



AGENDA
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
PARK COMMISSION TELEVISED
REGULAR MEETING
Tuesday, May 9, 2023 4:30pm
Harris Nature Center
3998 Van Atta Road, Okemos, MI 48864

REGULAR MEETING – 4:30PM

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
2. ROLL CALL
3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
4. PRESENTATIONS
5. PUBLIC COMMENT
6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
March 14, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes
7. COMMUNICATIONS
 - A. Mary Nardo Farris Letter of Support Meridian Township Senior & Community Center
 - B. LuAnn Maisner Letter of Support Meridian Township Senior & Community Center
8. ACTION ITEMS
 - A. Resolution of Support for River Clearing Grant
 - B. Spark Grant Re-submittal for Nancy Moore Park Accessibility Improvements
9. DISCUSSION ITEMS
 - A. Central Park Pavilion Replacement
10. LAND PRESERVATION REPORT – Commissioner Stephens
11. DIRECTOR’S REPORT
12. PUBLIC COMMENTS
13. OTHER MATTERS AND COMMISSIONERS’ COMMENTS
14. ADJOURNMENT

All comments limited to 3 minutes, unless prior approval for additional time for good cause is obtained.

Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact Parks & Recreation Director, LuAnn Maisner:
2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court, Haslett, MI 48864 or 517.853.4600 - Ten Day Notice is Required.

Meeting Location: Harris Nature Center, 39998 Van Atta Road, Okemos, MI 48864



3. Approval of Agenda

May 9, 2023



6. Approval of Minutes

March 14, 2023



**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
PARK COMMISSION TELEVISED REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Township Hall Room
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864
TUESDAY, MARCH 14, 2023 4:30 PM**

PRESENT: Chair, Mary Nardo-Farris; Vice Chair, Ami Van Antwerp; Commissioner, Amanda Lick; Commissioner, Mark Stephens; Commissioner, Mike McDonald
ABSENT: None
STAFF: LuAnn Maisner, Director of Parks and Recreation; Bridget Cannon, Administrative Assistant

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Nardo-Farris called the meeting to order at **4:30 pm**.

2. ROLL CALL

Chair Nardo-Farris called the roll of the Commission. All park commissioners present.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner McDonald moved **TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS SUBMITTED**.
Seconded by Commissioner Lick.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

NONE

5. PRESENTATIONS

A. Barn of the Year Award – Brad Brogren, President, Friends of Historic Meridian

The Michigan Barn Preservation Network awarded the Friends of Historic Meridian with the 2023 Barn of the Year Award at the Michigan Barn Preservation Network's Annual Conference on March 4, 2023 in East Lansing. The Barn of the Year Award annually honors barns that support the Michigan Barn Preservation Network's mission to preserve Michigan's agricultural heritage. The award serves to recognize barn owners who have made an extra effort to maintain or restore historic barns. The barn was moved from its original location to the historical village in 1991.

B. Green Burial Presentation – Bruce Peffers, The Green Burial Committee

Green burial is a way of caring for the dead that results in minimal environmental impact and aids in the conservation of natural resources, reduction of carbon emissions and more. There has been a lot of recent interest in the township in green burials. Williamstown Township is currently the only area township that is considering the green burial option. Director Maisner states the township ordinance would have to change to allow human burial without a casket.

6. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Minutes – Park Commission

March 14, 2023

Page 2

NONE

7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Stephens moved **TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 10, 2023 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED**. Seconded by Commissioner Van Antwerp.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

8. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Meeting notes from February 14, 2023

B. Letter from Hillbrook Park Pickleball Players

Commissioner Lick **MOVED TO PLACE THE COMMUNICATIONS ITEMS PRESENTED ON FILE**.
Seconded by Commissioner Stephens.

9. ACTION ITEMS

NONE

10. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Park Projects for 2023

There are a number of projects planned throughout the park system this year and Director Maisner wanted to provide a recap and update for discussion. Commissioners discussed each park project listed.

