

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
TOWNSHIP BOARD VIRTUAL SPECIAL MEETING **-APPROVED-**
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos MI 48864-1198
517.349.1232, Virtual Meeting via Zoom
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2021 **6:00 pm.**

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

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Township Manager Walsh, Director of Public Works Perry, Fire Chief Hamel, Community Planning and Development Director Kieselbach, Information Technology Director Gebes, Parks and Recreation Director Maisner, Finance Director Mattison, Human Resources Director Tithof, Economic Development and Neighborhoods Director Clark, Communications Manager Yates

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

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

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS

Supervisor Styka led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Clerk Guthrie called the roll of the Board.

4. PRESENTATIONS

A. Findings of the Local Officials Compensation Commission

Human Resources Director Tithof presented an overview of the determination of salaries for Elected Officials 2021 and 2022 by the Local Officials Compensation Commissions.

5. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Supervisor Styka opened public remarks at 6:04 pm

None

Supervisor Styka closed public remarks at 6:05 pm.

6. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

Manager Walsh reported

- Deer Management Program – Cull Deer Phase: to date 275 deer have been culled and the maximum through the approved DNR program is 326. He thanked the Police, Parks and Recreation and Public Works Teams for their efforts to make this program a success.
- Woda Cooper Development – The site plan has been submitted to the Planning Department and the Board will receive an update at a future meeting.
- Jolly Road Proposed Rezoning – It will be heard by the Planning Commission on March 8 and the Board will receive an update at a future meeting.

- MSU Credit Union – the Township received notice they will be amending their facility plan as it pertains to the drive through lanes on Central Park Drive
- 2021 Township Action Plan Work Groups – On March 2, the Board will receive the first updates from the groups
- Proposed Synthetic Ice Rink for Marketplace on the Green – the bid opening is scheduled for May 1 for a 100'x40' proposed area
- Free Sled Program – This idea is from Sault Saint Marie. To offer free sleds for visitors to use during a visit at North Meridian Road Park. Since we are nearing spring, this program may not happen this year but will next year
- Former Walnut Hills Country Club Site – demolition is almost complete with the recent removal of the pool and club house
- Food Pantry – met with Cecelia Kramer on moving forward with a proposed site and working with Clerk Guthrie and others on other proposed locations. A second pantry will be installed at the Faith Lutheran Church on Dobie Road. Sites are being approved through the Planning Department by Director Kieselbach

7. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Treasurer Deschaine:

- Commended the installation of the food pantries and announced the Okemos Community Church charity bingo asking for donations for those in need.
- As of February 17, the winter tax collection is at 99% of where it was last year. The summer tax collection was at 99.9%. On March 1, the Township will turn over unpaid taxes to the Ingham County Treasurer. The County Treasurer writes a check to the Township for the delinquent tax amount and then will spend the next three years trying to collect the taxes that will include interest and penalties.

Clerk Guthrie:

- Election Commission meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 24, at 6 pm to review the possibility of relocating precinct locations, accessibility issues, and review the post-election findings from the Ingham County Clerk. She thanked Deputy Manager Perry and staff for meeting with Okemos Public School officials to look at alternative polling locations.
- She thanked the City of East Lansing Clerk's Office for assisting with election and training materials. She will be working with former City Clerk Marie Wicks to assist with training for the upcoming election.

Trustee Wisinski:

- Will be attending the Election Commission meeting on Wednesday.
- Will be attending a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Task Force meeting on Thursday, February 25.
- Will be attending the Environmental Commission meeting on March 3. The Environment Commission has received four letters for green grants from Okemos and Haslett Schools. Grainger has offered \$1,000 and some of the other businesses have volunteered to match funds. She will be on the committee to review the grants. The Commission received a presentation on using social media for environmental change as a way to inform citizens on environmental concerns and what is happening in Meridian Township.
- Attended Groundwater Management Board meeting. The Board is looking for support for a geographical survey that will assist in locating the wells in Michigan. The Board will be writing

a grant or look for funding to update the survey and will be asking for letters of support for the project.

