

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
TOWNSHIP BOARD REGULAR MEETING **-APPROVED-**  
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos MI 48864-1198  
853-4000, Township Hall Room  
TUESDAY, February 04, 2020 **6:00 pm.**

PRESENT: Supervisor Styka, Clerk Dreyfus, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Jackson, Opsommer, Wisinski

ABSENT: Trustee Sundland

STAFF: Township Manager Walsh, Director of Public Works Perry, Fire Chief Hamel, Police Chief Plaga, Community Planning Director Kieselbach, Principle Planner Menser, Finance Director Mattison, Information Technology Director Gebes

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Supervisor Styka called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS

Supervisor Styka led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

The Recording Secretary called the roll of the Board.

4. PRESENTATIONS

A. Treasurer Deschaine presented the Resolution in Recognition of Bart Wegenke (Haslett High School principal who passed away) to Brandy Butcher, Interim Principle of Haslett High School. On behalf of Haslett Public Schools he thanked Meridian Township for the acknowledgement and support.

B. 2019 Township Annual Report is available at the Clerk's office, on the Meridian Township website. and at the Haslett and Okemos libraries.

5. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Supervisor Styka opened public remarks at 6:06 pm.

Gary Durow, 1259 West Grand River Ave., Okemos, MI; spoke in support of Rezoning Request #19100 (Discussion Item 13D).

Amanda Hopper, 5485 Martinique Cir., East Lansing, MI; spoke in support of Rezoning Request #19100.

Frank Fugate, 500 S Front St., Columbus, OH; (Woda Cooper executive/applicant) spoke in support of Discussion Item 13-C.

Tom Hass, 1491 Franklin St., Haslett, MI; spoke in support of Rezoning Request #19034 (Discussion Item 13A).

Stephanie White, 4400 Tacoma Blvd., Okemos, MI; inquired about the process for starting pollinator habitats in Meridian Township.

Supervisor Styka closed public remarks at 6:16 pm.

6. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

Township Manager Walsh spoke on the Market Place on the Green (Farmer’s Market), Economic Director position open due to current Director leaving for new job, Lick v. Meridian case dismissed by Judge Stokes, meeting next week with Granger regarding rubbish services and recycling, proposed Jolly Road “road diet” from 2 lanes in each direction to one lane in each direction plus center turn lane from Hagadorn Rd to Dobie Rd – discussion during Transportation Commission Special meeting on February 04, 2020, at 6:00 pm.

7. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Treasurer Deschaine:

- Property taxes due Friday, February 14, 2020, 5:00 pm. Suggestion to mail two weeks ahead of time if using the US mail, can use Township drop box. Instructions on website on how to sign up for online payment at no cost (if paying from bank account).

Clerk Dreyfus:

- 8,706 absentee ballot applications for the March 10, 2020 Presidential Primary have been sent out as of February 3, 2020, and 4,343 have been received back by the Meridian Township Clerk’s Office.
- Ballots from the Ingham County Clerk’s Office have come in on February 03, 2020. The Ingham County Clerk’s Office has still not sent out tabulator programming that allows the ballots to be tested on the tabulators, this resulted in delayed mailing of ballots. Expecting to receive tabulator programming from the Ingham County Clerk’s Office within the next few days so ballots can be tested before we mail them out and can begin early voting.
- Voters may still fill out an absentee ballot application until 4 p.m. on the day prior to the election. If you’re registering to vote or updating your address by appearing at your clerk’s office on Election Day, you can request an absent voter ballot at the same time you register. If you request your AV ballot the day before the election or on Election Day, you must vote the ballot in the clerk’s office.

Supervisor Styka:

- Fourth Annual Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser on March 07, 2020 8 am – 11 am, at 2/42 Community Church to benefit local Scout Units' Campership/Scholarship Fund, as well as the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA), sponsored by Meridian Township Professional Firefighters Local 1600.

8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve the Agenda. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.**

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried: 6 – 0

9. CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor Styka reviewed the consent agenda.

**Clerk Dreyfus moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Trustee Opsommer.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Clerk Dreyfus, Supervisor Styka, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Opsommer, Wisinski, Jackson

NAYS:

Motion carried: 6 - 0

A. Communications

**Clerk Dreyfus moved that the communications be received and placed on file and any communications not already assigned for disposition be referred to the Township Manager or Supervisor for follow-up. Seconded by Trustee Opsommer.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Clerk Dreyfus, Supervisor Styka, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Opsommer, Wisinski, Jackson

NAYS:

Motion carried: 6 - 0

B. January 21, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes

**Clerk Dreyfus moved to approve and ratify the minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 21, 2020 as submitted. Seconded by Trustee Opsommer.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Clerk Dreyfus, Supervisor Styka, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Opsommer, Wisinski, Jackson

NAYS:

Motion carried: 6 - 0

C. Bills

Clerk Dreyfus moved to approve that the Township Board approve the Manager’s Bills as follows. Seconded by Trustee Opsommer.