- Windscreens and trees at Marketplace on the Green
- Exterior Upgrades at Harris Nature Center
- Site Design for the newly acquired parcel on Okemos Road at Nancy Moore Park
- Site engineering for upgrades to the Wonch Park canoe landing
- Okemos Road under-bridge walkway–connections to pathway at Wonch & Ferguson Parks
- Paint the cross-walk on Central Park Drive near Marketplace on the Green
- New park identification signs in all parks
- Renovation of the pavilion in Central Park
- Building repair and maintenance at the Meridian Historical Village

11. LAND PRESERVATION REPORT – Commissioner Stephens

12. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- The Playbook monthly digital newsletter – sign up to receive on township website
- 2023 Family Fun Guide – will be delivered to residents mid-April
- Rec Pro – user friendly and positive feedback received from residents and staff
- Michigan Recreation and Park Association Legislative Day. Met with State Rep Julie Brixie. Our three talking points included:
 - opt out vs opt in Passport;
 - expedited legislative approval for trust fund grant awards;
 - Requested a one-time contribution to the Michigan State Parks Endowment Fund in the amount of \$475,000,000

Minutes – Park Commission

March 14, 2023

Page 3

- Celebrate Meridian Festival planning underway – June 23 and 24 ‘Ben Daniels Band’, ‘Garage Sale Band’, canned beverages at beer tent, crosswalk painting, food trucks, children’s game area with inflatables, Historical Village and Nokomis, and a fireworks finale.
- Okemos Road Under-bridge walkway – pathway connectors - \$150,000
- The concert schedule is set for the Summer Wednesday Concert Series beginning June-September. The Okemos and Haslett Libraries will be programs and activities every other Wednesday for youth.
- Senior Center/Community Center Task Force
- Artificial Ice Rink coming down on March 20

13. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Brad Brogren, President, Friends of Historic Meridian

The Historical Village is celebrating their 50th Anniversary in 2024. The Friends of Historic Meridian (FHM) seeks an artist or graphic designer to develop a logo for the non-profit organization. The FHM was formed in 1974 to present the history of Meridian Township through the preservation of historic buildings within Central Park. This opportunity is open to emerging and professional artists and graphic designers. The application deadline is March 31, 2023.

14. OTHER MATTERS AND COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Chair Nardo-Farris reminds there is no April Park Commission Meeting scheduled.

15. CLOSED SESSION – LAND ACQUISITION DISCUSSION

Commissioner Van Antwerp **MOVED TO ENTER IN TO CLOSED SESSION FOR PURPOSE OF POSSIBLE PROPERTY ACQUISITION.** Seconded by Commissioner Stephens.

ROLL CALL VOTE.

YEAS: Mark Stephens, Mike McDonald, Amanda Lick, Ami Van Antwerp, Mary

Nardo-Farris

NAYS: None

Chair Nardo-Farris closed the open session at 6:09 pm.

Commissioner Lick **MOVED TO END CLOSED SESSION AND RE-OPEN MEETING AND TAKE ACTION AS DIRECTED FROM THE CLOSED SESSION.** Seconded by Commissioner Stephens.

ROLL CALL VOTE.

YEAS: Mark Stephens, Mike McDonald, Amanda Lick, Ami Van Antwerp, Mary

Nardo-Farris

NAYS: None

Minutes – Park Commission
March 14, 2023
Page 4

Chair Nardo-Farris ended the closed session at 6:45 pm.

16. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Nardo-Farris adjourned the meeting at 6:48 pm.

The next scheduled meeting is **May 9, 2023** at ~~the Meridian Service Center~~, 4:30 pm.
Due to renovations at the Meridian Senior Center, the May Park Commission meeting place was amended to take place **May 9, 2023**, Harris Nature Center, 4:30 pm.



7. Communications

- A. Mary Nardo Farris Letter of Support Meridian Township Senior & Community Center**
- B. LuAnn Maisner Letter of Support Meridian Township Senior & Community Center**



Meridian Township
5151 Marsh Road
Okemos, MI 48864

P 517.853.4000
F 517.853.4096

Township Board:

Patricia Herring Jackson
Township Supervisor

Deborah Guthrie
Township Clerk

Phil Deschaine
Township Treasurer

Scott Hendrickson
Township Trustee

Kathy Ann Sundland
Township Trustee

Marna Wilson
Township Trustee

Courtney Wisinski
Township Trustee

Frank L. Walsh
Township Manager

March 20, 2023

Office of Representative Elissa Slotkin
Attn: Rep. Elissa Slotkin
315 W. Allegan St., Suite 207
Lansing, MI 48933

Re: CPF Application – Meridian Township Senior & Community Center

Dear Congresswoman Slotkin:

This letter is in support of Meridian Township's FY 2024 CPF request for construction of a new Senior & Community Center. A new Senior & Community Center is greatly needed in Meridian Township. When Okemos Public Schools demolishes Chippewa Middle School, where the current facility is located, our existing Senior Center will be lost. At the Township Board meeting on December 6, 2022, the proposed Senior & Community Center project was adopted as one of the Township's top three goals for 2023.

