

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
REGULAR MEETING TOWNSHIP BOARD 2022 **-APPROVED-**
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos MI 48864-1198
517.853.4000, Township Hall Room
TUESDAY, January 24, 2023 **6:00 pm**

PRESENT: Supervisor Jackson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Township Manager Walsh, Deputy Township Manager and Director of Public Works Opsommer, Chief of Police Plaga, Fire Chief Hamel, Community Planning and Development Director Schmitt, IT Director Gebes, Communications Manager Diehl, Director of Economic Development Clark, Deputy Clerk Lemaster

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Supervisor Jackson called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS

Supervisor Jackson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLLCALL

Deputy Clerk Lemaster called the roll of the Board. All board members are present.

4. PRESENTATION

A. Introduction of Penelope Tsernoglou, State Representative, 75th House District

Representative Penelope Tsernoglou was not in attendance as the State House was still in session.

B. Recognition of World Kiwanis Week-January 21-26, 2023

Tom Moore, regional head of Haslett and Okemos district of the Capital Area District Libraries gave a presentation on the Recognition of World Kiwanis Week. He spoke about money raised by the Kiwanis club and how it has contributed to the surrounding community. He also listed volunteer opportunities where Kiwanis Club provided volunteers.

C. Red Cedar River Stewardship-Mike Stout, Michigan Waterways

Mike Stout, 5171 White Haven Dr., Lansing MI, spoke on behalf of Michigan Waterway Stewards and gave a presentation on the Red Cedar River Stewardship. He spoke about work the Group has performed on various bodies of water in the local area. He spoke about several problem areas in the township's Red Cedar River that are obstructed.

Treasurer Deschaine noted the Rotary has addressed this issue and asked for the cost of professional crews to take on this issues.

Mr. Stout replied it depends on the size of the crew but because it doesn't require permitting that volunteers could perform this work. He doesn't have an amount of money.

Clerk Guthrie thanked Mr. Stout for this presentation.

Trustee Sundland noted she thought this would require an annual clean up.

Mr. Stout replied it would need to be a part of the Township's plan.

D. Nokomis Cultural Heritage Center-John Ostrander

John Ostrander, 5153 Marsh Rd., Okemos, MI, Vice President of Nokomis Cultural Heritage Center gave a presentation on the Nokomis Cultural Heritage Center. He spoke of the financials of the group and what they have done with their building in the last year including weekly language classes and crafting days on Saturdays. He introduced Mary Morales the new board president of Nokomis Cultural Heritage Center. He noted three tribes have used the Nokomis building to hold meetings. Nokomis has completed its pilot program with Okemos Montessori Schools and started work in the Grand Ledge school system. Nokomis has conducted 29 presentations this year and held a holiday craft sale in December. They have been working with Friend of Historic Village, and overseeing Elder monthly luncheons. Nokomis has been working with the Corey Marsh Ecological Research Center, and has been utilizing interns to develop language classes and gardening. Lastly Mr. Ostrander announced Nokomis will have a booth at the Meridian Township farmer's market.

Trustee Wilson noted she was on the founding board of the Nokomis Cultural and spoke to the importance of the work Nokomis is doing.

5. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Supervisor Jackson opened public comment at 6:41 PM.

Barbara Curtis, 5248 Park Lake, Rd., Okemos thanked Nokomis for their presentations and spoke about the water main break on Park Lake Rd. last week. She thanked Manager Walsh for helping her daughter with a street issue.

Stephanie Levitt, 5320 Park Lake, Rd., spoke about the recent water main breaks on Park Lake Rd. and how the township handled her complaints and communication regarding the recent water main breaks.

Supervisor Jackson closed public comment at 6:48 PM.

6. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

Manager Walsh recalled work the township had done in the Wardcliff area because of weather damage and noted \$50,000 spent by the township on repairs. He spoke about the township's communications concerning Daniel's Drain and the conserve water notice. He

mentioned the DPW crew worked a very long shift during that break. He noted water main breaks are not uncommon, even more so during the shift from winter to spring. He spoke about spending \$70,000 to hire a private contractor to deal with the break, and the lessons he learned from the recent breaks. He noted everyday there was notice given to 300 homes daily during the Daniels Drain project. He spoke of communications on the Okemos Bridge project. He apologized to residents for the unfortunate water main breaks.

Manager Walsh spoke about the annual deer cull where 157 deer were culled through archery and 130 by firearms. The Okemos Bridge project will hopefully be completed on February 28th. Thanked Deputy Manager Opsommer and the Department of Public Works for their work in the last six months. He noted the municipal building will be closed between May and October for renovation.

The Pensions board meets February 6th, LOCC meets January 27th. The first task force of senior center meets February 16th. Additional paramedics and firefighters are being put in place for additional emergency coverage. The Planning Commission met with a full board of 9 members yesterday. He noted the community sign project is moving forward, and noted the Park Commission should be involved in the Red Cedar Project.

Clerk Guthrie asked how many pounds of venison have been culled.

Manager Walsh replied over 7000 pounds.

7. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS OF ACTIVITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Trustee Hendrickson

- January 20th visited representative Tsernoglou at her open house

Trustee Sundland

- Attended Meridian Transportation Commission Meeting on January 19th where a focus was on the Okemos bridge, and becoming a Bicycle Friendly Community

Trustee Wilson

- Attended the Community Resource Commission January 11th meeting with two new members, reminded residents there is an open closet with free goods and clothes at faith Lutheran church, this is available for one more week.
- Announced the Village of Okemos Project is ongoing, even with multiple changes, she has asked for management to conduct a public forum for residents with developers

Treasurer Deschaine

- Attended January 18th CATA board retreat
- January 20th visited representative Tsernoglou at her open house
- Announced Treasury goals: make it easier for residents to pay taxes, provide more information on where your taxes go, to maximize township investment income
- Thanked management for their work during the last year as it has been tough with water main breaks, Daniels drain, and other occurrences

Clerk Guthrie

- The Clerk’s office has begun putting all of their legal ads in the City Pulse
- Encouraged residents to participate in communications provided on the township website
- Is available to speak with residents and happy to meet with residents to hear their concerns
- Spoke in support of a public forum with the developers of Village of Okemos project and residents
- The township will hold their November 8th, 2023 audit of precinct 7 on Friday, January 27th thanked Deputy Clerk Lemaster for his work
- The Clerks goals involve using new FOIA software, maintaining records, and updating the board policy book

Trustee Wisinski

- Environmental Commission is continuing work on the Climate Sustainability Plan
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee met last week to work on their goals for 2023
- Looking for more public facing community events, currently a LGBTQ event is scheduled this year
- Met with Theresa woodruff, Manager Walsh, and Supervisor Jackson

Supervisor Jackson

- Met with interim MSU president Woodruff with Manager Walsh and Trustee Wisinski where Woodruff spoke of how much the local governing bodies contribute to MSU’s success
- Promoting open conversation with organizations that operate in and for Meridian Township

8. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski.

VOICE VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Jackson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

9. CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor Jackson reviewed the Consent Agenda.

Trustee Hendrickson moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented with one Amendment to the minutes. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Jackson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

A. Communications

Trustee Hendrickson moved that the communications not already assigned for disposition be referred to the Township Manager or Supervisor for follow-up. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Jackson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

B. Minutes- December 13, 2022 Regular Township Board Minutes

Trustee Hendrickson moved to approve and ratify the minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 10th, 2022 as presented. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Jackson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

C. Bills

Trustee Hendrickson moved to approve that the Township Board approve the Manager's Bills as follows: Seconded by Trustee Wisinski.