Trustee Opsommer

- The Land Preservation Advisory Board is discussing the renaming of some of the land preserves. In the February 10 Advisory Board meeting packet, Chair Hiller included a list of perspective names. If a citizen or board member would like to comment, a message can be sent to the staff. Some of the preserves do have naming rights that were part of the purchase agreement.
- The Planning Commission on Monday, February 22 held a n public hearing on the Auto Dealership Amendment

8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried 7-0.

9. CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor Styka reviewed the consent agenda.

Treasurer Deschaine moved to adopt the Consent Agenda as presented. Seconded by Trustee Jackson

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

A. Communications

Treasurer Deschaine the communications not already assigned for disposition be referred to the Township Manager or Supervisor for follow-up. Seconded by Trustee Jackson

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

B. Approval of Minutes – February 2, 2021 Virtual Regular Meeting

Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve and ratify the minutes of the February 2, 2021 Virtual Regular Meeting, as submitted. Seconded by Trustee Jackson

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

C. Bills

Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve that the Township Board approve the Manager’s Bills as follows: Seconded by Trustee Jackson

Common Cash		\$	2,075,039.78
Public Works		\$	559,364.21
Trust & Agency		\$	3,704.72
	Total Checks	\$	2,638,108.71
Credit Card Transactions		\$	15,289.92
1/29/2021-2/7/2021			
	Total Purchases	\$	2,653,398.63
ACH Payments		\$	1,145,760.44

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

D. Lake Lansing Road at Dawn Avenue Sanitary Sewer Benefit Charge

Treasurer Deschaine move to approve the resolution establishing sanitary system benefit charges for Lake Lansing Road at Dawn Avenue, and establishing a cost of \$16,280.89 for 2783 Lake Lansing Road, parcel 33-02-02-08-201-001 (plus 5% annual increase). Seconded by Trustee Jackson

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

10. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY – NONE

11. HEARINGS

A. Powell Road Paving Public Road Improvement SAD

Deputy Manager Perry stated the Township Board had previously held a public hearing on the Powell Road Paving SAD. It will be 1,600 feet of new pavement from Grand River to the Silverstone Development. The estimated project cost is \$460,000. The developer will cover 56% of the project costs but a portion of the costs will be returned to the developer through the special assessment district. As part of the special assessment process, two public hearings are required. Tonight's public hearing provides an opportunity for Township Board to receive comments on the special assessment district.

Supervisor Styka called the public hearing to order at 6:25 pm.

Gary Laundroche, Lafontaine Buick Group, 4000 W Highland Road, Highland, MI, spoke in opposition to the SAD and raised concern that the paving costs being assessed on their site was because they have not completed their project. It appears the Silverstone developer is diverting their paving costs onto their project site.

Supervisor Styka closed the public hearing at 6:29pm.

12. ACTION ITEMS

A. Ratification of Brownfield Redevelopment Authority Appointment

Treasurer Deschaine move to approve the appointment of Brenda Chapman to the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority for a term ending 12/31/2023. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

Supervisor Styka thanked Jade Sims for serving on the Economic Development Corporation and the Brownfield Development Authority and wished her well on her future endeavors. He welcomed Brenda Chapman to the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority.

B. Fire Services Agreement – Alaiedon Township

Fire Chief Hamel summarized the proposed fire services agreement with Alaiedon Township.

Discussion:

- When asked about why the fees have not been increased, Chief Hamel stated the proposed fees cover the Township's costs.
- When asked if cost comparisons have been conducted, Chief Hamel replied no. The intent of this agreement is to assist Delhi with coverage of this section of Alaiedon Township and traditionally, there it is mutual aid involved with neighboring areas.