The high priority given this project is based on the Township Board, Administration and Park Commission focus and support of the mental and physical health of our community in this post-pandemic environment. There are significant mental and physical health benefits associated with even low levels of engagement in community fitness and arts programs. Community centers support far more than physical fitness and leisure activities. They are critical to addressing social isolation and loneliness, and the related mental health issues that come as a result. Many older adults, who limit or lose their social network and support system as they age, benefit greatly from activities and connections that centers provide. Research has also shown that during the pandemic it was children who felt the most isolated and the loneliest. The Township's intent is to provide a Senior & Community Center that focuses on intergenerational opportunities to combat the negative impacts from pandemic related social isolation of many of our community residents.

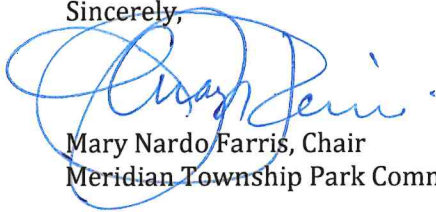
Meridian Township has a disproportionately higher percentage of both senior residents 65 or older, and younger persons under the age of 18. [According to the 2020 Census, 16% of Meridian Township's population is age 65 or older, while the Ingham County average is only 14.4%. The Township also has a higher percentage of children than Ingham County as a whole, with persons under the age of 18 representing 21.5% of the Township's population and Ingham County's average at 19.7%.](#)

This Senior & Community Center will provide a place for the entire community to come together and participate in recreation, arts and community-based programs. The facility will have specialized programming for persons 55 and older, and activities for residents of all ages to connect with one another. Our vision is a bustling facility with people of all ages; from older adults, to young families, to children attending after school.

The cost of the new 20,000 square foot Senior & Community Center is estimated to be \$10 million. The Park Commission supports the Township's CPF application for \$5 million of the estimated construction cost. The Township will fund the remaining cost of the project through private donations, property tax revenue, as well as securing additional funding at the state level for this project. Annual operating expenditures of the facility will be funded through property tax revenue as they are for the existing Senior Center.

Please feel free to let us know if you have any questions or need additional information regarding the Park Commission's support for the Meridian Township CPF request for Fiscal Year 24, or the proposed Senior & Community Center.

Sincerely,



Mary Nardo Farris, Chair
Meridian Township Park Commission



Meridian Township
5151 Marsh Road
Okemos, MI 48864

P 517.853.4000
F 517.853.4096

Township Board:

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Township Trustee

Marna Wilson
Township Trustee

Courtney Wisinski
Township Trustee

Frank L. Walsh
Township Manager

March 20, 2023

Office of Representative Elissa Slotkin
Attn: Rep. Elissa Slotkin
315 W. Allegan St., Suite 207
Lansing, MI 48933

Re: CPF Application – Meridian Township Senior & Community Center

Dear Congresswoman Slotkin:

I am writing in support of Meridian Township's fiscal year 2024 CPF request for construction of a new Senior and Community Center.

The Meridian Township Parks and Recreation Department has taken great pride in providing quality services programs and amenities to best serve the needs of our community. Even though there is a wide variety of outdoor recreation opportunities available in our parks, land preserves and pathways, our indoor offerings are limited to available gym and classroom space in Okemos and Haslett Schools. The current Meridian Senior Center, housed at Okemos Chippewa Middle School, is scheduled for demolition in the near future. These concerns are the basis for action by the Meridian Township Board to seek funding for this community- enhancing project.

This new Senior and Community Center will address existing deficiencies by providing indoor gymnasium space, community meeting rooms, and other spaces for art, culture, and enrichment programs for all of our residents, as well as a new home for the Senior Center.