Common Cash		\$	193,706.13
Public Works		\$	202,647.99
Trust & Agency		\$	<u>26,150.44</u>
	Total Checks	\$	<u>422,504.56</u>
Credit Card Transactions		\$	11,135.20
01/05/23 to 01/18/2023			
	Total Purchases	\$	<u>433,639.76</u>
ACH Payments		\$	<u>935,247.52</u>

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Jackson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

D. Charitable Gaming License – Okemos High School Drama Boosters

Treasurer Deschaine moved approval of a request from the Okemos High School Drama Boosters of Meridian Township, Ingham County, asking that they be recognized as a non-profit organization operating in the community for the purposes of obtaining a gaming license for approval, and further that the Township Clerk be authorized to execute the resolution from the state of Michigan. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Jackson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

10. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY-NONE

11. HEARINGS-NONE

12. ACTION ITEMS

A. Ordinance 2022-15 Daycare Regulation Update-Final Adoption

Director Schmitt outlined Ordinance 2022-15 Daycare Regulation Update for Final adoption.

Trustee Wilson moved to adopt the resolution approving for final adoption Zoning Amendment 2022-15 to amend the Zoning Ordinance of the Charter Township of Meridian to update day care definitions to be in compliance with recent State law changes. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski.

Trustee Wilson spoke in support of this item.

Treasurer Deschaine spoke of the importance of quality daycare and spoke in support of the township assisting in quality daycare.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski, Supervisor Jackson

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

B. Board and Commission Appointments

Supervisor Jackson outlined board and commission appointments for action.

Trustee Hendrickson moved to appoint William Cawood to the Building Board of Appeals for a term ending 12/31/24. Seconded by Seconded by Trustee Wilson.

Supervisor Jackson spoke of the qualifications of William Cawood.

VOICE VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Jackson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

Treasurer Deschaine moved to appoint Kathleen Fay to the Land Preservation Advisory Board for a term ending 12/31/23. Seconded by Trustee Hendrickson.

Treasurer Deschaine spoke in support of this appointment.

VOICE VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Jackson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

C. Township Emergency Plan Update

Fire Chief Hamel outlined the Township Emergency Plan Update for action.

Trustee Wisinski moved to approve the updated Support Emergency Operations Plan. Seconded by Trustee Wilson.

Trustee Wisinski spoke in support of this item.

Trustee Wilson spoke in support of this item.

VOICE VOTE: YEAS: Supervisor Jackson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

D. Amendment to the Resolution Establishing the Corridor Improvement Authority

Director Clark outlined the Amendment to the Resolution establishing the Corridor Improvement Authority.

Treasurer Deschaine moved to adopt the amended resolution establishing the Corridor Improvement Authority of Meridian Township to allow the CIA to pursue a Tax Increment Financing plan. Seconded by Trustee Hendrickson.

Treasurer Deschaine stated the Corridor Improvement Authority's funding had been left out when it was originally created and the board is now fixing this mistake. He noted this is not easy work, but necessary.

Trustee Hendrickson spoke in support of this item as the current Corridor Improvement Authority is moving in the same direction as the Township Board.

Clerk Guthrie thanked Director Clark for her work with the Corridor Improvement Authority and bringing this to the board.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski, Supervisor Jackson, Clerk Guthrie

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

E. Continuity of Operations Plan

Chief Hamel outlined the Continuity of Operations Plan for action. He gave a basic timeline of this project and spoke of how this plan would be implemented.

Trustee Wilson moved to approve the Continuity of Operations Plan consisting of the basic plan and functional annex and support plan for each department. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski.

VOICE VOTE: YEAS: Treasurer Deschaine, Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski, Supervisor Jackson, Clerk Guthrie,

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

F. Reauthorization to Waive Sec. 50-84, Subdivision 4.a. for the Okemos Rd Bridge Construction Project

Deputy Manager Opsommer outlined the Reauthorization to Waive Sec. 50-84, Subdivision 4.a. for the Okemos Rd Bridge Construction Project. He explained this reauthorization is necessary to complete the bridge project as soon as possible.

