

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
REGULAR MEETING TOWNSHIP BOARD 2021 **-APPROVED-**
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos MI 48864-1198
517.853.4000, Township Hall Room
TUESDAY, November 16, 2021 **6:00 pm**

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

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Township Manager Walsh, Deputy Manager Perry, Fire Chief Hamel, Community Planning and Development Director Schmitt, Finance Director Mattison, Human Resources Director Tithof, IT Director Gebes, Communications Manager Yates

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Supervisor Styka called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS

Supervisor Styka led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLLCALL

Clerk Guthrie called the roll of the Board. All members present.

4. PRESENTATION

A. Okemos High School Tennis State Champions-Suchir Nagisetty & Ethan Portnoy

Okemos High School Tennis Coach, Karim Jelassi introduced State Champs Suchir Nagisetty and Ethan Portnoy to the board.

B. Check Presentation from the Fire Department to It's a Breast Thing Charity

Fire Fighter Samantha Weber spoke about money raised by the Meridian Fire Department in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Samantha Weber then presented a check to Judy Tegreeny of the It's a Breast Thing charity.

C. Nokomis Learning Center-John Ostrander

Vice President of Nokomis Learning Center Board John Ostrander and President of Nokomis Learning Center Board Aarin Dokum gave a presentation on the Nokomis Learning Center to the board.

5. CITIZENS ADDRESS AGENDA ITEMS AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Supervisor Styka opened public remarks at 6:22 pm

Quenda Story, 4526 Marlborough Rd., Okemos MI, spoke about Daniels Drain.

Richard Harrington, 820 Piper Rd., Haslett MI, spoke about the urban and natural world interface.

David Pierson, 1142 S. Washington Ave., Lansing MI, stated he wished to give up his time and speak during the public hearing.

Charles Barbieri, 5505 Star Flower Dr., Haslett MI, stated he wished to give up his time and speak during the public hearing.

Cecilia Kramer, 4560 Oakwood Dr., Okemos MI, spoke about the Daniels Drain project.

Keith Latham, 4382 North Hickory Dr., spoke in opposition of the Daniels Drain assessment.

Cory Hill, 4507 Eastwood Dr., Okemos MI, spoke in opposition of the Daniels Drain assessment.

Ruth Luter, 4506 Marlborough Dr., Okemos MI, spoke about the Daniels Drain project.

Gary Stow, 4511 Eastwood Dr., Okemos MI, spoke in opposition of the Daniels Drain project.

Jessie Addler, 1580 Hillside Dr., Okemos MI, spoke about the new left turn light on Grand River, and on the Daniels Drain project.

Katherine Croft, 4517 Marlborough Rd., Okemos MI, spoke in opposition of the Daniels Drain assessment.

John Leone, 4544 Dobie Rd., Okemos MI, stated he wished to give up his time and speak during the public hearing.

Mike Osborn, 1494 Forest Hills Dr., Okemos MI, spoke in opposition of the Daniels Drain project.

Kavita Drolet, 4416 Alderwood Dr., Okemos MI, spoke about the Daniels Drain project.

Supervisor Styka closed public remarks at 6:44 pm

6. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

Township Manager Walsh reported the 2022 goal setting packet will be sent out on December 3rd. The new ice rink area will be open at the marketplace on December 4th. Friday, November 19th at 11:30 the marketplace will unveil the new public art piece. The annual deer cull is running until March 1st. The new website is up and running. The Meridian Township Police are participating in the No Shave November fundraiser. Thanked the board and township staff for their support during his personal tragedy.

7. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS OF ACTIVITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Trustee Sundland

- Attended Economic Development Corporation meeting November 4th concerning development on Okemos Rd.

8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Supervisor Styka suggested moving 13.B immediately after 11.B.

Trustee Opsommer moved to approve the agenda with item 13.B being moved to take place immediately after 11.B. Seconded by Trustee Wisinski.

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

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 Jackson.

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

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 Jackson.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

B. Approval of Minutes – November 2, 2021

Treasurer Deschaine moved to approve and ratify the minutes of November 21, 2021 as presented. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

C. Bills

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

| | | |
|---|-----------|--------------------------|
| Common Cash | \$ | 324,026.73 |
| Public Works | \$ | 578,506.71 |
| Trust & Agency | \$ | <u>1,174.06</u> |
| Total Checks | \$ | 903,707.50 |
| Credit Card Transactions 10/28/2021-11/11/2021 | \$ | 15,289.92 |
| Total Purchases | \$ | <u>915,966.00</u> |
| ACH Payments | \$ | <u>779,206.63</u> |

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

10. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY - NONE

11. HEARINGS

A. Silverstone Estates Public Streetlighting Improvement

Supervisor Styka opened the public hearing at 6:51 pm.

Deputy Manager Perry outlined the Silverstone Estates Public Streetlighting Improvement.

Supervisor Styka closed the public hearing at 6:52 pm.