<b>Common Cash</b>		\$	<b>705,398.68</b>
<b>Public Works</b>		\$	<b>539,825.65</b>
<b>Trust &amp; Agency</b>		\$	<b>2,206,072.86</b>
	<b>Total Checks</b>	\$	<b>3,451,297.19</b>
<b>Credit Card Transactions</b>		\$	<b>10,748.26</b>
Nov 14th – Nov 25th			
	<b>Total Purchases</b>	\$	<b><u>3,462,045.45</u></b>
<b>ACH Payments</b>		\$	<b><u>456,435.04</u></b>

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Clerk Dreyfus, Supervisor Styka, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Opsommer, Wisinski, Jackson

NAYS:

Motion carried: 6 – 0

D. Resolution in Recognition of Ann Chapman, Haslett Library Head Librarian

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Clerk Dreyfus, Supervisor Styka, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Opsommer, Wisinski, Jackson

NAYS:

Motion carried: 6 – 0

E. Resolution in Recognition of Bart Wegenke, Haslett High School Principal

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Clerk Dreyfus, Supervisor Styka, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Opsommer, Wisinski, Jackson

NAYS:

Motion carried: 6 – 0

10. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY – NONE

11. HEARINGS (CANARY)

A. Mixed Use Planned Unit Development #19034 (Hudson Senior Living) Pine Village

Director Kieselbach provided an overview of the request to establish a Mixed Use Planned Unit Development (MUPUD) identified as Pine Village on 9.6 acres located at 1673 Haslett Road.

**Supervisor Styka called the public hearing to order at 6:31 pm.**

Jeff Buck, 288 West Maple Rd., Birmingham, MI; applicant, spoke in support of Rezoning Request #19034 (Discussion Item 13A).

Van Martin, 1111 Michigan Ave., East Lansing, MI; spoke in support of Rezoning Request #19034.

Bart Baryames, Haslett Village Square LLC, 2423 S. Cedar St. Lansing, MI; spoke in support of Rezoning Request #19034.

**Supervisor Styka closed the public hearing at 6:47 pm.**

12. ACTION ITEMS (PINK)

A. Rezoning #19090 (Planning Commission) Hagadorn Road – **Final Adoption**

**Trustee Opsommer moved to approve the resolution for final adoption of Ordinance No. 2020-03 pursuant to Rezoning Petition #19090 to rezone 2.2 acres addressed as 4036, 4038, 4046, 4108, and 4118 Hagadorn Road from RP (Research Park to RAA (Single Family-Low Density). Seconded by Trustee Jackson.**

Board discussion: Bygone residential zoning from when the Township Board envisioned the whole block of land at the corner of Jolly Road and Hagadorn as a Research Park adjacent to MSU, no longer the case with the 425 agreement/annexation with the City of Lansing with College Fields, Planning Commission helped residents initiate rezoning back to its current use due to hardship for the residents to maintain properties and conflict between rezoning and the master plan.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Wisinski, Jackson, Opsommer, Treasurer Deschaine, Clerk Dreyfus, Supervisor Styka

NAYS:

Motion carried: 6 – 0

B. Township Manager 2019 Performance Review Summary

**Trustee Jackson moved to support the 2019 Township Manager’s Performance Review as presented. The review document shall be forwarded to the Human Resource Office for proper filing. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine.**

Board discussion: Supervisor Styka summarized review document on Township Manager dated January 21, 2020, overall evaluation of excellent. Information gleaned during closed discussion, board discussion, and forms submitted from Board members.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried: 6 – 0

C. Resolution Commemorating Black History Month

**Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve the Resolution Commemorating Black History Month  
Seconded by Trustee Jackson.**

Supervisor had Resolution read out loud for Board and public.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried: 6 – 0

13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS (ORCHID)

- A. Mixed Use Planned Unit Development #19034 (Hudson Senior Living) Pine Village
- B. Special Use Permit #19181 (Hudson Senior Living) Pine Village

Supervisor Styka noted Discussion Items A and B to be discussed together.

