

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
TOWNSHIP BOARD REGULAR MEETING - **APPROVED** -
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198
853-4000, Town Hall Room
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2016 **6:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Supervisor LeGoff, Clerk Dreyfus, Treasurer Brixie, Trustees Scales, Styka, Veenstra
ABSENT: Trustee Wilson
STAFF: Township Manager Frank Walsh, Assistant Township Manager/Director of Public Works and Engineering Derek Perry, Director of Community Planning & Development Mark Kieselbach, Police Chief David Hall, Finance Director Miriam Mattison, Communications Director Deborah Guthrie, Internship Coordinator Brandie Yates, Information and Technology Director Stephen Gebes

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Supervisor LeGoff called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS

Supervisor LeGoff led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

The secretary called the roll of the Board.

4. PRESENTATION

A. HOMTV Internship 35th Anniversary Tribute-Brandie Yates, Internship Coordinator
Communications Director Guthrie shared her experience as a HOMTV intern beginning in 1996 and how her career at Meridian Township unfolded thereafter.

Trustee Styka presented a tribute to Meridian Township's Internship Coordinator Brandie Yates regarding the 35th Anniversary of HOMTV's Internship Program.

B. Award of Financial Reporting Achievement-Miriam Mattison

Finance Director Miriam Mattison read the certificate of achievement of excellence in financial reporting awarded to Meridian Township by Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) for fiscal year 2015.

5. PUBLIC REMARKS

Supervisor LeGoff opened Public Remarks.

Pat Munshaw, 5261 Golden Circle, East Lansing, spoke in support of CATA's BRT as originally presented, based on seven (7) years of analysis, planning and review by professional planners, economists, analysts, forecasters, modelers and engineers. She stated the Township Board is not speaking for her in its opposition to the BRT as currently proposed and believed there are many like her in the Township.

Patty McPhee, 5275 Thames, Haslett, addressed her continued opposition to the BRT as proposed. She did not believe the plan supports the Americans with Disabilities Act. Ms. McPhee is a supporter of CATA, but will be unable to continue to do so if the BRT is approved. She thanked Trustee Scales for all his efforts over the past four (4) years as a member of the Board. She voiced her support of Erik Lindquist for Township Treasurer as changes need to be made.

Brent Forsberg, TA Forsberg, Inc., 2422 Jolly Road, Okemos, announced he is partnering with Home Builders Association of Greater Lansing for a Trunk or Treat Event to be held on October 27, 2016 from 5:00 until 7:00 P.M. at his business on Jolly Road. He indicated collection for the Toys for Tots campaign will take place during this event.

Kathy DeVito, 470 Chimney Oaks Drive, Okemos, voiced her continued opposition to the BRT. She inquired why residents opposed to the BRT are labeled fearmongers, small minded, simple minded, misinformed, etc. Ms. DeVito spoke to the lack of professionalism by CATA executives she encountered at the August meeting, citing “snide” comments made.

John Ware, 1964 Yuma Trail, Okemos, opposed the center running lane proposed for the BRT project. He spoke to his desire for direct left hand turns into businesses off Grand River Avenue. Mr. Ware preferred “things” be left the way they are.

Chris Collette, 2373 Barnsbury Road, East Lansing, addressed what she believed to be petty political tactics being used by the “Brixie slate”, involving the removal of “Lindquist for Township Treasurer” campaign literature from residents’ front doors.

George Henley, 943 Allison House Lane, Lansing, stated CATA has the best transportation system in the state. He identified himself as a member of CATA’s Local Advisory Council (LAC) who strives for open communication, and correct information is shared with residents concerning the BRT project. Mr. Henley stated the BRT project will both increase emergency service time and will not negatively impact businesses along the BRT corridor as alleged. He stated the BRT will be funded through state and federal grants and additional tax money will not be used.

Bill Collette, 2373 Barnsbury Road, East Lansing, noted the reason for the BRT on tonight’s agenda was the result of a suggestion by Trustee Scales to reconvene to address whether headway had been made between the two positions on the BRT. He stated CATA has made no effort to meet with the “Stop the BRT” group and has submitted “unbelievable” plans (e.g., driving buses through side streets in East Lansing). Mr. Collette believed the Board should “short circuit” this entire proceeding as there has been no resolution between the parties. He cited no support for the BRT project has been given by Michigan State University, Sparrow Hospital and the Lansing Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Collette shared that Tri-County Regional Planning Commission has chosen to conduct a comprehensive study on transportation needs in the tri-county area and, yet, CATA has chosen to move ahead with the BRT without input on the results of that study. He addressed the article in the *City Pulse* which was printed about him, alleging there is a financial relationship between CATA and the *City Pulse*.

Leonard Provencher, 5824 Buena Parkway, Haslett, complimented the artist who painted the new mural in Wonch Park. He spoke to the death of a Haslett Middle School student which he believed was the result of harassment and bullying and questioned why this issue is being silenced instead of addressed.

Mindy Randolph, 4586 Blackstone Trail, Okemos, spoke to her lack of understanding surrounding the negativity associated with CATA’s BRT. She believed CATA to be the best run transit authority in her experience. Ms. Randolph requested the Township Board come together with an open mind and vet the facts presented by the BRT.

Diana Engle, 2164 Quarry, East Lansing, stated very few people speaking actually use the CATA system. She reminded Board members they will be making a decision on something they do not use. Ms. Engle stated she has experienced several occasions where the Route 1 bus has been full, one of the reasons why the BRT is needed. She believed the BRT improvements along the Grand River/Michigan Avenue Corridor will promote safer crossing for riders with disabilities.

Richard Harrington, 820 Piper Road, Haslett, stated he was asked by Trustee Veenstra to address a communication in the packet criticizing the mural on School Road in Haslett. As a “qualified professional artist”, he spoke in support of the mural and the message it conveys.

Chris Buck, 2642 Loon Lane, Okemos, reported his attendance at the CATA Board meeting where the five (5) alternate proposals to the original plan were presented. He also attended all three (3) community conversations regarding the BRT. Mr. Buck stated CATA listened to the August

community conversations held and all five (5) updated renderings of the BRT adjustments take Meridian Township's concerns to heart. He believed all five (5) options are poor, as the goal of connecting the affected communities requires one (1) continuous BRT system. Mr. Buck believed a continuous BRT from downtown Lansing to Meridian Mall is a proactive approach to facilitate the thousands of new residents which will be housed along the corridor in the next two (2) to three (3) years. He pointed to studies which indicate that in three (3) to six (6) years, the Michigan/Grand River Avenue area will be a "snarled mess." Mr. