



**AGENDA**  
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
TOWNSHIP BOARD – SPECIAL MEETING  
December 11, 2021 9:00 AM

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1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS
3. ROLL CALL
4. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS
5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
6. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS
  - A. Overview of 2021 Township Board Goals and Objectives 9:00am-9:15am
  - B. Overview of 2021 Departmental Activities & 2022 Vision
    - 1) Human Resources 9:15am-9:30am
    - 2) Community Planning and Development 9:30am-9:45am
    - 3) Economic Development & Neighborhoods 9:45am-10:00am
    - 4) Parks and Recreation 10:00am-10:15am
    - 5) Deputy Manager & Public Works 10:15am-10:30am
    - 6) Assessing 10:30am-10:40am
    - 7) Police 10:40am-10:55am
    - 8) Information Technology 10:55am-11:10am
    - 9) Fire 11:10am-11:25am
    - 10) Finance 11:25am-11:40am
    - 11) Communications 11:40am-11:55am
    - 12) Clerk 11:55am-12:10pm
    - 13) Treasurer 12:10pm-12:25pm
    - 14) Township Manager 12:25pm-12:30pm
7. LUNCH BREAK 12:30pm-1:00pm
8. BOARD DISCUSSION (CONTINUED)
  - C. Establish 2022 Action Plan & ARP Discussion 1:00pm-2:00pm
9. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC
10. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS
11. ADJOURNMENT

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All comments limited to 3 minutes, unless prior approval for additional time for good cause is obtained from the Supervisor.  
Appointment of Supervisor Pro Tem and/ or Temporary Clerk if necessary.

Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Meridian Township Board by contacting:  
Township Manager Frank L. Walsh, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 or 517.853.4258 - Ten Day Notice is Required.  
Meeting Location: 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 Township Hall



2021

## GOALS ACTION PLAN

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- A. Maintain unparalleled customer service and public safety throughout the Global COVID-19 Pandemic. Be mindful of the struggle facing our Meridian business community during COVID-19, develop and implement creative programs to assist our partners.**

In addition to the business grants that the township graciously provided, the entire Meridian Team was mindful of the need to continue providing exemplary customer service through and beyond COVID. Meridian Township has a reputation for caring and compassionate customer service. After all, how many other Michigan communities approve a local tax to help their fellow residents who struggle to cover necessities?

Our COVID HOTLINE continued into 2021. Our state association of Michigan local government leaders has asked Meridian Township to lead a statewide keynote on how we cared for our team during the pandemic. Our goal is to continue to be leaders in Michigan regardless of the crisis or need.

- B. Continue progress on the Meridian Township Sustainability Plan goal of 100% renewable energy use for Township facilities by 2035 by installing an additional 120kW of photovoltaic panels on Township property. Upon installation of the additional 120 kW panels in 2021, we will be at 60% of the required 300kW needed in combination with energy efficiency measures and renewable energy provider purchases to meet the 100% goal.**

In the summer of 2021, the Township completed the installation of a 142 kW DC flat panel system on the roof of the Service Center. In a typical year, on average, we anticipate the 142 kW system to generate 100% of the electrical usage of the Service Center. The systems generation statistic and history can be viewed on our Township website.

Based on the baseline electric usage year of 2018, the Township has seen considerable energy purchase requirements go down as significant capital investments into solar panels and energy efficient systems has been made at several Township Buildings. The Municipal Building, Service Center and the South Fire Station can now boast a 59% power purchase reduction requirement from the baseline year. Future capital investments and energy reduction projects such as the office light conversion to LED's completed in 2021 and budgeted for in 2022 will continue the progress made towards reaching the goals outlines in the Township Sustainability Plan.



**C. Develop a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan with specific goals and objectives.**

The Township continues to implement its DEI mission statement into the practices and culture of the organization. In January, we incorporated the Board-approved Non-Discrimination in Hiring Policy into our Personnel Policy Manual, and in August, our leadership and Trustees participated in a 4-hour virtual DEI training presented by the Michigan Department of Civil Rights. We are currently working with MSU, LCC, and other DEI-specialized training entities in order to plan and offer regular training to leadership and staff in the upcoming year and beyond.

**D. Culminate our decade long effort to redevelop Downtown Okemos and Haslett with vertical construction.**

The Village of Okemos, LLC development remains a priority for the departments to fulfill through efficient partnerships. The first action taken was to remove the blight that stood in place of our downtown. Through the use of the Meridian Redevelopment Fund (MRF) the Village of Okemos developers came to the Township with an application requesting the use of the funds toward sheeting and shoring. The request was approved by the Meridian Economic Development Corporation (EDC) and the Township Board with incentives to complete demolition before the end of the spring season.

By February, all of the previously blighted buildings were removed to usher in the new development. The successful completion of this portion of the project proves the Township's ability to work as a financial partner with a developer to bring the community updated spaces.



Soon after the arrival of our new Community Planning & Development Director Tim Schmitt, the developer submitted a request for an amendment to their approved Mixed Use Planned Unit Site Plan. This second amendment was requested to phase residential development on Ardmore and reduce the commercial suites on Hamilton road. The Township Board and community were not in support of a reduced commercial space downtown and phased development to begin on Ardmore. Director Schmitt acknowledged the financial climate and did approve a reduction in the height of the buildings from five stories to four. He also approved the removal of the surface parking deck. The developer will be held to a concept that includes at least 32,000 sq. ft. of commercial first-floor space and no more than 200 residential units. These changes keep the overall look and feel of the development close to the original proposal. It also allows for the developer to gain the financial support of private lenders as the financial risk was reduced.

A funding gap may exist and could be supported by the State of Michigan through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC). The Village of Okemos project could begin to see construction in 2022 if the previously mentioned approvals are given by March of 2022. It is the sole focus of the staff to work closely with the Village of Okemos LLC team, MEDC staff, Downtown Development Authority (DDA) stakeholders, BRA

stakeholders, Township Board Members, and our residents to support a start date by June 2022.

One development upgrade in the Haslett PICA is the Haslett Marathon at 1619 Haslett Road. This site is the only centrally located gas station in the Haslett School District. It is a “service station” concept as patrons can buy gas and have repairs/maintenance completed on their vehicles. This unique construction project allowed the business owner to stay open during construction.



The Township worked with the developer to allow for demolition and construction permits to be issued concurrently. Demolition of gas tanks, surface parking, and other pavement made way for the new building construction. Members of the community were shocked by the placement of the new building and its height. It reminded our staff that many community members do not know the vision of the Board and the Planning Commission calls for the intersection of Marsh and Haslett roads to become urban “downtowns”. Working with the Communications Team, we developed short videos for the public to understand the reasons behind the design. The recent Haslett Market Study indicates a desire for more upscale retail for residents in the area. The updates at the Haslett Marathon will include take-out food options with quality car maintenance services. The project is an estimated \$1 million dollars with \$300,000 in brownfield reimbursement for site contamination.



Pine Village Senior Community is an approved four story Mixed Use Planned Unit Development (MUPUD) with approximately 10,000 sq. ft. of commercial space and 132 residential units. This year the cost of construction skyrocketed to over 30% higher than average costs. Developers that did not have specific material and labor contracts pre-COVID-19, opted to wait out the spike in materials. In May, the Pine Village team also submitted a request to amend their MUPUD. The approved change allowed the developer to rearrange the entrance to the site from Haslett Road and also made a small adjustment to the floor plan. With a rebound in the cost of

materials within the last quarter of the year, the Pine Village Development Team is successfully moving forward. Director Schmitt and the Planning Team continue to review their construction design details. In a recent instance, the Pine Village Development Team redesigned the communal dining space to allow for residents to spread out and provide “social distancing”. The design adjustment was made by the Development Team, as they consider life with COVID-19.

The Pine Village Development has an approved Brownfield Plan that incorporates reimbursement to the developer for eligible activities. The total \$2,595,332 of eligible reimbursement included \$472,160 in interest if the demolition of 1637 Haslett road was completed by November 1, 2021. The deadlines for the interest incentive were missed and the developer is prepared to move ahead with the project without the interest. The Community Planning and Economic Development Departments are confident that demolition for 1637 Haslett road will begin in 2022 with vertical construction to begin in early spring 2022. There is a partial approval for demolition of 1655 Haslett road for the L&L building only with the Hudson Senior Development Team. The demolition of that property will be considered when a new proposed project for Haslett Village Square is approved.

**E. Implement the second year of our Local Road Enhancement Program by improving a minimum of 15 miles of local roads.**

The second year of the 10-year program provided funding for an additional resurfacing of almost 9 miles of local roads in the Township.

Of the 8.87 miles of roads slated for work, the following were completed during the 2021 construction season: Skyline (North of Margate), Kingcross, Shaw, Potter, Edson, Colby, Park (Lake Lansing), Cliffdale, White Ash, Buckingham, Sapphire, Sequoia, Comanche, Cochise, Tomahawk, Lagoon, Wausau, Osage, Seneca, Ivywood, Mistywood, Silverwood, Shortwood, Oakwood, Indian Glen, Mojave, Farm Meadows, Cherrywood, Butternut, Conifer Circle, Autumnwood, Timberview, Fairhills, and Rainbow Court. Because of the delays caused by excess precipitation this construction season, Pine Hollow, Mereford, Fenwick and Overglen will be completed in the spring of 2022.



