and been made more useful. All money allocated to the Green Grants Program is being used on projects in the community.

ix. Community Resources Commission – Georgia Styka

Ms. Styka recognized Human Services Specialist Love for her work on Meridian Cares which provided one hundred twenty-three with financial assistance. Additionally Meridian Cares collaborated with various community organizations and businesses to provide school supplies, winter weather gear, and holiday food baskets. The CRC coordinated a networking session for Ingham County service organizations and will be scheduling one this year.

x. Communications Commission – Leslie Charles

Ms. Charles recognized Communications Manager Deihl for her leadership of HOMTV. She listed the Commission’s goals for the coming year, including a review of the Commission’s mission and update of bylaws, to research Smart Cities and universal connectivity, and to find new funding sources.

xi. Corridor Improvement Authority – Bruce Peffers

Mr. Peffers noted that the CIA established a TIF (Tax Increment Funding) Program in 2024 and the first public improvement project will be flashing lights at one of the pedestrian refuges on Grand River. The CIA is planning to create an integrated development plan for any redevelopment in the corridor.

xii. Local Officials Compensation Commission – Steven Vagnozzi

Mr. Vagnozzi noted that the LOCC increased salaries of Supervisor, Clerk, Treasurer, and Trustees for 2025, with an additional amount to be applied in 2026, and increased Parks Commissioner stipends for 2025, with an additional amount to be applied in 2026.

xiii. Land Preservation Advisory Board – Kathleen Fay

Ms. Fay noted that in 2024 the LPAB installed new signs, built a new greenhouse and storage shed, Meridian Conservation Corps completed three hundred fifty-nine volunteer hours across fifty-six events, and a prescribed burn was completed at Davis Foster Preserve.

xiv. Lake Lansing Advisory Board – Curtis Armbruster

Mr. Armbruster highlighted new and ongoing education efforts and annual maintenance efforts. In addition, they worked with Ingham County Parks to

install a second cleaning station at the boat launch. He noted that they are making plans to address the fishing area.

Clerk Demas asked for more details regarding the fishing area. Mr. Armbruster gave details about the work that has occurred so far.

xv. Park Commission – Mary Nardo Farris

Ms. Nardo Farris noted that in 2024 the Parks Department continued maintenance of parks and pathways. She recognized staff for their work on parks and recreation department projects and noted that membership and participation in public programs have increased. Continue to evaluate ability to staff Snell Towar Center. In 2025 the Parks Commission plans to continue to evaluate staffing at Snell Towar Center, enhance accessibility in parks, begin a pilot project for County Commissioner liaisons, collaborate with other municipalities to clear the Red Cedar waterway and noted upcoming capital improvement projects.

Board Members thanked Board and Commission members for their hard work and commitment to the community.

7. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Supervisor Hendrickson opened public comments at 7:39 pm

Joyce Van Covering asked about the Okemos Redevelopment.

Supervisor Hendrickson closed public comments at 7:40 pm

8. ADJOURNMENT

Treasurer Deschaine 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 7:41 pm



Scott Hendrickson
Township Supervisor



Angela Demas
Township Clerk