



CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court, Haslett  
Meridian Service Center  
Wednesday, February 12, 2020 6 PM

PRESENT: Board Members: Jamie Hiller; James Kielbaso (6:20 pm); Kirk Lapham; Yu Man Lee;  
Mark Stephens; Steve Thomas  
ABSENT: None  
STAFF: Emma Campbell, Stewardship Coordinator; Robin Faust, Administrative Assistant II  
TOWNSHIP: Township Trustee, Dan Opsommer  
OTHER: None

### 1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Board Member Opsommer moved BOARD MEMBER STEPHENS ACT AS CHAIR PROTEM.  
Seconded by Board Member Lee.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Pro-Tem Chair Stephens called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

### 2. INTRODUCTIONS

- A. Steve Thomas, Board Member, appointed to the Board in January, is a professional ecologist, is a 15-year resident of the Township, been involved in stewardship within the Township since 2009 and has actively conducted and lead ecological stewardship in Sower Woods for last six years.
- B. Emma Campbell, Land Stewardship Coordinator, hired by the Township in January, holds a Bachelor of Science, Fisheries and Wildlife from MSU, worked as an education and stewardship coordinator and interpretative naturalist for Woldumar Nature Center, and has an extensive background in environmental stewardship including fundraising, grant writing, creation and implementation of land management plans and volunteer recruitment and coordination.

### 3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Under #7, Old Business, add #7A Wetland Bank Update, #7B, Renewal of Land Preservation Millage.

Board Member Lee moved TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED. Seconded by Board Member Hiller.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

### 4. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None

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### **5. APPROVE MINUTES**

Correct spelling of Board Member Lapham's name.

Board Member Opsommer moved TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 11, 2019 REGULAR MEETING AS AMENDED. Seconded by Board Member Lapham

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

### **6. COMMUNICATIONS**

- A. 2020 Board Member List – Board Member Hiller offered new address
- B. 2019 Annual Report and 2020 Goals – report was given at joint meeting of the boards and commissions with the Township Board

Hearing no objections, Vice Chair Kielbaso accepted the items of communication for filing.

### **7. OLD BUSINESS**

#### **A. Wetland Bank Update**

Board Member Lapham reported the Environmental Commission has reviewed the current Ordinance, some changes will be required for wetland banking, and they plan to discuss it with the Environment, Great Lake and Energy Department (EGLE). The Environmental Commission believes the Tihart Preserve would be a good mitigation opportunity and suggested a walk of the property with Mike Pennington. Board Members indicated they would like to be part of that walk.

Discussion:

- 1) We can break the tiles to reclaim the wetland
- 2) It was suggested a tour of the land preserves in the spring
- 3) There were discussions during the purchase of the Tihart Preserve on reclaiming the wetland
- 4) Suggestion was made to include Drain Commissioner's Office on these discussions
- 5) It was suggested to flood the area to get rid of canary grasses
- 6) Board Member Lapham will take this information back to Environmental Commission and arrange site visit this spring.

#### **B. Land Preservation Millage Renewal**

Board Members discussed:

- 1) The current Millage expires this year
- 2) Should the renewal be for the current levy amount or should it be at a lower amount
- 3) With respect to millage renewal request, it was stated that a majority of them pass
- 4) Ingham County is currently advertising their Parks and Trail Millage renewal and it will probably pass
- 5) Meridian Township Police and Fire Millage is also up for renewal
- 6) Board Members asked to have this as a March agenda item to be discussed further with staff.

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- C. Southwest Meridian Upland Donation Update  
Board Member Opsommer reported the development between Hagadorn and Hulett is going through site plan review and 23 acres which is contiguous to Southwest Meridian Uplands has been donated as part of the project.

**8. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Election of Officers

Chair opens the floor for nominations for **Chair**.

BOARD MEMBER HILLER MOVED, TO NOMINATE JAMES KIELBASO AS CHAIR. BOARD MEMBER STEPHENS SECONDED.

Board Member Kielbaso accepted the nomination.

Hearing no other nominations, Chair closed the floor to nominations for Chair.

Roll Call Vote:

AYES: YuMan Lee, Mark Stephens, Steve Thomas, Dan Opsommer, Jamie Hiller, Kirk Lapham

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

Chair opens the floor for nomination for **Vice Chair**.