In summary, keeping our seniors, active and engaged with facilities that provide social, educational, fitness and nutritional opportunities, will result in improved chances for successful aging-in-place, while also addressing deficiencies that will positively impact the diverse needs of the entire community!

Thank you for your consideration of this funding request. I may be reached at maisner@meridian.mi.us if you have additional questions.

Sincerely,

LuAnn Maisner, CPRP
Director of Parks and Recreation



8. Action Items

- A. Resolution of Support for River Clearing Grant**
- B. Spark Grant Resubmittal for Nancy Moore Park**



8.A.

To: Park Commission
From: LuAnn Maisner CPRP, Director of Parks and Recreation
Date: May 4, 2023
Re: Ingham County Parks and Trails Millage Grant – Multi-Jurisdictional River Clearing Grant

The Red Cedar River serves as a valuable natural feature in our region that is enjoyed by paddlers, fisherman, photographers and nature lovers in general. The ability to navigate the river has and continues to be challenging due to frequently occurring log jams. Over the years, the Friends of the Red Cedar and the Lansing Oar and Paddle Club have conducted multiple volunteer events to address some of the areas as well as the Ingham County Drain office.

The City of Williamston has recently installed a new launch facility in McCormick Park and had previously constructed a short “white water paddling” area near their downtown. Williamstown Township obtained funding last year to remove a large log jam in their jurisdiction as well. It is apparent that a dedicated concerted effort is needed to address the navigability of the Red Cedar River. The Ingham County Parks and Trails Millage is interested in funding this effort.

I have worked together with Williamstown Township Supervisor, Wanda Bloomquist to complete a multi-jurisdictional grant application for submittal including City of Williamston, Williamstown Township, and Meridian Township. We are preparing a resolution of support for each jurisdiction for the request \$500,000 for up to three years of funding to address current and future logjams along an 18-mile stretch from McCormick Park in Williamston to Hagedorn Ave in Meridian Township/East Lansing.

If the grant is approved, we will create a committee with representatives to determine yearly priority areas. Since this is a reimbursement program, I am recommending that Meridian Township serve as the fiduciary for this program.

MOVE TO APPROVE THE ATTACHED RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE RED CEDAR RIVER MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL CLEARING PROJECT GRANT APPLICATION TO THE INGHAM COUNTY PARKS AND TRAILS MILLAGE PROGRAM IN THE AMOUNT OF \$500,000 IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE CITY OF WILLIAMSTON, WILLIAMSTOWN TOWNSHIP AND MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP OFFERING NO LOCAL MATCH.

I, the undersigned, the duly qualified and acting Chair of the Park Commission of the Charter Township of Meridian, Ingham County, Michigan, DO HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a resolution adopted at a regular meeting of the Township Board on the 9th day of May, 2023.

Mary Nardo-Farris, Chair
Park Commission



To: Park Commission
From: LuAnn Maisner, CPRP
Director of Parks and Recreation
Date: May 4, 2023
Re: SPARK Grant Application for Nancy Moore Park Accessibility Improvements

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is administering the Federal American Rescue Plan funds designated for parks with \$65,000,000 in grants for allocation to local communities. Requests for funds are being accepted in amounts from \$100,000 to \$1,000,000 per application with no local match requirement. The deadline for the upcoming round of funding is June 26, 2023. Staff is recommending re-submitting the application for accessibility improvements for Nancy Moore Park in the amount of \$700,000 for construction of a paved loop trail to created accessible access to athletic fields as well as replacement of an obsolete play structure.

- **Nancy Moore Park Playground Replacement and Accessible Loop Trail** – Nancy Moore Park hosts more children than any other park in our system who participate in soccer, lacrosse, baseball, softball and flag football. The playground has exceeded its life expectancy and is in serious need of replacement. Also included in the addition of a paved loop trail from the parking lot to and around the soccer fields to access the playfields and also provide an additional fitness opportunity. Estimated Cost: \$700,000.

Project awards are scheduled to be announced later this year for construction in 2024. To learn more about this program, follow this link to the SPARK Grant Booklet. [Michigan Spark Grants](#).