Trustee Opsommer move to approve the agreement between Delhi Charter Township and Meridian Charter Township for fire and rescue services within Alaiedon Township and authorize the Township Manager and Fire Chief to sign the agreement. Seconded by Trustee Jackson

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Powell Road Paving Public Road Improvement SAD

Discussion:

- Clerk Guthrie summarized a communication received Sunday from New China of MI Inc. in opposition to the special assessment and reported it will be included in the next meeting packet. Deputy Manager Perry addressed the concerns outlined in the communication.
- The Lafontaine site plan included an egress onto Powell Road from their two parcels, one on the east side and one on the west side of Powell Road
- The paving of Powell Road was a condition of the preliminary plat for Silverstone.

Board consensus to place this item on the next Board meeting agenda.

B. 2021 Citizen Survey

Director Clark summarized information from two communities who do not use the National Research Center.

Discussion:

- Manager Walsh explained how the City of St. Joseph conducted their in-house survey, the response percentages and due to feedback, they moved to mailing it out to registered voters.
- Manager Walsh reported Deputy Manager Perry, Director Clark and himself would lead the project. He suggested the Board could set aside time to outline the topics to be covered and staff can investigate whom to hire to create the questions on the subject matter. The questions could be reviewed by the Township Board and mailed out.
- Director Clark offered a timeline of: begin question preparation, have finalized for mailing in June, results compiled in July, and findings presented to Board in August.
- Manager Walsh stated he will work with staff to develop questions and two main topics to include are adult use recreational marihuana and deer management program. When asked if the results could be made available before August, Manager Walsh stated there are two options for conducting the survey. One is to perform a survey based only on recreational marihuana and waiting until next year to send out an extensive survey or proceed with a survey that covers multiple topics.
- It was the consensus of the Board to proceed with an in-house survey and staff was directed to develop a timeline for a single or two-issue survey and for a multi-questioned survey.

Board consensus to place this item on the next Board meeting agenda.

14. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Supervisor Styka Opened Public Remarks at 7:36 pm.

Haibiao Zhang, 4719 Powell Road, Okemos, voiced concern about the large developments, how the environment has changed because of the removal of the trees on the site adjacent to his property including trees on his property, and how it has damaged the wetland. He is requesting the trees be replanted including on his property, not just grass and asked how to make sure the developer protects the environment, their property and community. He spoke about the problems this has caused to his area and is against the special assessment.

Supervisor Styka Closed Public Remarks at 7:39 pm.

15. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Supervisor Styka reported the Planning Commission is asking for a joint meeting with the Township Board and he asked about setting aside an hour at the next meeting.

Trustee Jackson asked if there is a specific topic.

Supervisor Styka stated they mentioned recreational marihuana.

Trustee Opsommer stated the Commission also mentioned form based code.

Supervisor Styka stated he would contact the Planning Commission Chair and schedule a time during an upcoming Township Board Meeting.

Clerk Guthrie announced this Thursday, February 25, from 6-8 pm, HOMTV will be hosting their annual Intern Appreciation and Golden Tape Awards Ceremony. Normally it is held at Studio C as a red carpet event but will be held virtually this year.

Trustee Opsommer asked when the Special Use Permit for Lafontaine expires. Director Kieselbach replied he believed it is July this year. It was approved in 2019 for two years but he will verify the date. Trustee Opsommer stated with the SUP due to expire, the Auto Dealership Amendment would require it to be heard by the Township Board and then referred to the Planning Commission. With the right-of-way issues Deputy Perry is having with DTN, he suggested the Township could allocate some of the tree planting project funds for tree to be planted in the public right-of-way on the Lafontaine site to start reforesting the area.

16. ADJOURNMENT

Treasurer Deschaine moved to adjourn. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski

VOICE/HAND VOTE: Motion carried 7-0.

Supervisor Styka adjourned the meeting at 7:46 pm.

RONALD J. STYKA,
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

DEBORAH GUTHRIE,
TOWNSHIP CLERK