



Charter Township of Meridian
Meridian Economic Development Corporation
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864
Thursday, July 9, 2020- Minutes

Members

Present: Jade Sims, Joel Conn, Treasurer Phil Deschaine, Shawn Dunham, David Ledebuhr, Brenda Chapman, Township Manager Frank Walsh, Tom Conway, Trustee Kathy Ann Sundland, Mikhail Murshak, and Adam Carlson

Members

Absent: Kimberly Thompson

Others

Present: Economic Development Director Ken Lane, Planning Commissioner Peter Trezise and Trustee Patricia Herring Jackson

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Sims called the meeting to order at 7:31 am and Member Dunham read the mission statement.

2. **MISSION:** Set the standard in creating an entrepreneurial culture, be the example for revitalization of our business districts, and be the leaders in building sustainable public/private partnerships.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION BY MEMBER DUNHAM TO APPROVE THE AGENDA. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER LEDEBUHR. MOTION PASSES 10-0.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Minutes-May 29, 2020
- b. Financial Report
- c. Development Projects

MOTION BY MEMBER CONWAY TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER DUNHAM. MOTION PASSES 10-0.

5. PUBLIC REMARKS

None.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. Small Business Relief Grant Program Update

Director Lane reviewed the 42 small business grant recipients. All grantees signed a contract and a W9. On June 3, 2020 the \$4,000 grant checks were mailed to the recipients. Director Lane had a chance to communicate with nearly all recipients and many non-recipients. He summarized the grant awardees and applications by business types and working capital. The summary showed the biggest percentage of grant awardees came from the restaurant sector and the majority of the grant dollars were spent on utilities, rent and operating expenses.

Director Lane reviewed a draft Meridian Township business needs survey. The purpose of the survey is to check in with the local Township businesses and see how they are doing and how the Township might be able to assist them through the pandemic. Suggested updates to the survey included: For the question, "Of the following, what would be the most helpful to your business:" add (please rank the following in order of preference from 1-6). For the question, "Describe any financial support programs you have successfully secured at the local, state or federal level:" add (CARES, PPP, etc). Director Lane stated he would make the updates to the survey, share it with the Township Board and plans to send it out to the Township businesses by the end of the month.

b. Account Signatory Resolution

The EDC reviewed an updated resolution removing former Director Chris Buck's name.

MOTION BY MEMBER LEDEBUHR TO APPROVE THE BANK RESOLUTION, AS ATTACHED. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER DUNHAM. MOTION PASSES 10-0.

7. OLD BUSINESS

a. Committee Reports

The business promotion committee worked together on the MABA awards last year and with the Communications Department on promoting local businesses. The EDC discussed the need to reengage the group. Member Thompson and Member Conway were members and Treasurer Deschaine and Manager Walsh expressed interest in getting involved. Director Lane will organize a meeting with the committee and include Communications Manager Yates and MABA.

The school district committee worked on the golf carts for Haslett and Okemos High Schools. Meetings were held with the superintendents last year. It was discussed that given the pandemic, the superintendents might be overwhelmed and possibly it would be a good idea to reach out to Brian Harrod, Okemos High School teacher involved in entrepreneurship. Director Lane will craft an email to follow up from last year and ask how the EDC might be able to support the schools.

8. TOWNSHIP REPORTS

a. Township Board

Trustee Sundland discussed the following items:

- Haslett Marathon Brownfield Plan has been approved

- An amendment on vegetation plan has been approved. This will require all vegetation to be less than 8 inches high within 75 feet of a sidewalk.
 - Discussion of diversity, equity and inclusion plan
 - Discussion of non-discrimination and fair employment practices policy
- b. Township Manager
- The firefighter investigation report has been posted on the Township website
 - Marketplace on the Green is 5-6 weeks from opening
 - Road work is underway on Lake Lansing, Jolly Road, and Central Park Drive. In addition, the Township has 26 miles of local road work underway.
 - The outdoor service pods are working well at the Municipal Building
 - We are awaiting bids for the demolition of the buildings in Downtown Okemos
 - The owner of Walnut Hills now has an order to take down the buildings on his property.
 - The Large Dog Park at Central Park will be opening in a couple weeks
 - 33 applications have been submitted for the Human Resources Director position
 - Reminder to please complete the Census 2020
- c. Planning Commission
Planning Commissioner Peter Trezise provided a summary of recent Planning Commission activities.
- d. Chair
Chair Sims thanked Manager Walsh for his quick resolution to the firefighter issue.
- e. Staff
Director Lane reported that LEAP will restart the small grant program with \$5.5 million for the tri-county area. The grants will focus on small businesses with less than 50 employees. Businesses that received funding in the first round will not be eligible this time to receive funds again. Grants will be \$10,000 or \$20,000 and 200-300 grants will be awarded through the July 15-August 5, 2020 grant period. The funding is expected to go out by the end of September. Director Lane also reviewed the current development projects.

9. COMMUNITY REPORTS

- a. Meridian Mall
Member Dunham reported High Caliber Karting is adding 25,000 square feet. The bankruptcies and closures at the Mall include A & W, GNC, and JC Penney.
- b. Marketplace on the Green
Member Ledebuhr stated that a grant was received from the Realtors Association for adirondack chair kits. Volunteers from the Association will be assembling the chairs for the Marketplace on the Green.
- c. MABA
MABA will be having their monthly zoom meeting tomorrow.

10. OPEN DISCUSSION/BOARD COMMENTS

Manager Walsh thanked Member Ledebuhr for all of his hard work, over the past many years, on the Farmers' Market.

8. PUBLIC REMARKS

None.

9. NEXT MEETING DATE

- August 6, 2020 at 7:30am

10. ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no objection, Chair Sims adjourned the meeting at 8:11am.