Trustee Hendrickson moved to waive Section 50-84, Subsection 4.a. in our code of ordinances to permit the Ingham County Road Department and its contractors working on the Okemos Rd bridge project to conduct construction work Monday through Sunday,

including holidays, between the hours of 7 a.m. and 9 p.m. until March 7, 2023. Seconded by Clerk Guthrie.

Trustee Hendrickson spoke in support of this item as it will help complete the project as soon as possible.

Trustee Wilson spoke in support of this item as it will help complete the project and reopen the bridge.

Clerk Guthrie thanked Deputy Manager Opsommer for working with the county on this project. She spoke of the importance of this motion as it will help lessen the burden of residents. She asked if this would be completed by March 7th.

Deputy Manager Opsommer noted the next board meeting is on March 7th where this can be reauthorized if needed. He noted updates on the project may be viewed at www.meridian.mi.us/government/township-projects. He stated the bridge deck is slated for construction next week, provided the weather is good.

Clerk Guthrie asked what type of concrete is poured during the winter.

Deputy Manager Opsommer replied will be a special mix that is blanketed to keep it at optimal temperature.

VOICE VOTE: YEAS: Trustees Hendrickson, Sundland, Wilson, Wisinski, Supervisor Jackson, Clerk Guthrie, Treasurer Deschaine

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

Manager Walsh thanked trustee Hendrickson for bringing this item to the board as it will help residents.

13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Ordinance 2022-16 Sign Ordinance Update

Director Schmitt outlined Ordinance 2022-16 Sign ordinance update for discussion. He overviewed some definitions and updated the purpose section of the Ordinance to show intent, clarification, and references that have been added throughout the Ordinance. Flag regulation has been updated. The temporary sign section has been updated and is likely the biggest change to the Ordinance. Definitions of off-premise and on premise signs have been updated. A provision was added for construction project waivers on temporary signs. He noted the size of professional office district, free-standing signs has been increased. Monument signs changed from a height of 16 ft. to 6 ft. and commercial district free standing signs may now be up to 38 sq. ft.

Treasurer Deschaine stated he would like to spend more time on this item and go through it section by section for at least an hour.

Clerk Guthrie concurred with Treasurer Deschaine's statement that more time is needed to review this with staff.

Trustee Wilson noted a communication regarding an electronic billboard in East Lansing and is worried about the impacts of electronic signs.

Director Schmitt noted he worked on the sign Ordinance in East Lansing and noted the hole in their Ordinance that allowed the sign in question. He stated that hole does not exist in this Ordinance.

Trustee Hendrickson thanked Director Schmitt for his work on this and also would like more time to go over this Ordinance. He asked if a new tenant moved into a building could the new tenant could use the old tenant's signage even if it becomes out of compliance after the passing of this Ordinance.

Director Schmitt replied that is the case.

Supervisor Jackson noted a section about how to make a long term transition in the township and a lot of changes are about how we reference the signs which is dependent on zoning. She asked how Director Schmitt came up with the maximum square footage of a flag.

Director Schmitt replied the maximum size is from the currently existing Ordinance.

Supervisor Jackson stated consideration of approval of this item will come after the board has had more time to review the Ordinance.

B. Redevelopment Ready Communities Recertification Update

Director Clark gave an update on Redevelopment Ready Communities Recertification. She explained this is to draw further development into the community and that she has been working with Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) to accomplish this goal. She explained there are two major requirements the township will need to meet, one is to have three diverse housing types, by right, in every zoning district. The second is the orientation of boards and commission, meaning that any resident may use the township website to understand what it means to be a board member or commissioner and what are the requirements of being on a board or commission. She noted if this is not attainable then Meridian will not be recertified as a Redevelopment Ready Community. She noted Meridian is currently 61% aligned with the essentials.