The work affected many of our residents all summer, and we appreciate their patience and understanding as we worked to complete our second year of work of the 10-year program. In addition to the rehabilitation and resurfacing work, our preservation program is ready to commence in the spring of 2022 and will provide 7.61 miles of crack filling and 1.5 miles of cape sealing work. These two types of preservation work will allow our “good” roads to last longer by slowing their deterioration. Funding for this preventative maintenance program is provided from the Township General Fund to allow all of the road bond revenue to go towards reconstruction and resurfacing work.

The resulting rehabilitation and preventative maintenance work this year allowed our local road network Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) to go from 4.48 in 2019 to 5.37 at the completion of all the identified 2020 program work.



In addition to our local road program, Ingham County also provided several paving overlay projects in the Township. Work included the resurfacing of Van Atta Road south of the bridge, a section of Cornell Road by Haslett Road, Towar Avenue and Coleman Road.

The Hagadorn Road resurfacing project from Mt. Hope to the Red Cedar Bridge was also completed in 2020.



**F. Develop a comprehensive plan to facilitate access to affordable Broadband across the entire Township.**

In cooperation with Ingham County, we will be participating in a broadband assessment and planning project using Merit Network Inc. as a consultant. According to our partners at Ingham County, our first project team meeting will commence in December and continue into 2022. The primary work will focus on quantifying internet availability and demand in Meridian Township and the greater Ingham County. Funding for the project is being provided by Ingham County.

**G. Complete Phase 1 and 2 of the MSU to Lake Lansing Pathway and review the Pathway Master Plan.**

Phase one and phase two of the MSU to Lake Lansing pathway is being prepared for bidding this winter. Significant surveying and engineering were required in the development of these projects. Phase 1 is the more difficult of the two, as it includes a river crossing and skirts difficult terrain and required the acquisition of two

parcels requiring environmental due diligence work.

All funding for both phases one and two have been secured, and we look forward to starting construction in 2022.



Phase IIb, which was a project to widen the pathway along Okemos Road from the Service Center to the Inter Urban, was completed in 2021.



The Shaw Street connector was also constructed this year in conjunction with the local road-paving program. This connector will provide a route from the future MSU-Lake Lansing Phase III section in downtown Haslett to Lake Lansing South Park. Preliminary design for Phase III is underway as we look to secure the necessary land and funding for the final phase of the project.



As part of the pathway work, several RRFB's were installed for safer pedestrian crossing at Central Park, and Haslett/Van Atta. Two additional RRFB's will also be installed at Hagadorn/Shaw and on Okemos Road yet this year.

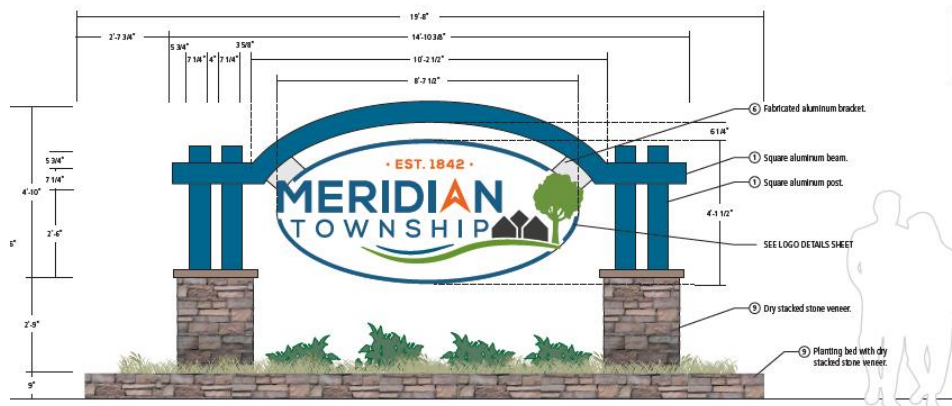
The Pathway Master Plan was also updated for the next five years this summer. The plan was presented to several Boards and Commissions with final adoption by the Township Board this summer. The 2021 Pathway Master Plan can be found on the website.

**H. Further our branding efforts with the addition of new “Welcome to Meridian Township” signage.**

This year, Corbin Design assisted the Township with the development of a signage master plan that is based upon the Township logo and brand standards. This new sign plan will be used by our Team to purchase and install new community signage for all of our properties and buildings moving forward.

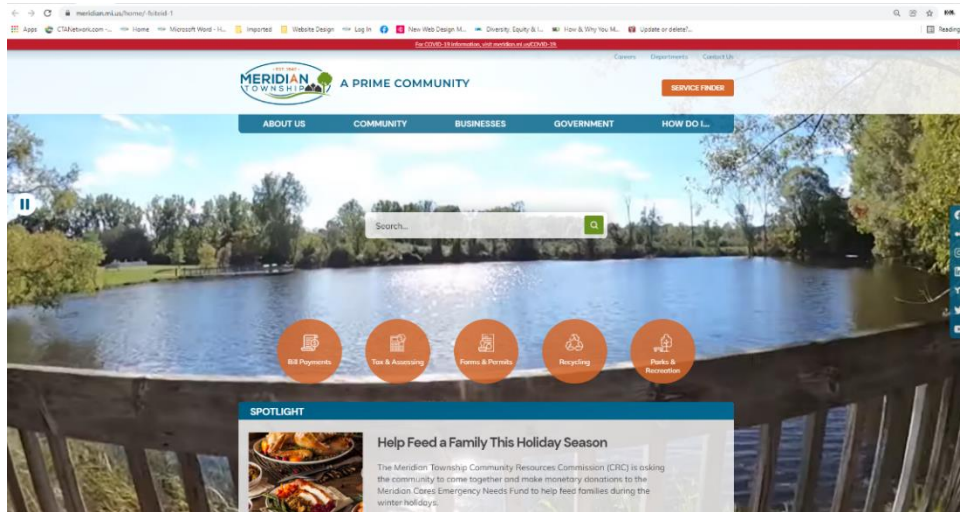


In the spring of 2022, we will be installing two new monument signs at the entrances to the Municipal Building, new Municipal Complex wayfinding signage to assist our visitors, and four new gateway signs for our Township along our major roads leading into the community. New signs for the Meridian Township Park System are also proposed. The new signs will create a consistent community image.





**I. Work with Granicus to upgrade the design of our Meridian Township website to improve functionality, as well as, give a new look and experience to site visitors.**



Industry standard states a website should be re-evaluated and revamped every 2-3 years, the previous Township website was launched in 2017. The Township Website Redesign Project initially began in 2020 with an internal audit of website content. In April 2021, the Granicus Project Manager and Communications staff started the Innovator Redesign Implementation Timeline with the Discovery/Consulting Phase of the project. Website traffic tracking utilizing heat maps and analytical data was the baseline for layout and design decisions. The Graphic Design, Development, Content Migration and Soft Launch Phases of the project took several months to complete. The redesigned website was launched and live to the public on November 15. The goal of the website refresh is to strengthen the Township's online presence and includes a new look and experience for site visitors. Added features and modified navigation provides community members with improved functionality and encourage additional use of the Township's online services such as live web forms, online payments and the new Service Finder component. The website remains mobile friendly and responsive. Accessibility enhancements have also been made and will continue to be addressed in the future. The website redesign has been undertaken as part of an existing contract with the Township's website host, Granicus, at minimal cost to the Township. The Communications Department will continue to work on streamlining content and making improvements to the site's navigation in the weeks and months to come

**J. Fulfill our promises made to voters in 2017 by allocating enhanced pension payments to MERS and maintaining 73 emergency responders.**

Back in 2017, our residents overwhelmingly approved a 1.483 mill levy to support additional police officers, paramedics, the purchase of a new ladder truck and paying down our pension liability. We promised voters we would increase our police ranks to 41, fire to 32, purchase a new ladder truck in 2021 and contribute an additional \$1,500,000 per year to eradicate our unfunded pension liabilities.

After four years of receiving the additional tax revenue, we have increased our police ranks to 41, fire to 34, ordered a \$950,000 ladder truck and contributed on average \$1,850,000 per year to unfunded pension liabilities. Not only have we kept our promise, we have well surpassed our lofty goals. While MERS suggest we use a 7.35% rate of return, Meridian Township will continue to pay down our MERS unfunded pension liability by using a 5.35% rate of return. Our target remains 100% funding.

# 2021 Departmental Year End Review

## ASSESSING

### Defend Tax Appeals with Vigor

The Assessing Department is continuing to defend tax appeals with vigor. 13 tax appeals were filed for 2020, two remain open with settlement pending. We have received 14 entire tribunal appeals for 2021 with 8,973,475 taxable value in contention. The value in contention represents 0.47% of the Township's taxable value.