BOARD MEMBER LEE MOVED, TO NOMINATE JAMIE HILLER AS VICE CHAIR. BOARD MEMBER STEPHENS SECONDED.

Board Member Hiller accepted the nomination.

Hearing no other nominations, Chair closed the floor to nomination for Vice Chair.

Roll Call Vote:

AYES: Kirk Lapham, Dan Opsommer, Steve Thomas, Mark Stephens, Yu Man Lee, James Kielbaso

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

- B. Resolution of Appreciation – Roland Harmes

The following resolution was offered by Board Member Opsommer and supported by Board Member Hiller.

**WHEREAS**, Roland Harmes has served as a member of the Land Preservation Advisory Board of the Charter Township of Meridian from 2014 through 2019; and

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**WHEREAS**, Roland Harmes has supported Meridian Township’s Land Preservation Program, the first community supported and funded program of its kind in Michigan for the acquisition and permanent preservation of ecologically important open space and natural features; and

**WHEREAS**, Roland Harmes provided expert natural resources and environmental knowledge on the lands that have entered into the Land Preservation Program; and

**WHEREAS**, Roland Harmes attended many site visits and offered preservation insight about each parcel being acquired and managed in the Township’s program; and

**WHEREAS**, Roland Harmes has devoted much of his personal time and energy to monitor the terms of the Cornell Road “Natural Beauty Road” designation that he was able to obtain from the Ingham County Road Commission and Township Trustees approximately 50 years ago; and

**WHEREAS**, Roland Harmes’ service on the Land Preservation Advisory Board has been beneficial to Meridian Township, its citizens, and its natural environment.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THE LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN** extends its best wishes to Roland Harmes and expresses its gratitude for his service to the community.

ROLL CALL:

YEAS: Kirk Lapham, Jamie Hiller, Dan Opsommer, Steve Thomas, Mark Stephens, Yu Man Lee, James Kielbaso

NAYS: None

Resolution passed unanimously.

### 9. STAFF REPORT

#### A. Stewardship Coordinator 2020 Work Plan

##### 1. Management Plan for Invasive Species

Coordinator Campbell outlined goals and objectives for this plan. She will work to remove resistant species in the not very dense sites especially where there is already a nice native species start. She reported she has already worked in Hillbrook Park and will continue 2019 applications to work to remove large knot weed in Ponderosa. If funds available, she suggested an outside company could assist in large areas to remove invasives but she will visit and survey the land preserves first and create a priority list. She has a new GPS unit to assist with mapping treatment areas and will be scheduling workdays in near future (complete plan in minute book).

- a. Prevention
- b. Early Detection & Response
- c. Control and Restoration (long-term management)
- d. Collaboration through management
- e. Invasive Species Adaptive Management Framework (How to get from A-Z)

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- B. Introduction of Meridian Conservation Corps
  - 1. Coordinator Campbell outlined plan for the launch of Meridian Conservation Corps (MCC) a township wide volunteer program (complete outline and mock flyer in minute book). MCC is a program devoted to increasing community involvement in our parks and preserves and to grow awareness of volunteer opportunities involving the care and conservation of Meridian Township’s expansive local green spaces.
  - 2. Corps Programs will include (full description of each program included in outline):
    - A. Forest Watch, Cleanup Crew, Trail Blazers, Invasive Species Strike Team, Planting a Native Meridian, Waterways Watch, Bioblitz Squad, Vernal Pool Monitors.
  - 3. Coordinator Campbell announced the program will not officially be launched until all the proper resources are in order such as: website creation, resource toolkits for each program, logo creation, and outreach materials (all in collaboration with communications). Official launch date will be Earth Day, April 22, 2020.

### 10. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

### 11. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBERS’ COMMENTS

- A. Acquisition Grant Status/Towar Woods - When asked when the grant application expires, Staff replied it has a two-year application period and expires in 2021.

### 12. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next Land Preservation Advisory Board Meeting: Wednesday, March 11, 6 pm, Meridian Service Center

### 13. ADJOURNMENT

Board Member Yu Man moved **TO ADJOURN THE MEETING**. Seconded by Board Member Stephens

Chair Mayes adjourned the meeting at 7:36 pm.