Supervisor Jackson asked if the board is read to commit to either of the requirements.

Trustee Hendrickson stated the board orientation requirement should be completed either way.

Treasurer Deschaine asked if this housing diversity a way to separate townships and other localities that don't have much housing diversity from more urban areas.

Trustee Wilson noted this will call for additional study as allowing use by right without having special use permits and PICA's is a big change.

Clerk Guthrie noted the board orientation already exists it just isn't public facing at this time. She asked for an example of what housing diversity would look like with this requirement.

Director Clark replied it is allowing all types of housing across the entire townships residential districts.

Director Schmitt noted the majority of certified communities are cities, and the township would be an outlier. He spoke about how this is likely a way to provide certainty and consistency to developers.

Clerk Guthrie asked if the board could define what diverse housing would be.

Director Schmitt replied there would be options on how to accomplish this, it just needs to be decided.

Trustee Hendrickson asked if had to be the same three typologies in each zoning district or if you could specify per zoning district which three will be used.

Director Clark replied the MEDC does not tell you how to meet the requirements, they only ask that they are met.

Trustee Hendrickson noted the rural sections of the township would not be happy to see multifamily dwellings built up next to them. He stated it may not be a bad idea to direct staff to see if the requirements can be met without fundamentally altering the nature of housing in the township.

Trustee Wilson asked if director Clark is working with the business Development Manager at MEDC.

Director Clark replied they are.

Trustee Wilson suggested the township may get better direction from MEDC directly.

Trustee Sundland suggested using the PICA's for diverse housing developments.

Supervisor Jackson noted she is hesitant about this as use by right removes community input from developments.

Director Schmitt stated that he believes the township could meet these requirements.

Supervisor Jackson noted she does not like the language stating this must happen in every zoning district.

Director Clark noted the MEDC suggestion of the township committing the diverse housing topologies near areas of concentrated development.

Trustee Sundland asked about pattern book housing.

Director Schmitt replied pattern brook housing is more for broadly planned developments on large plots of land.

Treasurer Deschaine noted he would like to see the benefits received from MEDC, and is reluctant to completely change the township's current Ordinances.

Clerk Guthrie spoke about the board's discussions about middle and lower income housing. She asked for clarification on the definition of, "any zoning district".

Director Clark replied the township's zoning map doesn't have a single occurrence of three topologies.

Clerk Guthrie asked if the requirement was for only one area in the township.

Director Schmitt replied that he does not believe all areas in the township must be developed.

Trustee Hendrickson asked if the requirements changed as the township was previously certified as a redevelopment ready community.

Director Clark replied the MEDC may have overlooked the points the township missed in the past.

Director Schmitt noted the requirements have changed substantially.

Trustee Wilson asked if there is a timeline on recertification.

Director Clark replied around November is the last chance to recertify.

Treasurer Deschaine asked how many townships are certified.

Director Schmitt replied it is a relatively small number.

Supervisor Jackson stated the board has no objections moving forward with this business.

14. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Supervisor Jackson opened Public Remarks at 8:35 pm.

NONE

Supervisor Jackson closed Public Remarks at 8:35 pm.

15. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS-NONE

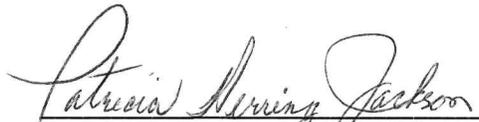
Clerk Guthrie announced there is an open admin position in the Clerk's office. She also announced a Chinese New Year celebration Sunday, January 29th at Center Court at the Meridian Mall.

Manager Walsh suggested holding a study session on the Sign Ordinance and the Redevelopment Ready Communities Recertification as both would have a large impact on the community.

16. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Hendrickson moved to adjourn, Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine.

Supervisor Jackson adjourned the meeting at 8:38 pm.



PATRICIA H. JACKSON,
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR



DEBORAH GUTHRIE
TOWNSHIP CLERK