

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
REGULAR MEETING TOWNSHIP BOARD 2021 –**APPROVED**-
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos MI 48864-1198
853-4000, Township Hall Room
TUESDAY, September 7, 2021 **6:00 pm**

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

ABSENT:

STAFF: Township Manager Walsh, IT Director Gebes, Economic Development Director
Clark, Community Planning and Development Director Schmitt, Human Resources
Director Tithof, Chief of Police Plaga, Fire Chief Hamel, Finance Director Mattison,
Deputy Manager Perry, Communications Manager Yates, Assessor Winstead, Parks
and Recreation Director Maisner

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Supervisor Styka called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

The Township Board took a moment of silence for the victims of Hurricane Ida, and the 20 year anniversary of September 11th.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS

Trustee Opsommer led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLLCALL

Clerk Guthrie called the roll of the Board.

Supervisor Styka, is attending remotely from Meridian Township due to health reasons.

4. PRESENTATION

A. 2022 Township Budget

Township Manager Walsh presented the 2022 Township Budget. The focus of the 2022 budget is Pension/ Legacy Costs, Investment in PICAs, local roads, overhauling IT infrastructure, environmental sustainability and public safety.

5. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Supervisor Styka Opened Public Remarks at 6:42 pm.

NONE

Supervisor Styka Closed Public Remarks at 6:43 pm.

6. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

NONE

7. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS OF ACTIVITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Treasurer Deschaine

- Taxes are due September 14th.
- Attended August 25th Downtown Development Authority meeting.
- Attended August 26th Daniels Drain meeting.

Trustee Wisinski

- The Environmental Commission is holding electronics recycling day on Saturday September 18th from 9am-2pm
- The Environmental Commission is working to establish a wetland education campaign.

Trustee Opsommer

- The Transportation Commission is working with staff to examine updates to the Towar and Lake Lansing Intersection.
- A Zoning Board of Appeals applicant on Marsh road at the State Farm office requested a variance for a 20 foot sign setback. This could become a recurring issue as many parcels do not have the room to accommodate the current ordinance, and it may be a good idea to review this while working on the Township sign Ordinance.

Clerk Guthrie

- Attended August 26th Daniels Drain meeting. Stated there will be public hearings and meetings in the future for residents to attend.
- Attended August 25th Communications Commission meeting in which Commissioners expressed they would like to see the Township Board continue to pursue the township broadband project.

8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Supervisor Styka offered a friendly amendment to the agenda that discussion item 13A take place immediately after the public hearing at 11A.

Trustee Opsommer moved to approve the agenda with the friendly amendment that discussion item 13A take place immediately after public hearing item 11A. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

9. CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor Styka Reviewed the Consent Agenda.

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

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

A. Communications

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

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

B. Minutes

- (1) August 17, 2021 Regular Board Meeting
- (2) August 26, 2021 Special Board Meeting

Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve and ratify the minutes of August 17, 2021 and August 26, 2021 as presented. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski.

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

Common Cash	\$	986,200.31
Public Works	\$	41,310.96
Trust & Agency	\$	<u>2,712.21</u>
Total Checks	\$	1,030,223.48
Credit Card Transactions	\$	14,155.38

08/12/2021 to 09/01/2021

Total Purchases \$ 1,044,378.86

ACH Payments \$ 1,296,316.48

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

D. Disposal of Surplus Equipment

Treasurer Deschaine moved to authorize the disposal of IT surplus computers and HOMTV surplus Equipment. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

E. Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program

Treasurer Deschaine moved to authorize the Fire Department to apply for and accept an assistance to Firefighters grant through the Department of Homeland Security in the amount of \$49,737.40 with the Township's share of \$4,521.58 coming out of the Fire Department General Fund. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

10. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY

NONE

11. HEARINGS

A. 2022 Township Budget

Supervisor Styka Called the Public Hearing to order at 6:52 pm.

Supervisor Styka opened public comment at 6:52 pm.

NONE

Supervisor Styka closed public comment at 6:53 pm.

13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEM

A. 2022 Township Budget

The Township Board Discussed the 2022 Budget with Manager Walsh.

Trustee Opsommer asked for an increase to public safety in the budget.

Clerk Guthrie called Fire Chief Hamel to the podium to ask about response times and staff growth. Chief Hamel explained that response times are slightly higher than the national standard, and his goal for the past two years has been to increase firefighter staff to 36.

Trustee Opsommer stated that while census data shows an 11% growth in residency, EMS and Fire call volume has increased by 22% over the same period.

Trustee Jackson asked Manager Walsh what an IT help desk is. Manager Walsh explained that it is an offsite company that offers IT assistance that is cheaper than hiring another IT staff member.

Trustee Jackson asked Manager Walsh about the Daniels Drain funds in the budget. Manager Walsh explained that the township would initially cover the full cost, and would be reimbursed 50% of the cost through special assessment, if approved by the Board.