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN**  
 MTT Status Report - Entire Tribunal (ET) Appeals  
 November 19, 2021

PARCEL	OWNERSHIP	DOCKET NUMBER	YEAR	SEV	TV	TV IN CONTENTION
33-02-02-15-276-005	JER/NHP SENIOR LIVING ACQUISITION LLC	20-001739	2020	3,417,700	2,753,257	1,003,257
33-02-02-15-276-005	JER/NHP SENIOR LIVING ACQUISITION LLC	20-001739	2021	3,122,400	2,791,802	1,166,802
33-02-02-10-401-006	LTG HASLETT LLC	20-003095	2020	236,000	191,589	41,589
33-02-02-22-126-021	KROGER CO OF MICHIGAN	21-001279	2021	1,443,700	1,443,700	693,700
33-02-02-29-105-004	EYDE IRONPOINT LLC	21-001573	2021	856,900	798,111	198,111
33-02-02-33-326-032	EYDE PORTFOLIO B LLC	21-001574	2021	545,500	522,683	122,683
33-02-02-20-205-015	MERIDIAN GRAND RIVER LLC	21-001576	2021	776,500	718,665	88,665
33-02-02-20-205-019	MERIDIAN GRAND RIVER LLC	21-001576	2021	916,600	892,500	122,500
33-02-02-20-326-011	HANNAH HOSPITALITY LLC	21-002018	2021	4,184,900	4,184,900	984,900
33-02-02-33-378-005	PHG LAND DEVELOPMENT, LLC	21-002593	2021	3,219,800	3,219,800	1,644,800
33-02-02-33-378-004	PENINSULA HOTEL GROUP, LLC	21-002598	2021	2,561,400	2,533,911	471,411
33-02-02-21-254-037	WALGREEN COMPANY	21-002717	2021	1,486,100	1,486,100	486,100
33-02-02-22-126-022	TKG MERIDIAN TOWNE CENTRE LLC	21-002756	2021	5,569,300	4,833,507	1,290,657
33-02-02-22-126-024	TKG MERIDIAN TOWNE CENTRE LLC	21-003253	2021	556,100	556,100	281,100
33-02-02-21-226-004	PANERA LLC	21-002765	2021	777,200	777,200	377,200
33-02-02-15-201-023	GEFFREY COLON-RIVERA	21-003063	2021	75,100	74,010	0
<b>Total in Contention:</b>						<b>8,973,475</b>

NOTE: Parcels highlighted in yellow, if any, are located in a capture district (e.g., DDA, etc.)

### Conduct Annual Assessment/Re-Inspection of Taxable Properties

The 2021 Assessment Roll and March Board of Review were completed under the supervision of the previous assessor, David Lee. In June, new Assessor Ashley Winstead, took over the roll. The July Board of Review was held to process corrections and exemptions. The final Board of Review meeting for 2021 is in December. The purpose of this meeting is to process corrections and exemptions.

Due to staffing changes within the department and the risk of COVID in the community, we did not hire interns to assist with the re-inspection program for 2021. Instead, phone interviews were conducted when appropriate and appraisers completed the majority of field work by appointment.

## COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

### Implement New Strategic Communications & Marketing Plan

The Strategic Communications and Marketing Plan was developed as a foundation for all communications and marketing activities and to assist with meeting the needs of the other departments of the Township. The Communications Department has implemented new task management web-based software, ClickUp, to assist with team collaboration efforts, as well as streamline marketing and communications processes. The team continues to work with staff from

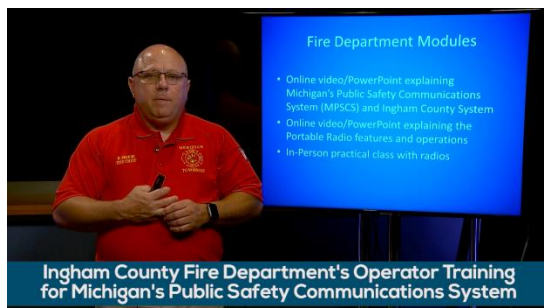
multiple departments on planning marketing needs. As part of the new strategic plan, the department will launch a marketing and communications ticket system in 2022.

## Expand Branding



The Communications Team continues to expand Township Branding through the use of branded graphics on social media, branded flyers and a new branded digital newsletter. With the launch of the redesigned Township website, the team also redesigned the Meridian Happenings digital newsletter to have the same look. The team has worked with multiple departments on branded promotional campaigns, including Parks & Recreation, Green Meridian and Economic Development to name a few. Canva web-based software has been recommended to other departments as a way to collaborate on graphics, signage, etc. A new logo was also created for the Harris Nature Center to incorporate the Township branded colors and the Communications staff is working on a new Farmers' Market logo. Expanding branding both internally and externally is an ongoing process and will continue into 2022.

## Onboarding Training Videos



The Communications Department worked with both the Meridian Township Police and Fire Departments to film and produce training videos for staff. Utilizing HOMTV production equipment

and editing software, staff recorded a radio system training video with EMS/Training Chief Bill Priese to not only be used for staff within the Meridian Township Fire Department, but for all fire departments in Ingham County. The training video recorded with Police Captain Rick Grillo was a non-escalation and de-escalation customer service training that will be used internally for all Meridian Township employees. Staff will continue to work with the Human Resources Department on recording staff training videos for onboarding of new employees. The goal is to compile a library of training videos that could be utilized within a new Intranet that would be accessible for all employees as a tool of internal communications.

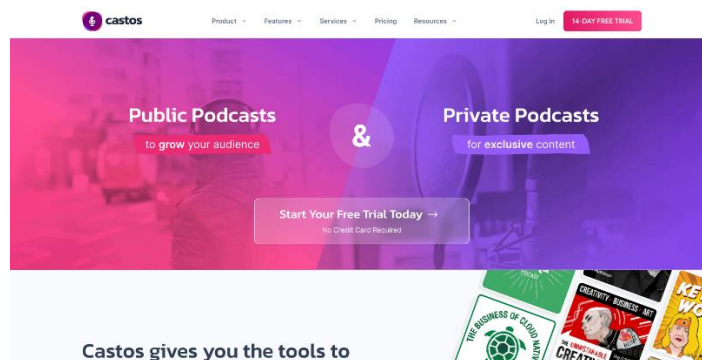
## CAMTV Community Access Channel



The goal was to re-evaluate the purpose of the CAMTV Community Access Channel and to strengthen programming and participation of community producers. Staff discovered the encoder, which sends the CAMTV signal to AT&T was no longer functioning. In order to comply with the AT&T Franchise Agreement and stream CAMTV to approximately 17 communities on the AT&T U-verse system, it was imperative for an emergency purchase to replace the HD encoder and restore the channel signal. The new encoder was installed in summer 2021.

In addition to installing the encoder, staff is looking to revise the CAMTV Operating Policies & Procedures Manual, which has not been updated since April 18, 2012. Majority of the changes included updating the technical requirements, omitting obsolete information, adding Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) language and mirroring principles from the PBS Editorial Standards and Practices as it pertains to Programming Content Requirements. The Communications Commission is expected to approve the changes to the policies at the December 8, 2021 meeting.

## Investigate & Implement HOMTV Podcast

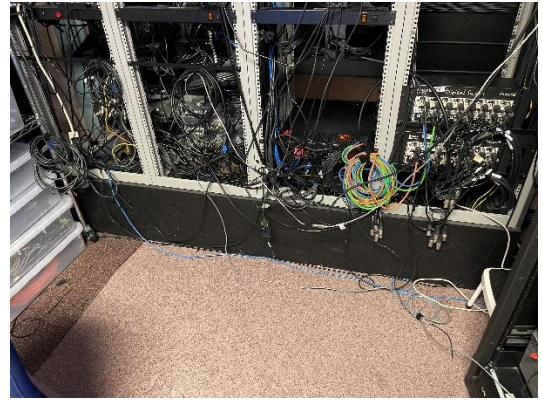


To capture additional audiences and increase awareness of HOMTV, staff has been investigating setting up a HOMTV podcast. The first program of the HOMTV podcast will be called “Township Today” and will be hosted by Multimedia Production and Operations Specialist Samantha Diehl. It will cover the biggest topics happening in Meridian Township and include viewpoints from people on both sides of the issue. The software platform to host the podcast has been chosen and HOMTV is working with the company to secure final pricing. The photo above shows the podcast hosting company chosen. HOMTV plans to launch the new podcast with the first program in 2022.

### HOMTV Server Room Reconfiguration



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**

Throughout 2021, Multimedia Production and Operations Specialist Samantha Diehl worked with the IT Department and a local engineer on reconfiguring the HOMTV Server Room. Staff training was also included in this project on the workflow and troubleshooting of equipment. Old equipment and approximately 52 cables that were no longer needed were removed from the racks in the HOMTV Server Room to make way for new equipment and/or proper equipment maintenance. The first picture above shows all the cables in the racks that weren't needed or coiled properly. The second photo shows the progress after the unnecessary equipment was removed and the cables were properly coiled. The equipment that was removed was recycled and any equipment not recycled will be sold. The photo below shows the equipment that was recycled.



In 2022, staff will continue to remove old equipment and cables, as well as label them properly and create new schematics for the updated workflow.

## Digital Conversion into HOMTV Video Archive System

The image displays a grid of 12 spreadsheets, each representing a year from 2008 to 2019. Each spreadsheet contains a list of episodes with columns for 'Name', 'Date', and 'Time'. The rows are color-coded: pink for completed entries and white for uncompleted ones. The spreadsheets are arranged in a 3x4 grid. The first two columns show years 2008-2010, the next two show 2011-2013, and the last two show 2014-2016. The 12th spreadsheet (bottom right) shows 2019.

