



Charter Township of Meridian  
Meridian Economic Development Corporation  
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864  
Thursday, February 4, 2021– Minutes -DRAFT

**Members**

**Present:** Jade Sims, Joel Conn, Treasurer Phil Deschaine, David Ledebuhr, Township Manager Frank Walsh, Shawn Dunham, Henry Kwok, Brenda Chapman, Adam Carlson, Trustee Kathy Ann Sundland, and Kimberly Thompson

**Members**

**Absent:** Tom Conway

**Others**

**Present:** Neighborhoods & Economic Development Director Amber Clark, Community Planning & Development Director Mark Kieselbach, and Trustee Patricia Herring Jackson

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Sims called the meeting to order at 7:30 am and 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 CONN TO APPROVE THE AGENDA. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER LEDEBUHR  
MOTION PASSES 11-0.**

4. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Minutes-January 7, 2021
- b. Financial Report
- c. Development Projects

**MOTION BY MEMBER DUNHAM TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA. SUPPORTED BY  
MEMBER LEDEBUHR MOTION PASSES 11-0.**

5. PUBLIC REMARKS

NONE.

6. NEW BUSINESS

- a. EDC Appointment  
Discussion was held and confirmation of appointment for Henry Kwok to EDC was made

- b. EDC Officer Election  
There was discussion of the new slate of EDC officers.

**MOTION BY MEMBER WALSH TO APPROVE KIMBERLY THOMPSON, CHAIR, BRENDA CHAPMAN, VICE CHAIR, AND ADAM CARLSON, DEPUTY SECRETARY AS THE NEW EDC OFFICERS. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER LEDEBUHR. MOTION PASSES 11-0.**

- c. EDC BRA Liaison Election  
With Chair Sims departure, there is an opening for an EDC representative to serve on the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority.

**MOTION BY MEMBER THOMPSON TO APPOINT BRENDA CHAPMAN TO SERVE AS THE EDC REPRESENTATIVE ON THE BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER DUNHAM. MOTION PASSES 11-0.**

- d. Letter of Appreciation Jade Sims  
Member Ledebuhr and Director Clark thanked Chair Sims for her leadership and many accomplishments as EDC Chair. Kimberly Thompson will sign the framed letter of appreciation presented to Chair Sims.

7. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Meridian Small Business Relief Grant Update  
Chair Sims announced the committee reviewed 128 grant applications and awarded 105 grants to local businesses. Treasurer Deschaine reviewed each application to make sure they were located in Meridian Township and did not have any outstanding payments with the Township as it relates to utilities or taxes. The list of businesses is included in the meeting packet.
- b. MABA Business Awards  
Chair Sims reported MABA collected 120 votes for award recipients. However, these votes were processed through Mail Chimp and MABA does not have a membership to extract the data from Mail Chimp. The membership will cost \$400 and MABA is wondering if the EDC would be interested in covering the cost or splitting the cost. The EDC discussed the idea and decided this was an internal accounting issue for MABA and the EDC is still interested in supporting the cost of the awards, but not the fees for Mail Chimp.
- c. Village of Okemos Update-Reimbursement Agreement  
Director Clark stated that the demolition is complete. She has not received the wording back yet from the developers regarding the agreement. She is expecting it in the next few weeks and is expecting the amount to be less than the original request. However, this will not be the last request for funds for this project.
- d. Chinese New Year  
The EDC had contributed \$1,000 to the Mall for rent for the Chinese New Year celebration for 2020. Since the event did not occur, due to the pandemic, they held the dollars for a 2021 event. It is now clear a 2021 event will not occur either. Member Dunham stated the process has begun to issue the EDC a refund for the \$1,000. The payment should be received in the next 4-6 weeks.

8. TOWNSHIP REPORTS

a. Township Board

Trustee Sundland reported the following:

- The Board approved a non-discrimination policy.
- The Board approved 2021 work plan assignments.
- The Board will hold a retreat on February 20<sup>th</sup>.
- The Board will have a special meeting on February 16<sup>th</sup> to discuss recreational marihuana.
- The Board discussed the upcoming 2021 Citizen's survey.
- The Board appointed Henry Kwok to the EDC.
- The Board approved a resolution in support of black history month.

b. Township Manager

Manager Walsh reported the following:

- The 2020 Annual Report is complete.
- Deputy Manager Perry received the award of top Assistant Manager in Michigan.
- The Marketplace on the Green received a design award from Michigan Parks.
- We submitted a \$10,000 LEAP public art grant for the Marketplace on the Green.
- The deer management program is going well with 237 of their 326 goal.
- The new Silverstone and Copper Creek neighborhoods are moving along.

c. Planning Commission

Director Kieselbach, on behalf of Commissioner Trezise, gave a report on the current Planning Commission activities.

d. Chair

Chair Sims expressed gratitude, support and congratulations to the new EDC Officers.

e. Staff

Director Clark congratulated the group on a great 2020 given the obstacles. She is working on compiling a business database. The business promotion and outreach committee is meeting this afternoon to discuss their projects. Director Clark has been selected to serve on the MABA Board. There is one vacancy on the EDC. Anna's House opened today.

9. COMMUNITY REPORTS

a. Meridian Mall

Member Dunham reported that the Mall has had higher traffic recently, but retailers are still struggling. CBL is working on restructuring debt and has filed bankruptcy. High Caliber Karting is continuing their expansion. Also, a new Italian restaurant will be coming to the food court.

b. MABA

No additional items.

10. OPEN DISCUSSION/BOARD COMMENTS

Treasurer Deschaine mentioned Susan Masten has stepped down from the Environmental Commission. So, if you know of anyone that may be interested in serving, please pass the word along.

10. PUBLIC REMARKS

Trustee Patricia Herring Jackson said thank you and congratulations to Jade Sims.

11. NEXT MEETING DATE

- March 4, 2021 at 7:30am

12. ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no objection, Chair Thompson adjourned the meeting.