Treasurer Deschaine asked to clarify budget items giving money to organizations such as Meals-On-Wheels and the Kiwanis Club. Manager Walsh explained this money is given to them to create public benefit to the community.

Trustee Wisinski requested funding to the Environmental Commission for a green project and a wetland educational campaign. Manager Walsh noted the requests.

Trustee Opsommer asked about funding to IT and whether or not this was a one-time expense. Manager Walsh was not able to give a complete answer, however he explained that a 3rd party will come and review the IT infrastructure and make recommendations to improve.

Trustee Opsommer asked why a line item for solar power infrastructure wasn't included as it had been in previous years. Manager Walsh explained the township is doing well in its advances towards solar power and is focusing on other renewable sources of energy such as the recycling center and electric cars. Trustee Opsommer suggested a smaller investment than previous years, with the police department roof as a potential location.

Clerk Guthrie asked if the township would still be on track towards 100% renewable energy by 2035 if no investment is made in this budget. Deputy Manager Perry stated the township is currently using 60% renewable energy and will be on track to reach 100% renewable energy by 2035, even with a year hiatus from solar.

Trustee Opsommer proposed a reduction to the Meridian redevelopment fund from \$2,000,000, to \$1,000,000.

Treasurer Deschaine asked Manager Walsh to explain the \$2,000,000 in the budget for Meridian redevelopment. Manager Walsh explained that the money is not just given away but provides opportunity for developers.

Clerk Guthrie Asked if ARPA funding could be used for the redevelopment fund. Manager Walsh stated that it could be used for infrastructure and broadband.

Manager Walsh also stated that the ARPA funding is not included in the budget and will be discussed in a future conversation.

12. ACTION ITEMS

A. Zoning Board of Appeals Appointment

Supervisor Styka outlined the Zoning Board of Appeals Appointment.

Trustee Opsommer moved to approve the appointment made by Supervisor Styka of Brian Shorkey to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a term ending 12/31/2022. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

B. Acceptance of American Rescue Plan Funding

Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve the resolution to accept American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

C. Silverstone Development- Streetlight SAD #427, Resolution #1 & #2

Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve the Silverstone Estates Public Streetlighting Improvement Special Assessment District #427- Resolution #1, ordering plans to be prepared showing the streetlighting improvement, location, and estimate of cost; and Resolution #2, filing the plans showing the improvement, location and estimate of cost with the Clerk's Office, tentatively declaring intention to install and maintain 7 LED traditional w/ cut-off streetlights and defray the cost of operation and maintenance by special assessment

against the 22 benefiting lots, and setting a public hearing for September 21, 2021. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.

Deputy Manager Perry outlined the Silverstone Development- Streetlight SAD #427, Resolution #1 & #2.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

D. 2021 Sidewalk Order to Maintain SAD #18, Resolution #1 & #2

Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve 2021 Order to Maintain Sidewalk Special Assessment District #19 Resolutions #1 and #2, which tentatively approves the improvements and the cost estimates of proposed improvements and sets the date for a public hearing on September 21, 2021. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.

Deputy Manager Perry outlined 2021 Sidewalk Order to Maintain SAD #18, Resolution #1 & #2

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

E. Resolution of Support for Voter Registration Month

Clerk Guthrie outlined the Resolution of Support for Voter Registration Month.

Clerk Guthrie moved to approve the Resolution Recognizing September 2021 As National Voter Registration Month in Meridian Township. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. ~~2022 Township Budget~~

B. SmartZone Local Development Finance Authority

Director Clark outlined and discussed the SmartZone Local Development Finance Authority with the board.

Supervisor Styka asked if the Township would have to wait five years before they could make any changes to the SmartZone district. Director Clark replied that it's not recommended to make changes within five years, but it is possible.

Tim Dempsey, Vice President of Public Sector Consultants, described how adding or subtracting parcels could affect the timeline of adding a SmartZone to Meridian Township.

Clerk Guthrie and Trustee Jackson spoke in support of adding a SmartZone.

14. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Supervisor Styka Opened Public Remarks at 9:30 pm.

NONE

Supervisor Styka Closed Public Remarks at 9:31 pm.

15. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

NONE

16. CLOSED SESSION-Motion to go into closed session to discuss a written confidential legal opinion from the township attorney concerning the Georgetown Sewer Payback District

Trustee Jackson moved to go into closed session to discuss a written confidential legal opinion from the township attorney concerning the Georgetown Sewer Payback District. Seconded by Trustee Opsommer.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

The board returned to open session at 9:54 pm.

17. ADJOURNMENT

Treasurer Deschaine moved to adjourn. Seconded by Trustee Opsommer.


VOICE/HAND VOTE: Motion carried 7-0

Supervisor Styka adjourned the meeting at 9:54 pm.



RONALD J. STYKA,
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

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DEBORAH GUTHRIE
TOWNSHIP CLERK