Multimedia Production and Operations Specialist Samantha Diehl continued the HOMTV Video Archive Project that was started by her predecessors. She purchased the necessary equipment to convert DVDs and VHS tapes into digital format and converted 30 episodes of the “Beyond the Badge” program before changing the structure of her archiving process. Instead of ingesting more footage into the EditShare system, it was decided the best approach would be to enter the metadata for shows already in the EditShare system. This means that staff goes through and labels who appears in each episode, the date it aired, who crewed the episode and any other pertinent information that should be logged. To date, staff has completed entering metadata for 36 episodes of Beyond the Badge, 116 episodes of All Access Sports and 57 episodes of Open Line. Once the metadata is finished for all existing shows in EditShare, then staff will continue with the digitization of tapes, DVDs, etc.

In addition to that, staff has also cleaned up the EditShare system. This includes deleting files no longer needed and reorganizing how files are stored and what folders they belong to. Staff has also trained 3 interns on how to enter metadata and the process for tracking the project's progress.

The photo above shows how staff tracks progress of this project. Each show has a spreadsheet that categorize the episodes by year. Each column shows the episode number, the date and the runtime. Once staff has finished entering the metadata for an episode, it is highlighted in pink to signify its completion. The digital conversion into the HOMTV Video Archive System is making progress, but will be an ongoing project in the coming years.

## Additional HOMTV Revenue Sources



The Communications team launched two t-shirt fundraisers to generate additional revenue for HOMTV and the department. Through the use of [bonfire.com](https://www.bonfire.com), the team set up two separate t-shirt fundraisers; one for the community - HOMTV Proud Supporter and the other for HOMTV Alumni - HOMie4life. Supporters can select their item and color and the team receives a kickback for every item purchased. To date, these fundraisers have raised \$45.00. Staff will continue seeking additional revenue sources for HOMTV including encouraging HOMTV Alumni members to give back to current HOMTV interns.

## Other 2021 Accomplishments

Marketing:



Marketing and Public Relations Specialist Andrea Smiley assisted the Meridian Cares team in launching fundraisers to encourage donations to the Emergency Needs Fund. The Meridian Cares Fundraisers consisted of t-shirts and other apparel, and shopping bags. The shopping bags were sold at the Farmers' Market and will continue to be sold this winter inside the Township Municipal Building. Every time an item is sold, Meridian Cares receives a percentage of the sale. To date, the t-shirt fundraiser through Bonfire has raised \$592.04.

Production:



- HOMETV was recognized at the regional and national level in three different awards competitions in 2021.
  - HOMETV won another first place Overall Excellence in Governmental Access for the 2021 Hometown Media National Awards Competition put on by the Alliance for Community Media.
  - HOMETV was also awarded 1st place in the Public/Community Meetings category of the NATOA 2021 Government Programming Awards for their Meridian Live coverage of Township meetings.
  - HOMETV received a Finalist recognition from the Alliance for Community Media Central States Regional Philo Festival of Media Arts in the Professional Documentary Category for the First Female Eagle Scouts: Troop 164 Special Feature.
- Multimedia Production and Operations Specialist Samantha Diehl completed trainings for various equipment including EditShare, ROSS Expression and the NewTek Tricaster switcher. She will continue more trainings into 2022 to increase her knowledge of the HOMETV equipment, workflow and troubleshooting techniques.
- Staff adapted effectively to the changing landscape during the COVID-19 pandemic:
  - For the first time, HOMETV broadcast hybrid Township Board meetings with the help of the IT Department. This allowed for Board members to attend virtually, if they needed. The hybrid meeting set-up takes a lot more equipment set-up, testing and production techniques in order to achieve successful coverage. Both virtual and in-person Township meeting coverage also continued in 2021.
  - At the beginning of 2021, the HOMETV Internship Program was entirely virtual. Because of this, HOMETV Staff needed to revise and update the training procedures. These new procedures proved beneficial to both staff and the interns. These new procedures will carry over into future internship semesters, regardless of if they are in-person or virtual.



## **COMMUNITY, PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT**

### **Serve as an active partner in redeveloping the Village of Okemos and Downtown Haslett.**

The Village of Okemos project had two minor amendments to their MUPUD approved by Staff in 2021. The plans continue to evolve towards construction. The Downtown Haslett plans also underwent a minor amendment to their MUPUD approval and are currently under review for final Site Plan approval, which will lead them towards potential construction this winter or early spring 2022. Along with the Neighborhoods and Economic Development Director, Staff continues to meet regularly with the development teams for both projects, in an effort to move these two redevelopment opportunities forward.

### **Finalize the draft of the Form Based Code for the western portion of Grand River Avenue.**

The Planning Commission and Township Board have been discussing this concept for several years. Although no major progress has been made this year, Staff is currently analyzing how to move this forward or if there are alternatives that will get us to the same end goal of higher quality development in the West Grand River Avenue corridor. This was also a goal of the Planning Commission in 2021.

### **Begin the review of the Future Land Use Map as part of an overall review and possible update to the Master Plan.**

The Master Plan for the Township will begin in 2022, five years after the adoption of our current plan and consistent with the State enabling legislation. Staff is recommending slightly reworking this goal for the Planning Commission to focus on in 2022. By focusing on the existing land use, the Planning Commission can determine areas that need to be studied further and wait for public input to talk about the Future Land Use in the Township. This was also a goal of the Planning Commission in 2021.

### **Revise the sign ordinance so it is content neutral.**

Staff has started work on this major ordinance overhaul, with a 50% draft having been circulated to the Planning Commission subcommittee working on this item. We expect to finalize the language this winter for the Planning Commission and Township Board's review and ultimate adoption. This was also a goal of the Planning Commission in 2021.

### **Continue to assist the Planning Commission with the review of the Mixed Use Planned Unit Development ordinance.**

The overhaul of this ordinance, which has been discussed for years and has been under active review for over 12 months, is near completion. The Township Board is on schedule to adopt the ordinance by the end of the calendar year. The ordinance completely overhauls the MUPUD regulations, modernizing the process, updating and improving the amenities, and providing for additional flexibility for potential development in the Meridian Mall area. This is a monumental change to the Township's Zoning ordinance structure. This was also a goal of the Planning Commission in 2021.

**Provide the Rental Housing Inspectors with tablets and create an interactive inspection checklist to streamline inspection reporting.**

The rental inspectors will be on tablets in the near future, as our focus initially was getting tablets for the building inspectors. The checklist has been created and is being used as a hard copy, pending making it digital in BS&A. We plan to make this transition complete in 2022.

**Evaluate the need for an additional Rental Housing Inspector.**

After some staff changes, a request was made to the Township Manager to convert one of the part time rental inspectors over to a full-time role. This was granted and we have filled the role. We are now using this additional manpower to catch up on inspections that have been postponed or delayed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Provide the Building Inspectors with laptops to better facilitate working, communicating and meeting remotely.**

The Building inspectors have been outfitted with tablets, which have made entering inspection results and following up on issues much easier. We will continue to utilize technology as best we can to improve our operations.

**Continue the discussion with the City of Mason to provide increased building services and evaluate the cost and staffing needed for the Township to provide additional services.**

In the summer, Staff from Mason and Meridian Township finalized a new building services contract outlining the terms of the service that we provide to Mason. After legal review, both communities adopted the new contract and we are currently operating under it. Both parties agreed that we will hold costs the same at this time, but reevaluate in the upcoming years.

**Work with the City of East Lansing on improvements to scheduling, reporting inspection results and communication relating to Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing permits.**

In late summer, Staff from East Lansing and Meridian Township came together for an ‘all hands’ meeting to discuss our processes and how to improve them. As a result of that meeting, we were able to fix a long-standing issue with reporting inspection results, which has substantially improved our customer service. We are continually working through scheduling issues that have arisen from the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Continue to monitor and update permit applications used by the Department.**

Staff was unable to take a deep dive into this goal, due to the Staff changes that hit the Department. We plan on carrying this over to the 2022 goals, with the addition of reviewing our full fee structure, as well.



**Outside of the formal goals of the Department, a substantial amount of work has occurred in the 2021 calendar year.**

By the end of the year:

- Fourteen different Special Use Permit requests will have been reviewed and decisions made by either the Planning Commission or Township Board.
- Five separate amendments to Mixed Use Planned Unit Development projects will have been reviewed administratively by Staff.
- Six different rezoning requests have been reviewed and brought forward to the Township Board for decision.
- Thirteen cases will have been reviewed and decided by the Zoning Board of Appeals.
- Fourteen different site plans have been reviewed by Staff, in advance of construction.
- Sparrow standalone emergency room and medical office building on Jolly Road started the development process in early 2021 and by October, they were under construction on the building.
- The Woodward Way project, a 49-unit affordable housing project, has been in the planning stages since 2019. They have recently started work on the site and Staff is in the final stages of plan review in order to get them fully under construction by the end of the year.
- The redevelopment of the former Walnut Hills country club will begin by the end of the year, with the first of two mansions being built on the site.
- Construction in the Copper Creek subdivision, the first new subdivision built in Haslett in decades.
- We are on pace to issue over 2,000 permits for the year, totaling over \$60,000,000 in value, which is well ahead of the 2020 pace of construction.
- Buddy's Pizza under construction on Grand River Avenue at the site of a former Burger King restaurant.



## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Identify the most frequent issues our community businesses are facing (financial, staffing, traffic, etc.) and come up with strategic ways the Township can assist businesses to offset the negative impact.**

Meridian Township awarded two rounds of large grant programs in 2020 and 2021 in support of businesses struggling with COVID-19. Meridian Township first offered 42, \$4,000 award grants to Meridian Township business in April of 2020. In January of 2021, Township leadership acknowledged the additional hurdles to restaurant, bars and entertainment venues as social distancing restrictions held operations to 50% capacity. For small business operators, 50% capacity was not enough to keep doors open and business flowing. The Township again commissioned small business grants up to \$7,000 per awarded business. Lessons learned from the first round of grant submissions highlighted that excluding franchisees could negatively impact the local community. Additional franchises and sole proprietors were eligible to receive assistance if their application made a case for the negative impact to their operation.

In total, Meridian Township awarded over \$600,000 to Meridian businesses in our effort to maintain a healthy local economy. Meridian can be proud that they served 100+ businesses of our community in the year of uncertainty.

### **Continue to Show Support of the Best Practices to Reduce the Spread of COVID-19.**

On a day to day basis, we continue to wear masks when engaging with business owners and members of the public until COVID-19 is no longer a threat. In response, we altered our communication with developers and the public to digital platforms like Zoom or Microsoft Teams to conduct work. We were able to manage close communication with the development team to manage timelines and schedules. We also partnered with LEAP to communicate resources as they became available to our business community.

### **Outside of the Redevelopment Goals for the Township, the Economic Development Department Played a Key role in the Following:**

- Supported the release of the DDA debt of \$124,000 to the Township Board
- Celebrated new and established businesses of the year: Cheezy D's Deli & Dogs and High Caliber Karting & Entertainment
- Recipient of the LEAP PAFC 2021 \$10,000 Art Grant



## Federal Grants

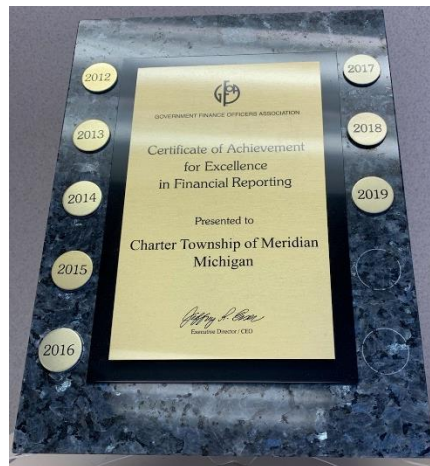
In May 2021, we received Federal Grant funding for the Public Safety and Public Health Payroll Reimbursement Program (PSPHPR) in the amount of \$915,715.20. This was a CARES Grant to offset first responder pay during COVID.

In October 2021, we received the first half of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). The first half of the plan payment was \$2,260,631.50. We will receive the second payment of the same amount in October 2022.

## Prepare the 2020 Audit.

The annual audit was completed by Yeo & Yeo CPA's & Business Consultants. The audit was given a clean review. With the 2020 audit, we implemented GASB Statement No. 84 Fiduciary Activities. A single audit was required for the 2020 fiscal year because the Township received Federal Grant Funds in excess of \$750,000. This audit was also performed by YEO & YEO and the Township was given a clean review, as well. This single audit will be required for the next few years.

The Township submitted its 2019 audited financial reports to the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) and was awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the 2019 audit.



## Adopt the 2022 Budget.

The 2022 budget was presented to the Township Board on September 7, 2021 and approved at the September 21, 2021 Board meeting. The budget is showing a use of \$2.4 million in the General Fund, but the Township will still have a strong expected fund balance of \$8.5 million.

## FIRE DEPARTMENT

**Roll out the Meridian Township Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) including:**

- Main Plan
- Annexes

- **Support Plans**
- **Training and Exercise Plan**

Significant progress was made toward completing this goal with the development of the Main Plan, Functional Annex, and Support Plan. These plans are in final review and the Functional Annex worksheet is in final development. The Training and Exercise Plan will be developed and rolled out after the COOP plan is officially approved by Manager Walsh and the Township Board. The target timeline is the first quarter of 2022.

### **Continue Review and Update of all Fire Department Policies.**

Ten policies were completed in 2021 including three COVID-19 operational and response policies.

### **Supporting the Township with COVID Planning.**

The Fire Department supported COVID planning as needed throughout 2021. One individual was trained to do COVID testing in house which generated rapid results to support the safety of all firefighters. Based on CDC requirements, a flowchart was developed in October for testing first responders and identifying timelines for quarantine and isolation. In November, a plan for the OSHA mandate for vaccinations and/or weekly testing was developed jointly with HR.

### **Purchasing COVID Response PPE.**

COVID-19 PPE was purchased throughout the year supporting respiratory protection of all firefighters. Masks for Township employees were also purchased as needed.

### **Continual Evaluation of our Fire Department COVID Response Plan.**

The 2020 response plans for COVID were maintained in 2021. This ensured the safety of all firefighters while responding to incidents and during all patient encounters.

### **Evaluate Staffing and Response Times based on NFPA 1710 Fire Department Deployment Standards.**

Throughout 2021, the Department continued to evaluate response times as recommended by NFPA 1710. 1710 recommends a four minute response to structural fires for the first engine and eight minutes for all other resources. The Department currently meets the four minute response approximately 54% of the time and the eight minute response approximately 87% of the time.

### **Explore and Test Alternate Hiring Processes Hiring Paramedics and Sponsor to Firefighter I & II Training.**

In October, one individual was hired part time as a Paramedic and is in the process of completing Firefighter I & II training. Upon successful completion of Firefighter I & II training, the individual will be hired full time as a Paramedic/Firefighter.

### **Sponsoring EMT/ Firefighters to Paramedic School.**

An EMT/Firefighter was selected for sponsorship through a paramedic program in August. This individual will be paid to attend classes but will not begin working for the department until

completing the program. This individual is scheduled to complete training in late 2022 and begin working full-time in January 2023.

### **Hiring EMT/Firefighters Full Time and Sending them to Paramedic School.**

The Fire Department is currently working on contractual language to start this process with two firefighters in January 2022. Legal is looking at pay requirements for attending classes and clinicals off duty.

### **Continue with Five Year Replacement Schedule Purchasing Required Personal Protective Gear.**

In 2021, the following was purchased:

- Five sets of Structural Fire Fighter ensembles
- 10 lengths of 5" hose
- 24 lengths of 1 3/4" hose
- Five SCBA air cylinders
- Hose Tester (annual pressure testing), joint purchase between Meridian and East Lansing Fire Department
- Twelve Lead EKG monitor
- Water rescue replacement equipment
- Blow Hard Fan
- Thermal imaging camera
- K-12 saw
- Battery powered rams and air bags for extrication (grant funded)



### **Continue with Siren Project by installing Tenth Siren.**

The tenth siren was purchased and installed in the area of Lake Lansing and Park Lake Roads.





## **HUMAN RESOURCES**

### **COVID-19**

In 2021, we continued to monitor and manage Covid-19 related requirements, including masking and safe distancing as communicated by the CDC, Ingham County Health Department, and the State of Michigan. As a designated Covid-19 Coordinator, HR managed regular employee notifications and inquiries and conducted contact tracing protocol as necessary and according to the latest CDC, County, and State recommendations and requirements. The *Safe Work From Home Program* which we put in place in November of 2020 concluded at the end of May 2021. As of this update (November 2021), employees continue to mask and social distance while working in our Township buildings and while conducting offsite Township business. We are currently working on the Federal ETS for a vaccine mandate policy which could be in effect as soon as December 2021.

### **Health & Wellbeing**

We continue to navigate unprecedented times of change and uncertainty, and acknowledge that affects everyone differently. It is our intention as an employer to promote positive physical and mental health and wellbeing. We continue to post and share the contact information for our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) as well as other opportunities that come available to staff and their families. The EAP program includes mental health and wellbeing assistance, financial counseling, and more for employees and their loved ones. To encourage self-care and provide opportunity to explore our natural surroundings the Township has provided bicycles for employees to borrow at both the Municipal Building and Service Center.

### **Electronic Applicant Process**

In collaboration with our IT department, we have met with multiple companies to review and consider new software for offering online applicant software to replace the current system that is no longer supported by the providing company. At the same time, we continue to research employee payroll self-service programs that would allow staff to manage periodic payroll updates like; address updates, tax exemption updates, annual benefits selection process, dependent add/change, etc. We look forward to implementing new applicant software in the first part of 2022.

### **HR Processes**

We are continually managing HR processes, including records management, recruiting, selection and onboarding, reporting & statistical monitoring, etc. and implementing new solutions in order to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and providing useful support to the Township leadership and staff.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

### **2021 Budgeted Technology Projects**

The IT team worked with Logicalis to set up a new service that now provides around the clock triage for technology issues across all Township operations.

IT staff replaced our seven-year-old Microsoft SQL Server.

Network Administrators are working with outside vendors to prepare for replacement of our primary switches and firewalls in 2022.

In October 2021, IT Staff continued training efforts to build skills that will allow them to meet the needs of a demanding organization more effectively. Areas of training included SQL Services, General Network Administration (Active Directory), Group Policy Administration, Network/Cisco routing, vSphere/VMware implementation, AppAssure System backups.