B. Daniels Drain Public Drain Improvement

Supervisor Styka opened the public hearing at 6:52 pm.

Deputy Manager Perry outlined the Daniels Drain project for public hearing.

David Pierson, 1142 S. Washington Ave., Lansing MI, representing Ellens Properties, 1619 Grand River Rd., spoke in opposition of the Daniels Drain Assessment.

Charles Barbieri, 5505 Star Flower Dr., Haslett MI, representing the Ponds Cooperative Home Owners Association, spoke in support of the Daniels Drain Project, and in opposition of the Daniels Drain Assessment.

John Leone, 4544 Dobie Rd., Okemos MI, spoke in opposition of the Daniels Drain assessment.

Jerry Fedewa, 5570 Okemos Rd., spoke in opposition of the Daniels Drain assessment.

David Ledebuhr, 4767 Cornell Rd., Okemos MI, spoke in opposition of the Daniels Drain assessment.

Quenda Story, 4526 Marlborough Rd., Okemos MI, spoke about the Daniels Drain assessment.

Jessie Addler, 1580 Hillside Dr., Okemos MI, spoke in opposition of the Daniels Drain project and the Daniels Drain assessment.

Brian Markum, 4424, Satinwood Dr., Okemos MI, spoke in opposition of the Daniels Drain assessment.

Kavita Drolet, 4416 Alderwood Dr., Okemos MI, spoke about the Daniels Drain project.

Katherine Croft, 4517 Marlborough Rd., Okemos MI, spoke in opposition of the Daniels Drain assessment.

Cecilia Kramer, 4560 Oakwood, Okemos MI, spoke about the Daniels Drain project.

Mike Osborn, 1494 Forest Hills, Okemos MI, spoke in opposition of the Daniels Drain project.

Michelle Eschelbach, 1384 Ivywood Dr., Okemos MI, spoke about the Daniels Drain project.

Supervisor Styka closed the public hearing at 7:39 pm.

13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEM MOVED DURING APPROVAL OF AGENDA

C. Daniels Drain Public Drain Improvement

Deputy Manager Perry outlined the Daniels Drain Public Drain Improvement for discussion.

Trustee Jackson asked if anyone from Spicer Group is here.

Deputy Manager Perry called Tim Inman representing Spicer Group to the podium.

Mr. Inman explained and discussed with board members how the assessment roll was created detailing the different factors that determined the cost to residents.

Clerk Guthrie asked for a review on the calculations of the deciduous forest land cover.

Mr. Inman explained the land cover used is from national land cover dataset. Any change from land cover since 2016 may need to be discussed. He further explained how each land cover type is applied to calculations.

Clerk Guthrie asked if a portion of deciduous forest no longer exists since 2016 how was that accounted for.

Mr. Inman stated that has not been accounted for. He explained that every parcel has been given a benefit score based on an aggregate score based on different land types on the parcel.

Clerk Guthrie asked about the effects of landscaping on property assessments.

Deputy Manager Perry stated the assessments are made from data from 2016.

Treasurer Deschaine questioned the benefit factor, as he believes that everyone will benefit equally from having functioning drains.

Deputy Manager Perry explained it comes down to asset management.

Treasurer Deschaine thanked residents for coming to the meeting and spoke about the high cost of the Daniels Drain project.

Trustee Opsommer thanked the residents who came out tonight. He spoke about the townships process in drain repair, and asked what the bond interest rate will be.

Deputy Manager Perry stated the bond interest rate should be 1.75.

Trustee Wisinski thanked residents for attending tonight's meeting and spoke about better communicating to residents in the future as well as stating the County Drain Commissioner should be present for meetings related to Daniels Drain.

Trustee Jackson outlined the townships plan for the Daniels Drain Project with Deputy Manager Perry and thanked residents for showing up to tonight's meeting and reminded residents there will be a second public hearing. She stated residents should contact Director Manager Perry's office for any questions or concerns.

Deputy Manager Perry stated there hasn't been a date set for the second public hearing, but gave his the phone number and email address to his office.

Supervisor Styka thanked residents for attending. He spoke about the bond interest rate and the cost of the Daniels Drain project to Meridian Township billed by the Drain Commissioner.

The board recessed at 8:28 pm.

The board resumed at 8:47 pm.

12. ACTION ITEMS

A. Town Hall Room A/V Upgrades

Clerk Guthrie moved to authorize the Communications Department to proceed with the proposed Town Hall Room A/V Upgrades Project to take place in 2022 with funds from the former Cable TV PEG Revenue Account. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.

The board discussed the Town Hall Room A/V Upgrades with Manager Yates and Jeff Possanza of Smart Homes and Smart Offices.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

B. Zoning Amendment #21020 - Mixed Use Planned Unit Development Ordinance Update-Introduction

Trustee Jackson moved to adopt the resolution approving for introduction Zoning Amendment #21020 to amend Article 4, District Regulations, of the Charter Township of Meridian Zoning Code to update the Zoning Ordinance to update the Mixed Use Planned Unit Development (MUPUD) regulations. Seconded by Trustee Opsommer.