A motion is prepared for Park Commission consideration:

MOVE TO SUPPORT AN APPLICATION TO THE FEDERAL SPARK GRANT PROGRAM ADMINISTERED BY THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, FOR PLAYGROUND REPLACEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF ACCESSIBLE PAVED LOOP TRAIL IN NANCY MOORE PARK IN THE AMOUNT OF \$700,000. THERE IS NO LOCAL MATCH REQUIRED FOR THIS PROGRAM.

**RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE A GRANT APPLICATION FOR ACCESSIBILITY
IMPROVEMENTS IN NANCY MOORE PARK
MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES FEDERAL SPARK GRANT PROGRAM**

At a regular meeting of the Township Board of the Charter Township of Meridian, Ingham County, Michigan, held at the Meridian Municipal Building, in said Township on the 6th day of December 2022 at 6:00 p.m., Local Time.

PRESENT:

ABSENT:

The following resolution was offered by _____ and supported by _____.

WHEREAS the Park Commission and Township Board are interested in the continued improvement of Meridian Township’s Park system; and

WHEREAS Nancy Moore Park located at 2100 Gaylord Smith Court in Haslett consists of two ball diamonds, two soccer and lacrosse fields, two sand volleyball courts, one basketball court, a dog park, natural trails, pavilion and restrooms and serves as Meridian Township’s most highly visited and utilized park for organized sports; and

WHEREAS this park has not received any accessibility upgrades since its construction in 1996; and

WHEREAS Nancy Moore Park is located in the centermost portion of the community; and

WHEREAS the Charter Township of Meridian is interested in applying to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for Federal SPARK Grant assistance for accessibility improvements consisting of a paved, accessible loop walkway to access the soccer and lacrosse fields; and to replace an obsolete play structure in Nancy Moore Park located at 2100 Gaylord Smith Court,

WHEREAS this project is outlined and justified in the 2021-2027 Parks and Recreation Master Plan adopted by the Meridian Township Board and Park Commission, and is on file with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources; and

WHEREAS, the Park Commission unanimously supported this application request of \$400,000 for accessibility improvements in Nancy Moore Park consisting of an internal paved walkway to and around the soccer/lacrosse fields; and replacement of an obsolete

playscape including accessible poured-in-place safety surfacing, with no required local match.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, INGHAM COUNTY, MICHIGAN DOES HEREBY APPROVE SUBMISSION OF AN APPLICATION TO THE FEDERAL SPARK GRANT PROGRAM FOR ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS TO NANCY MOORE PARK INCLUDING A PAVED LOOP WALKWAY AND NEW PLAYSCAPE WITH ACCESSIBLE SAFETY SURFACING FOR CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ABILITIES WITH NO REQUIRED LOCAL MATCH.

ADOPTED: YEAS:

 NAYS:

STATE OF MICHIGAN)

) ss

COUNTY OF INGHAM)

I, the undersigned, the duly qualified and acting Chair of the Township Board, Charter Township of Meridian, Ingham County, Michigan, DO HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing is a true and a complete copy of a resolution relative to the Agreement with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, which Resolution was adopted at a regular meeting of the Park Commission on the 9th of May, 2023.

Mary Nardo-Farris
Park Commission Chair



9. Discussion Items

A. Central Park Pavilion Replacement



To: Park Commissioners
From: LuAnn Maisner, CPRP
Director of Parks and Recreation
Date: May 4, 2023
Re: Central Park Pavilion Replacement Project

In 2014, the Park Commission approved the Master Plan for Central Park that included adding a fishing dock in the Historical Village, paving a trail through Central Park to connect Central Park, Central Park South and Nancy Moore Park; relocation of the Farmers Market, new restroom building to serve Central Park and the Historical Village, as well as replacement of the pavilion in Central Park.

Staff recently conducted an evaluation of the existing structure and found that many of the support posts are rotted. Therefore, staff has developed a plan to update the pavilion area with the following improvements:

- Replace the pavilion with a new structure utilizing the existing concrete pad.
- Remove the existing restrooms that are connected to the pavilion to provide a clear view to the park area.
- Construct short brick seat walls on the corners of the new pavilion.
- Improve vegetation and landscaping around the pavilion area.
- Add retractable windscreens.

Staff is in the process of gathering costs and bids to begin the renovation later this summer pending Park Commission approval.





10. Land Preservation Report

Presented by: Commissioner Stephens



11. Director's Report