Staff oversaw the renewal of over \$230,000 worth of existing software license agreements and software deployments.

Staff worked with the Police Department to design a new in-car computer experience. This design will be used for additional replacements over the next several years.

The technology team is working with the consultants that set up our existing virtual server and storage area network devices to execute upgrades and replacements. This project will continue into early 2022, but has already re-invested in our previously established technology base.

### **2021 Emergent Technology Activities**

Staff continued with over 100 fully virtual public meetings in the first six months of 2021. While the second half of the year saw an increase in in-person meetings, many meetings used technology to allow for some level of hybrid attendance. The return to in-person meetings required a re-investment in some technology that had sat unused for over a year.



Staff worked with the Police Department to outfit motorcycle units with laptop computers and printers. This was done in conjunction with the in-car planning so that as much of the equipment can be interchanged as makes sense to do for the units that are used for less than six months of the year.

The technology team worked with internationally renowned networking company, Cisco, to enhance our mobile device management infrastructure to help monitor and manage use of the many devices used remotely throughout the COVID operations.

Facing some shocking price increases, Township Staff worked with external vendors to replace many of the dated copper services to our six primary facilities.

Although there were no workstation replacements originally budgeted for 2021, COVID precipitated some necessary upgrades, and as a result the Technology Team ended up replacing about 15% of our workstations over the calendar year. All these replacements focused on configurations that promote some type of remote work.

IT provided Building Inspection operations with increased connectivity to outside organizations, including the City of Mason, and the City of East Lansing. These improvements significantly enhance the productivity of our intra-governmental cooperative efforts.

In early 2021, most local Verizon third generation transceivers were replaced by fifth generation infrastructure. IT staff decommissioned or replaced any cellular devices that no longer function in our area.

Technology Staff continues to work with Ingham County to deploy new Wi-Fi based infrastructure to help maintain the 800-megahertz radios being deployed throughout Police & Fire operations.



The IT team worked with the Department of Public Works to convert over to a new Global Positioning Satellite System recertification system used to streamline collection of field information for input into various Township systems.

Network Administrators worked with Microsoft to enable encrypted email for any end user requiring secure Internet email communications.

Technology Staff extended collaboration software including email to all full-time staff members. In places where staff did not already have dedicated computing devices, tablets were deployed to facilitate this functionality.

When Public Works needed a system to better manage employee work hours and project charges, the Technology Team deployed a new time clock system that allows them much more flexibility than the punch card system deployed over the past 50 years.

IT Staff worked with the Public Works Department to connect the HVAC, fuel management, and solar systems back to the Township network.

## **PARKS AND RECREATION**

### **Create a community ice rink at Marketplace on the Green utilizing artificial ice.**

The fencing and skating surface panels have arrived! The rink will be installed the week of November 15<sup>th</sup>. Additional amenities include benches, decorative lighting, rubber mats and a skate-lending bin for visitors to use while visiting. Dick's Sporting Goods will serve as a convenient location for participants to get their skates sharpened.



### **Complete the paving of the Central Meridian Regional Trail Connector.**

The project was completed in 2021 and includes an accessible, 1/3 mile paved trail and boardwalk connecting the Historical Village with Central Park South/Marketplace on the Green/ and Large Dog Park. This project also included a fishing dock in Central Park South pond. Funding for this project was provided through a MNRTF Grant and the Park Millage.

### **Complete the acquisition process of the Okemos Road parcel, if grant funds are awarded.**

Good news! Funds were awarded and the process is nearly complete. We are set to close on the property on or before December 15, 2021.

### **Expand markets and activities at Marketplace on the Green.**

The Saturday Farmers Markets have been full of vendors and host approximately 3,000 visitors weekly. The Wednesday Market from July-October hosted free live music concerts from 6-9pm with food trucks. These events grew more popular as the weeks went on and were funded by donations from local businesses. Other activities included a Halloween event with 650 youngsters participating and the Haslett High School Homecoming Dance. Many other groups such as the Girl Scouts have been regularly holding meetings at Marketplace and other pavilions as these outdoor spaces have served a very important function.



### **Continue successful implementation of the Deer Management Program.**

2020-21 was the most successful program year yet! The volunteer archery program netted an all-time record of 176 deer. New in 2021, the Police Department conducted a supplemental cull that added 150 more for a grand total of 326 deer. 7,154 pounds of venison were donated to Lansing-area food banks from this program.

The 2021-22 Volunteer Archery Program is underway with 75 hunters on 42 properties. This program runs from October 1<sup>st</sup> to January 1<sup>st</sup>. The Police Department supplemental cull has also been approved by the DNR and will begin on January 1, 2022 with the goal of harvesting 200 deer.

### **Complete roof replacement at Nokomis Learning Center.**

Funding was approved for 2021 to assist Nokomis Center with replacing the roof on their building. After obtaining quotes, they entered into an agreement with Jimmerson Roofing Company for the work. The work will be done by November 15<sup>th</sup>.



## **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**Maintain accreditation and meet newly added standards through the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police and the Michigan Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission while preparing for our 2022 onsite assessment.**

Though no new standards were introduced this year, it is anticipated that the use of force standard will be updated with the best practices in law enforcement. In anticipation of this change, MTPD updated our Use of Force General Order to reflect the best practices as set forth by the International Association of Chiefs of Police. The Department continues to prepare for our on-site evaluation, which will occur in December of 2022.



**Work diligently toward full staffing (41) and provide opportunities that promote employee retention.**

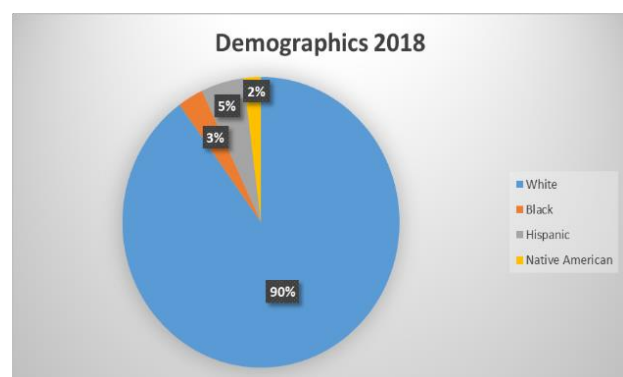
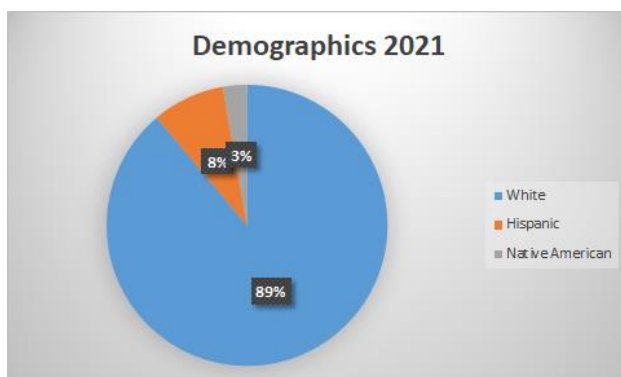
Since December of 2020, MTPD has hired six officers. Four of these officers were former MTPD cadets and three were sponsored by the Township through the Mid-Michigan Police Academy. New committees have been formed including a social media committee, a uniform committee, and a health and wellness committee with the goal of incentivizing officers to stay at MTPD. A retention committee was also formed that will meet regularly to discuss ideas on how to retain employees. The Department is currently staffed with 36 sworn officers. There are three qualified candidates currently in the hiring process.



**Continue collective efforts to foster an environment that is welcoming, diverse and inclusive.**

Of the ten most recently hired officers, six are female. Conditional offers have been extended and accepted by two officer candidates. One is a female and the other is a male. One of the candidates is graduating from the police academy in December 2021 and the other meets the requirements to be sponsored by the Township through the Mid-Michigan Police Academy in January 2022. A third

candidate, a black male, is being considered for sponsorship if he can pass all of the requirements set by the Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES). Two police cadet candidates have passed the background investigation and will be hired by MTPD in November. One is a black female and the other is a white male. All MTPD officers attended a three-hour training on implicit bias in June of 2021. Officer Megan Klein was assigned to the investigations unit.



**Prepare staff for succession due to retirements or promotions through training and mentoring.**

- Sergeant Andrew Tobias and Sergeant Brian Canen attended MSU School of Criminal Justice First Line Supervision in September.
- Sergeant Chris Lofton graduated from the MSU School of Criminal Justice School of Staff and Command.
- Lieutenant Rick Grillo was promoted to Captain and Sergeant. Bart Crane was promoted to Lieutenant.
- Officer Mike Hagbom was promoted to Sergeant.
- Officers Ian Mandernack and Lorenzo Velasquez were trained as Field Training Officers.

**Assist the Parks Department with the deer management efforts to reduce property damage and traffic crashes.**

In 2021, the Meridian Township Police Department participated in a deer cull during the months of January and February. During that time, 150 deer were harvested. The cull led to a five year low in traffic crashes involving deer. The number of crashes involving deer on average from 2015-2019

was 114 (2020 was not used as a comparable due to the reduced traffic pattern). The number of crashes involving deer in 2021 was 106, representing a 7% reduction.