The Board thanked Director Schmitt and his staff for their work on this Ordinance.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

C. Retention and Recruitment Program

Clerk Guthrie moved to approve the recommendation from the township manager & Director of human resources to fully implement the 2022 retention & Recruitment wellness program. Seconded by Treasurer Deschaine.

Manager Walsh outlined the Retention and Recruitment Program. He gave thanks to Director Tithof, Clerk Guthrie and Trustee Jackson for their work on showing appreciation to staff.

Clerk Guthrie asked about a plan for staff feedback after the Retention and Recruitment Program has been enacted, spoke about incentives that have been given to staff and suggested the board budget funds for incentives in the future.

Manager Walsh stated there is money in the budget for incentives for the staff. He further stated that any gift cards are supplied by outside parties.

Trustee Jackson asked what Manager Walsh learned from police and fire and their wants besides money.

Manager Walsh replied that most groups prefer flex time over money. He stated that police and fire would like higher staff levels so they can take more time off.

Trustee Jackson asked if the 3% raise applied to all non-police and fire including directors.

Manager Walsh replied yes, all employees will receive the raise other than himself, Treasurer Deschaine, and Clerk Guthrie.

Treasurer Deschaine stated "The Great Resignation" is getting worse as more people are leaving their jobs. He further stated the manager had been talking about flex time since 2019.

Trustee Wisinski asked if the half-hour flex time would be in effect during the weeks of January and February.

Manager Walsh replied no.

Trustee Wisinski asked if the four-day work week could be recurring.

Manager Walsh replied it will be evaluated and it is certainly possible to have four-day work week again in the future.

Trustee Wisinski asked why police and fire cannot take time off.

Manager Walsh stated it's because of the capacity of the departments.

Clerk Guthrie asked if Treasury and DPW staff that will be required to work on Fridays when the township is closed will receive time off.

Treasurer Deschaine replied they will have that time off given back to them.

Trustee Jackson stated that she thinks this plan will make good progress in making Meridian Township an even better place to work.

Supervisor Styka reminded the board that more fiscally conservative residents may be opposed to this plan. He stated the money being spent on this plan is not wasted as the township is facing a recruitment and retention problem.

Trustee Opsommer stated he is happy with the plan and the efforts put forth from various sources.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

D. 2021 Small Business Saturday Resolution

Supervisor Styka outlined the 2021 Small Business Saturday Resolution.

Trustee Wisinski moved to approve the resolution in recognition of small business Saturday. Seconded by Trustee Jackson.

Trustee Wisinski asked how to communicate to the public a list of small businesses in the township.

Treasurer Deschaine stated that Director Clark is working on a small business recognition project at this time.

Trustee Jackson stated during the pandemic the EDC sponsored grants to small businesses in the township.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 7-0

13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Silverstone Estates Public Streetlighting Improvement

Deputy Manager Perry stated he had nothing more to add to this topic at this time.

~~B. Daniels Drain Public Drain Improvement~~

C. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan Update

Director Tithof outlined the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan Update for discussion.

Trustee Wisinski thanked Director Tithof for her service to the township and discussed the DEI plan.

Treasurer Deschaine asked the board to give the manager specific goals for things they would like to see to advance diversity, equity and inclusion.

D. Information Technology Assessment Update

Director Gebes outlined the Information Technology Assessment Update for discussion.

The board and Director Gebes discussed the Information Technology Assessment Update.

14. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Supervisor Styka Opened Public Remarks at 9:41 pm.

NONE

Supervisor Styka Closed Public Remarks at 9:41 pm.

15. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Trustee Wisinski

- The Environmental Commission 2021 fiscal year green grants have come to a close
- Emma Campbell and Environment Commissioner Kendra Grasseschi are working to support a build back the buffer in the green grants
- Environmental Commission worked to review the green infrastructure template
- Winter Coat Drive this Saturday, November 20th from 10am-2pm at marketplace
- Two student representative commissioners are resigning from the Environmental Commission
- Thanked Director Yates for her assistance with the wetland education campaign
- Ground Water Management Board is working on 2022 goal setting and budget approval

Trustee Opsommer

- The provisions of the open meetings act pertaining to virtual meetings are about to end and will no longer allow board members to vote virtually
- The short-term rental bill is sitting in the senate as the house voted in favor of the bill. The senate won't be back until Tuesday November 30th. The bill prevents the board from regulating short term rentals through Zoning Ordinance. The board could implement a cap on them related to the overall housing stock but no less than 30%

Treasurer Deschaine

- Tax bills should be received by residents on December 1st

16. ADJOURNMENT

Treasurer Deschaine moved to adjourn. Seconded by Trustee Opsommer.

VOICE/HAND VOTE: Motion carried 7-0

Supervisor Styka adjourned the meeting at 9:48 pm.



RONALD J. STYKA,
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR



DEBORAH GUTHRIE
TOWNSHIP CLERK