Director Kieselbach stated that the Planning Commission held a public hearing and made a recommendation to approve the Special Use Permit.

Board member question regarding the history of the site, what the land was zoned originally, the history of the Haslett Shopping Center, staff response included an amendment that allowed the building on the west side of the property to be built, and information in the packet such as the amendment removing all density constraints other than height in PICAs (Potential Intensity Change Areas, discussed in Master Plan).

Board discussion: lease terms, board consensus that project does not match Master Plan for housing diversity and downtown vision for Haslett Four Corners, suggestions for better project sites, Hagadorn Rd better choice with a higher frequency CATA line and for senior housing as an alternative to student housing, examples of other big senior facilities show seniors are often homebound which is not conducive to a vibrant and dynamic area, board member and property owner belief that the development of the project will attract more development, board member belief that a senior facility will not attract further development suitable for downtown Haslett, belief that public consistently supports better local shopping choices and destination experiences –no desires expressed for a big box or senior housing project, suggestion to not rush and better to seek right type of development, human scale and downsize scale development, better fit for area might be cohousing, shared office space, co-retail, smaller residential units, diverse housing, missing middle housing, activated public spaces and water features, smaller boutique stores, appeal needed to wider, diverse population. Concern about multiple phases, need for specificity when proposal involves phases, reduced parking request demonstrates that residents in senior facilities don't drive and are often less mobile.

Clerk Dreyfus view that the Township needs to change role of Economic Director to person who understands community views, Board member views, and has a bigger-picture view of community sustainability, belief that Meridian Township needs a Community Sustainability Director to align with the Township's Master Plan. Senior proposal for downtown Haslett is example of how new Sustainability Director position could work with the Planning Department, Planning Commission, Township Manager, Township Board, developers, Township Homeowner Associations, and the Meridian Area Business Association (MABA) and other stakeholders for a long-term vision and to bring Township Board a better project. Belief that new proposed position goes beyond current role which serves primarily as an agent/representative that

promotes developer and property owner proposals being brought before the Township Planning Commission and Township Board.

Treasurer Deschaine view that we need a new Economic Development Director just like current Director, who is leaving to work in private sector. Belief that Downtown Okemos project was brought to the Township by Economic Development Director, Township needs someone who can work both sides of the development, doesn't have to be a governmental employee but has to understand how business works, need passion and drive for our next Economic Development Director.

Board member view that if proposal had included big-picture look at the whole Haslett Village and how this project might fit in with that vision – it may have gotten Board support. Board member question about reasons previous development deal fell through, property owner response that main driver of costs was construction costs and risk was too high for strip mall developers.

**Board consensus to place this item on the agenda for denial at the next Board meeting.**

C. Woodward Way PILOT: Payment in Lieu of Taxes

Community Planning Director Kieselbach presented an overview of the request to reapprove the Woodward Way PILOT (Payment In Lieu of Taxes) for funding in order to have adequate time to meet the ordinance for the construction portion of the project. The proposal is to develop income-based apartment buildings on a site behind Whole Foods as a Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) based project.

Board member support for project and support for PILOT, should be reapproved because of no fault of applicant or the Township, bumping up against one-year timeframe for construction, they need this to secure funding for the next round by MSHDA. Board member question about applicant being turned down for funding and nature of competitive process, applicant response that they were tied with another applicant and their application was above board, some issue with underwriting that they will address.

Board member opposition to PILOT because project is proposed in an area that the Master Plan has designated best suited as an entry point for affordable, single-family housing which would likely be first-time homebuyers, this benefits school enrollment as most would have children attending Township schools, no need for a PILOT, Township needs property tax to pay for infrastructure/services and all property owners should pay their fair share of taxes, belief that Township already has a variety of affordable housing opportunities for those who want to live in apartment buildings.

**Board consensus to place this item on the agenda for action at the next Board meeting.**

D. Rezoning 19100 (Durow) 1259 Grand River Avenue RR and RRA to C-2

Community Planning Director Kieselbach presented an overview of the request to rezone approximately 1.487 acres located at 1259 Grand River Avenue from RR (Rural Residential) and RRA (Single Family-Suburban Estates) to C-2 (Commercial).