**Implement new technology to improve our ability to operate remotely during an emergency or pandemic situation.**

MTPD was awarded over \$20,000 through the Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding Grant. Through grant funding, web cameras were added to most desktop computers throughout the department. Laptop computers were purchased for the employees in the records unit, as well as, the investigations unit. These laptops allowed for work to be completed remotely. LogMeIn licenses were purchased for the records unit, the administrative assistant, and the investigations unit allowing them to access their computers remotely.

**Work toward implementation of the new countywide public safety radio networks to enhance communications and operations.**

- All patrol cars have been outfitted with the new radio system.
- All officers have been issued new radios and have received training in their use.
- Special radio equipment has been purchased for use by our motorcycle units and members of our Special Response Team.
- New radio system allows for encryption when transmitting sensitive information and for use statewide when traveling outside of our jurisdictional boundary.
- The radio system has gone active countywide and is being used by all public safety providers for emergency services.





## **PUBLIC WORKS AND ENGINEERING**

### **Water**

The budgeted 16-inch valve replacement project was rebid in November. The first bid process received only one interested party and was outside our engineering estimate. The valve replacement project is related to the Grand River water main project being completed as part of the MDOT Grand River rehabilitation and resurfacing project in 2022.

The water distribution team completed that annual fall hydrant-flushing program in November.



The water distribution team completed that annual fall hydrant-flushing program in November.

Design specifications for the north tower coating project are completed and the work will be bid out this winter. The work will commence in the spring of 2022 and include the placement of the Township logo on the storage tank face.

The Dobie Road Booster improvements are currently in design and require coordination with our ELMWSA and Lansing BWL partners. We anticipate construction and implementation of this project to occur in 2022.

The Engineering team spent considerable time on the water main design, submittals to EGLE and coordination for both Sparrow and MDOT projects.

### **Sanitary Sewer**

The Shoal and Whitehills Lake Lift Station standby generator projects were completed this year.

The Sewer rehabilitation project for the Lake Lansing area sewer rehabilitation project is delayed until 2022.

The City of East Lansing is currently reviewing our design for the Towar Garden meter replacement project. That project is expected to commence in 2022.

A new Georgetown Sewer Payback agreement was finalized and approved in 2021.



Since 2014, we have continued to collaborate with the City of East Lansing and Michigan State University on improvements to the WRRF. These completed and ongoing projects have resulted in significant operational, safety and environmental improvements.

### **Buildings and Grounds**

- In the spring of 2021, the Municipal Building HVAC project was completed.
- The Municipal Building exterior doors and locks were replaced.
- LED office light conversions at the Public Safety Building were completed.
- New Drinking fountains with water bottle fills were installed in all Township facilities.
- The Municipal Building second floor breakroom was updated and improved.
- A new Township Trustee office was created in the Municipal Building.
- The Township property at Mack and Reynolds had a new fence installed.
- The South Fire Station had new HVAC controls installed.
- The Service Center had an on-demand water heater installed.
- The Township property at Marsh/Lake and Reynolds has new concrete pathways and benches installed.



**Sidewalk Order to Maintain project in the Heritage Hills and Briarwood West neighborhoods.** This project is underway and expected to be completed in the spring of 2022. Several sidewalks squares will need to be replaced as they were damaged by a walker and their dog.



### **Other 2021 Accomplishments**

The Powell Road paving special assessment project was completed. The paving and curb plan was modified to protect two mature oak trees and to date, has been successful.

The Silverstone Streetlight Special Assessment District was completed.

Significant planning and design efforts occurred this year with representatives of the MDOT, the Ingham County Road Department, and the Ingham County Drain Commissioner on upcoming 2022 road and drain projects.

The first part of the Daniels Drain Special Assessment District was started this year. Final assessments will be set in 2022.

Solicitation of a new Lake Lansing Environmental Consultant was completed. The consultant is used to develop a management plan for Lake Lansing and is funded with the Lake Lansing Special Assessment District.

An updated facility master plan was created for the existing Recycling Center. The plan was used to submit an EGLE grant application, but we were not successful in receiving an award in 2021. The grant will be revised and resubmitted in 2022.

A Wetland education brochure was created and mailed to over 1,000 households in Meridian.

Two electronic recycling events were held in 2021.

Negotiations on a new electric franchise agreement with the Lansing Board of Water and Light commenced in 2021. Negotiations are still ongoing.

The coordination of two Consumers Electrical line clearance projects with our residents occurred in 2021.

A comprehensive IT Network Assessment was undertaken in 2021.

Additional work was completed on the RRQZ for the CN RR line that crosses the Township. Additional work will occur in 2022, including the potential implementation of the project.

The Township participated in an electrical vehicle/fleet analysis funded by Consumers Energy. The final report will be available in 2022.



# 2022 GOALS ACTION PLAN- DRAFT

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## **A. INFRASTRUCTURE ENHANCEMENTS**

Work with Ingham County to facilitate a successful replacement of the Okemos Road Bridge. Place an emphasis on traffic control in the adjacent neighborhoods.

Complete year three of the Meridian Township Local Road Improvement Plan. Our PASER rating at the end of 2022 shall be a minimum of 5.50.

Work jointly with the Michigan Department of Transportation to minimize the impacts of the Okemos Road/Grand River Avenue Enhancement Project.

Determine the feasibility of implementing of a Railroad Quiet Zone in the northern portion of the Township.

Continue to work with Ingham County officials to determine the most effective process to enhance the community's Broadband.

## **B. DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION**

Continue to work with Michigan State University, and the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, to foster a workplace that adheres to the highest standards of diversity, equity and inclusion.

Update the Township's 2015 Personnel Handbook with an emphasis on building equity for all.

Continue to offer DEI training opportunities across the organization.

## **C. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Continue our efforts to bring vitality to the Village of Okemos with the assistance of the Meridian Redevelopment Fund, Brownfield Redevelopment Authority and Downtown Development Authority Tax Increment Financing Authority.

Continue our efforts to revitalize downtown Haslett with the Pine Village development. Assistance available shall include the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority and the Meridian Redevelopment Authority.

Work cooperatively with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) and the Meridian Township Economic Development Corporation (EDC) to recertify our Redevelopment Ready Community (RRC) status.

Work in partnership with CBL Properties to forge a plan to accommodate a Meridian Mall Commercial Planned Unit Development.

#### **D. COMMUNITY PLANNING**

With the support of the Planning Commission, Township Board and residents, formulate a process to update the Township's 2017 Master Plan.

In a cooperative manner with our Parks Commission, and the Department of Natural Resources, develop a 2022-2026 Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Develop a policy, criteria and procedure for expanding both permanent and temporary public art installations within the Township.

Continue to seek a common sense approach to broaden our affordable housing opportunities.

#### **E. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

With the support of the Environmental Commission, develop a site and implementation for the Township's fourth solar project with a goal of 100% solar energy by 2035.

Work with the Environmental Commission to bring about a successful Wetland Campaign and Green Projects Initiative.

Continue to place a significant emphasis on community recycling events and improvements to Meridian's Recycling Center.

#### **F. FACILITIES, PARKS AND GROUNDS**

In cooperation with our Information Technology (IT) consultant, use our vast budgeted resources to bring substantial enhancements to our township's IT infrastructure.

Work closely with our community partners to construct Phase I and II of the MSU to Lake Lansing Regional Pathway.

Demolish house on Okemos Road in preparation of building support facilities for the MSU-Lake Lansing Trail.

Improve capacity and safety by expanding parking at North Meridian Road Park and Central Park South.

Pending grant approval, move forward with development of inter-generational play and fitness area Towner Road Park.

To improve water quality at Central Park South pond, install two Floating Natural Purification Islands planted with live vegetation.

#### **G. PUBLIC SAFETY**

Determine the cost/benefit of extending our existing police services contract with Williamstown Township.

Continue our commitment to implementing bold recruiting methods to maintain a police force of 41 and firefighter/paramedic of 34.

Purchase a new 2023 Pumper to replace Engine 93 built in 1999.

Review and update our accreditation through the Michigan Association of Police Chiefs.

#### **H. TOWNSHIP FINANCES**

Continue our 2017 pledge to voters by investing an additional \$1,500,000 into MERS to help reduce our underfunded pension liability.

Implement a thorough process for the distribution of the \$4,500,000 American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds.

#### **I. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Promote new features and build awareness for added functionality of the newly refreshed Township website. Encourage additional use of the Township's online services.

Strengthen and reinvigorate community support of the Township's brand through a multitude of platforms: Prime Meridian Magazine, new Township signage, digital channels and additional print materials.

Enhance the Town Hall Room audio and visual equipment to improve meeting room capabilities and better serve multimedia usage.

Foster an effective communication plan to renew the Community Services Millage.

#### **J. RETENTION, RECRUITMENT AND WELL-BEING**

Focus on implementing the 2022 Township Retention and Recruitment Program.

Develop creative ways to focus on and improve the team's well-being.

In an effort to foster teamwork, continue to offer programs and events such as team picnics, holiday parties and Lugnuts games.

