



Charter Township of Meridian  
Meridian Economic Development Corporation  
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864  
Thursday, April 6, 2023– Minutes -DRAFT

**Members**

**Present:** Treasurer Phil Deschaine, Trisha Bird, Chair Kim Thompson, Brenda Chapman, Adam Carlson, Dave Ledebuhr, Manager Frank L. Walsh, Shawn Dunham and Trustee Kathy Sundland

**Members**

**Absent:** None

**Others**

**Present:** Neighborhoods & Economic Development Director Amber Clark, Executive Assistant Michelle Prinz, and Planning Commissioner Milton Scales

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Thompson called the meeting to order and read the mission statement at 7:32 am.

2. **MISSION:** Set the standard in creating an entrepreneurial culture, be the example for revitalization of our business districts, and be the leaders in building sustainable public/private partnerships.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

**MOTION BY MEMBER CARLSON TO APPROVE THE AGENDA. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER LEDEBUHR. MOTION PASSES 8-0.**

4. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Minutes-Meeting January 5, 2023
- b. Financial Report
- c. Development Projects

**MOTION BY MEMBER CHAPMAN TO ADD THE DATE OF JANUARY 5, 2023 TO THE MINUTES. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER BIRD. MOTION PASSES 8-0.**

**MOTION BY MEMBER BIRD TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA WITH THE AMENDED MINUTES. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER CARLSON. MOTION PASSES 8-0.**

5. PUBLIC REMARKS

None.

6. OLD BUSINESS

- a. MABA New Business and Existing Business Award Invoice

**MOTION BY MEMBER LEDEBUHR TO APPROVE \$292.85 FOR THE NEW AND EXISTING BUSINESS OF THE YEAR 2022 AWARDS TO THE MERIDIAN AREA BUSINESS ASSOCIATION. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER CARLSON. MOTION PASSES 8-0.**

- b. Economic Development Strategy-SWOT Analysis

Director Clark discussed that as part of the township's Redevelopment Ready Community recertification, an updated economic development strategy is needed and a SWOT analysis should be completed. The EDC discussed the township's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The following items were mentioned:

Strengths:

- Parks, schools, highly educated community, good location
- Future road improvements

Weaknesses:

- Lack of industrial zoned land for development
- Lots of road construction

Opportunities:

- Better communication with the Ingham County Drain Commission
- Growing population/housing

Threats:

- Ingham County Drain Commission wanting too much work to be done by developers to fix old problems
- Commercial threats with expansion to Eastwood and the Westside of Lansing

7. NEW BUSINESS

- a. MARC Funds – MABA Small Business Expo Support Request

Director Clark mentioned that MABA is interested in bringing back the Small Business Expo at the Meridian Mall. There was general consensus that the EDC would support the event, but wanted to see the total budget. Director Clark will bring that information back to the EDC at a future meeting. There was discussion regarding the sale of the MARC building and \$7,000 given to the EDC for small business and the possibility of some of those funds used to support the Expo.

- b. Resolution for Meridian Juneteenth Festival

Chair Thompson discussed how the Juneteenth event started in 2021 through a committee and the committee has fundraised all the funds for the event. New to the celebration this year will be a jazz festival at Lake Lansing Park.

8. TOWNSHIP REPORTS

a. Township Board

Trustee Sundland reported the following:

- Board is working on updating the sign ordinance
- New welcoming signs installed
- Updated the purchasing and travel policies
- Village of Okemos resolution
- Discussing recreational marihuana ordinances

b. Township Manager

- Okemos was voted #1 place to live in Michigan
- Working on fixing 8 miles of local roads
- Having a public meeting tonight to discuss options for the “chip and fog” repairs
- Municipal Building will be closed for renovations from 4/24-10/1
- Celebrate Meridian on 6/24
- Township Pride Event on 8/26
- Police department will be getting new flooring and new locker rooms
- Township Health & Safety Event on 5/10
- Township will be doing Okemos Public Schools building permits
- 12<sup>th</sup> emergency siren is installed
- Schools are working on hiring Resource Officers
- Parks Family Fun Guide is in the mail
- The Pond’s lawsuit next week re: Daniel’s Drain
- Woodward Way-middle housing opening
- Community Center/Senior Center committee is meeting on regular basis

c. Planning Commission

Commissioner Scales mentioned that 33% of the commission is new. Director Schmitt has been working on providing planning and zoning training for the new commissioners. They are working to update the 2017 Master Plan. Tidal Wave Car Wash is going into the former Outback Steakhouse location.

d. Chair

None.

e. Staff

Director Clark reported the following:

- Social Sloth Café is moving in on Central Park Drive
- The rest of Haslett Village Square should be demolished in the fall
- American House is scheduled to open in January 2024
- Elevation is working on its 5<sup>th</sup> phase

9. COMMUNITY REPORTS

a. Meridian Mall

Director Dunham reported the following:

- Bed, Bath and Beyond is closing in 4 days
- Art Show on 4/15
- New screen printing/work wear store is coming
- Mall is at 2019 visit levels

b. MABA

Director Clark reported MABA is interested in bringing back the Small Business Expo to create a revenue stream for other small business programs including the gift card program and small grant/loans to businesses.

10. OPEN DISCUSSION/BOARD COMMENTS

None.

12. PUBLIC REMARKS

None.

13. NEXT MEETING DATE

- May 4, 2023 at 7:30am at the Central Fire Station, 5000 Okemos Road

14. ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no objection, Chair Thompson adjourned the meeting at 8:38am.