Board discussion: Planning Commission held a public hearing and the recommendation was to not approve the rezoning. It is a non-conforming use and can continue as non-conforming, but if there is a change in use, it would have to go back to the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) to approve to go from one non-conforming use to another non-conforming use and to consider whether the new use is more appropriate at the location

than the former use. If rezoning goes to C2, it would move the property/bigger building into compliance, however the single-family/residential zoning would not be conforming. Applicant not looking to redevelop the site, wants to continue as a non-conforming use, current use as a rental house, concession for conditions, general retail allowed. Non-residential use is allowed in a residential district through special use permit, board cannot add conditions but can set time limits to conditions offered by applicant. Concerns to keep character of the area, and consequences of C2 zoning which would open possibilities of a site plan with no oversight by the Township Board: e.g., site turning into a strip mall.

**Board consensus for this item to be brought back to the Planning Commission staff before being brought back before the Board.**

E. Fixed Asset Capitalization Policy

Finance Director Mattison presented the recommendation by the Township auditors Yeo and Yeo for a written policy to be adopted for the capitalization of fixed assets developed by the Finance Department.

**Trustee Opsommer moved to suspend our rules so the Board can take this item for consideration this evening. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.**

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried: 6 – 0

**Trustee Opsommer moved to adopt the fixed asset capitalization as presented. Supported by Trustee Jackson.**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Opsommer, Wisinski, Jackson, Treasurer Deschaine, Clerk Dreyfus, Supervisor Styka

NAYS:

Motion carried: 6 – 0

14. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Supervisor Styka Opened Public Remarks at 6:53 pm.

Supervisor Styka Closed Public Remarks at 6:53 pm.

15. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Clerk Dreyfus:

- Noted that his comments regarding current Economic Director were not disparaging or criticizing the efforts and work he has done in the Township throughout the past several years, but were addressing the positional authority, role, how the position of Economic Director was structured, and how the job could best be carried out in the future by changing it to a Community Sustainability Director position.

- Other communities around the country are changing the position of Economic Director to Community Sustainability Director to promote a broader, long-term community vision.
- Detailed letter from a citizen regarding the proposed Jolly Road “road diet” (taking two lanes in each direction and reducing them to one lane in each direction with a center turn lane), debunking assumptions, and providing studies/reports that point out examples of decreased safety, increased traffic congestion, and decreased quality of life for drivers who are using roads that have been reduced from two lanes in each direction to one lane with a center turn lane.
- Concern about proposed road diet for Central Park Drive, from Okemos Road (across Marsh) to Grand River, no safety issues have been reported on this road, road rings our highest density C-3 Commercial Core and it’s inappropriate from an economic development perspective and from a safety perspective to reduce the road down to one lane in each direction, especially with entrances to the new Farmer Market being constructed on that road, which will likely result in dangerous backups and congestion on Market Days.
- Worked with Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC) as a liaison for the Urban and Suburban Land Use Subcommittee, which included the Urban Sustainability Accelerator Project, gained knowledge from speakers involved in the Strong Town Program, information was sent out to Board members in the past about doing economic development using small amounts of money. TCRPC issued a report covering years 2012-2020 and is available on their website.

Trustee Opsommer:

- Governor approved 3.5 billion dollar bonding, no acceleration for the M-43 Grand River Avenue project and project will remain in 2023, hoping to get pathway connection fixed, waiting for news from MDOT.
- Will be acceleration/ influx of transportation funding and growth of projects on I-69, I-96, I-127, and 20 different bridges on I-496 and I-127.
- Expressed appreciation for working with Economic Director Buck, noted CMI funding that he helped with obtaining for downtown Okemos project, brought in Eric Helzer who helped get tax increment financing (TIF) for brownfield remediation, got Township RRC certified, he assisted with getting TIFs approved by various taxing authorities, private enterprises bring proposals forward and we may not always like what we see, he did very well in the projects he was assigned.

Treasurer Deschaine:

- Jolly Road road diet Public Hearing on February 6<sup>th</sup> at Central Fire Station, public is welcome.
- Expressed appreciation for working with Economic Director Buck. Loss of “brand leaders” as several Department Directors have left.
- Paying the bills now, regarding pension and roads, to prepare us for the future. Our Economic Development Director agreed with that approach.

Supervisor Styka:

- Expressed appreciation for working with Economic Director Buck.
- Meridian Township Garden Club has 90 members, works with pollinators and parks, created a pollinator garden in the Historical Village, 1000 acres of land preserve could be pollinator locations as well as 1000 acres of township parkland, anyone interested should contact Township Manager.

16. ADJOURNMENT

**Treasurer Deschaine moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Trustee Opsommer.**

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried: 6 - 0

**Supervisor Styka adjourned the meeting at 9:08 pm.**

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RONALD J. STYKA,  
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR



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BRETT DREYFUS,  
TOWNSHIP CLERK