# **MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP 2022 M-TEAM PLAN**

## **ASSESSING**

- Defend Tax Appeals With Vigor
- Conduct Annual Assessment
- Re-Inspection of taxable properties with the help of hired interns
- Assessor will continue working toward state required MMAO (Level 4) certification

## **CLERK'S OFFICE**

- Purchase of new election equipment and supplies to improve efficiency of the election process.
- Investigate the purchase of new cemetery software.
- Create an election worker recruitment program.
- Continue to improve the township's records management program.
- Continue to investigate a new township-wide FOIA process.
- Maintain election officials' accreditations with Bureau of Elections through e-learning training and in-person conferences.
- Create a staging location for election equipment and post-election records for future audits based on the State of Michigan's Retention Schedule.
- Complete the precinct relocation program with the Okemos and Haslett Public Schools and research options for other precinct sites that do not meet the accessibility standards.

## **COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING**

- Enhance the Town Hall Room audio and visual equipment to improve meeting room capabilities and better serve future multimedia usage.
- Promote and build awareness for added functionality of the newly refreshed Township website. Encourage additional use of the Township's online services. Continue to add new features to the website including reservations, payments and a Business Directory.
- Work with the Human Resources Department to create a web portal for employee information and to house a library of staff training videos to utilize for onboarding of new employees and internal communications.



- Branding Strategy and Implementation Plan
  - External – Strengthen and reinvigorate community support of the Township’s brand through a multitude of platforms: Prime Meridian Magazine, new Township signage, digital channels and additional print materials. Plan a multi-year phased approach for rolling out brand campaigns throughout the community.
  - Internal – Audit internal documents, forms and brochures for Township brand standards and create a timeline to re-brand documents, as needed. Provide additional templates and staff training to create internal brand ambassadors.
- Launch a marketing and communications ticket system to assist with the planning of marketing needs across departments. This is the next step of implementing the processes within the newly developed Strategic Communications and Marketing Plan.
- Continue working with the IT Department and a local engineer on reconfiguring the HOMTV Server Room, including removing old equipment, installing new equipment, labeling and creating new schematics for the updated workflow. Once archival equipment is properly installed in the racks of the HOMTV Server Room, begin the next phase of the digital conversion of HOMTV historic programs, footage and stories into the HOMTV Archive System.
- In support of our local PEG Channels, staff will be discussing and evaluating the future of the channels, including reviewing the franchise agreement. Staff will also work with the local school districts on signal quality and equipment needs.

## **COMMUNITY, PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT**

- Consolidate the number of Single-Family Residential and Multiple-Family Residential zoning districts.
- Review the Existing Land Use Map and patterns in the Township in preparation for the Master Plan update.
- Determine the best approach for implementation of Form Based Code principles in the West Grand River Avenue corridor.
- Kick off the 2022 update to the Township’s Master Plan for Land Use.
- Continue to work with both the City of Mason and the City of East Lansing on process improvements relating to all Building permits.
- Investigate the potential of going completely paperless for all permitting.
- Update the standards of review for the Zoning Board of Appeals to be more in line with the State enabling legislation.
- Complete Meridian Township’s recertification in the Redevelopment Ready Communities program.
- Update all applications, forms, and fees that the Department utilizes.

- Modernize Vehicular Parking Standards for new developments in the Township.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

- Provide quality leadership, support and management of the redevelopment of the Haslett and Okemos PICA's. Assist with implementation of the Meridian Redevelopment Fund, Brownfield TIF and DDA TIF for vertical construction.
- Seek alternative funding support mechanisms to strengthen the Meridian Redevelopment Fund.
- Manage the recertification of Meridian Township's Redevelopment Ready status with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. Assist with the implementation of the required policy or procedural changes.
- Assist with review and update of the Master Plan in advance of 2023.
- Update the Economic Development Strategy.
- Develop a Public Participation Plan for redevelopment sites.
- Develop a Public Incentives Policy to guide economic incentives.
- Develop a Community Brand/Marketing Plan.
- Begin introductory conversations with property owners of Carriage Hills regarding redevelopment.
- Work cooperatively with the several Meridian Township Boards and Commissions, CBL Property Management team, Meridian Mall property owners and the Ingham County Drain office to implement development goals, in support of redevelopment of the Meridian Mall.
- Seek funding mechanisms to financially support infrastructure, broadband or other public improvements at the Meridian Mall.
- Support the small business owners negatively impacted by the reconstruction of Grand River M-43 in 2022-2023.
- Identify ways to promote business operations during the 18 month Grand River construction project.
- Seek funding mechanisms to financially support negative impacts due to construction, manage the funding through the Corridor Improvement Authority.

## **FINANCE**

- Evaluate a new credit card (purchasing card) company
- Prepare the 2021 Audit

- Adopt the 2023 Budget
- Continue funding the extra \$1.5 million into MERS to help reduce the underfunded pension liability
- Implement a thorough process for accounting for the \$4.5 million in ARPA funds
- Implement more online services through Invoice Cloud

## **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

- Update Meridian Township Support Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)
  - Damage Assessment Plan
- Develop Township Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)
- Fire Department Accreditation
  - Develop a Fire Department Standard of Cover Document
  - Fire Department Strategic Plan
- Continue with Emergency Siren Project by Installing Eleventh Siren
- Recruiting and Succession Planning 2022
- Continue with Five-Year Replacement Schedule Required for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Other Required Equipment

## **HUMAN RESOURCES**

- Continue initiatives that openly support Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion principles including the efforts to attract diverse job candidates through COVID-safe recruiting methods and Township media opportunities.
- Conduct a review and update of current Personnel Policy Manual, ensuring alignment with our labor contracts.
- Develop a formal visual guide or manual for emergency preparedness dealing with alert notification procedures, natural disasters, acts of workplace violence, evacuation, and shelter procedures.
- Promote positive physical & mental health awareness through readily available employee health, wellness and wellbeing programs.
- Replace the former iApplicant software we are currently using for online job applicants, ensuring that we are compliant with our 2021 implementation of the Township's *Non-Discrimination in Hiring Policy*.

- Lead ongoing Covid-19 preparedness & safe work protocol updates and communication.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

- Completion of SAN Device Replacements
- Firewall Replacement & Replacement of Dirty Switch
- Virtual Environment Switch Upgrade
- Replace aging Hardware across all Facilities
- Wi-Fi Improvements
- Internet Service Enhancements & Upgrade
- Software Expansions in End-User Departments

## **PARKS AND RECREATION**

- Demolish house on Okemos Road in preparation of building support facilities for the MSU-Lake Lansing Trail.
- Improve capacity and safety by expanding parking at North Meridian Road Park and Central Park South.
- Pending grant approval, develop inter-generational play and fitness area at Towner Road Park.
- To improve water quality at Central Park South pond, install two floating natural purification islands planted with live vegetation.
- Construct a shade structure at Towner Road Park pickleball courts.
- Begin replacing park signage with new brand standard signage to enhance continuity and community image.
- Based on input from the recent community survey, work to schedule smaller special events throughout the year including skating events at Marketplace, moonlight sledding, Love a Park Day, dog park events, summer music concerts at Marketplace, Halloween, Earth Day, etc.
- Renew Community Services Millage for Recreation, Senior Center and Human Services.

## **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

- Fill all vacant positions while simultaneously working toward creating a diverse and inclusive workforce.

- Leverage suggestions made by the Recruitment and Retention Committee to provide an environment more likely to retain employees while attracting potential employees.
- Work to improve transparency of the department's actions through use of the website, social media, and community meetings.
- Begin preparations for the 2022 MLEAC re-accreditation assessment, which will take place in December 2022.
- Prepare staff for succession due to retirements or promotions through training and mentoring.
- Assist the Parks Department with the deer management efforts to reduce property damage and traffic crashes.
- Provide leadership in the law enforcement community through involvement in collaborative professional law enforcement training.
- Negotiate a new contract for prosecution services.

## **DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**

### **Roads**

- Complete the third year of the Meridian Local Road Program.
- Coordinate with our Ingham County partners on a successful Okemos Road Bridge Replacement project.
- Coordinate with our MDOT partners on a successful Grand River/M-43 road project.
- Complete Implementation of the RRQZ on the CN RR.

### **Pathways**

- Begin construction on the MSU-Lake Lansing Phase I & II project.
- Replace the Park Lake Retaining Wall.

### **Water**

- Complete the North Water Tower Improvements.
- Replace the Grand River Water Main in conjunction with the MDOT project.
- Complete the Hulett Flow Control and Dobie Booster Station modifications.

### **Sanitary Sewer**

- Complete the County Park North Sewer I&I Rehabilitation.
- Replace the existing Towar Garden meter with new equipment.

### **Buildings and Grounds**

- Replace the Public Safety Building Generator.
- Repair the Service Center skylight windows.
- Convert the office lights to LED at the Municipal Building and the Okemos Library.
- Replace the Okemos Library roof and rain gutters.
- Renovate the Municipal Building first floor breakroom and mail room.
- Begin design of new road and columbarium at Glendale Cemetery.

### **TREASURER'S OFFICE**

- Allow for more payment types to be paid using credit & debit cards.
- Provide more training for new Deputy Treasurer, and Bookkeeper professional staff to help them to be more effective.
- Convert tax bills and notices from current 'press & seal' to more standard 8.5' x 11' format bill with return envelope.
- Increase the number of on-line payers by > 10%.
- Reduce Delinquent Personal Property tax balances.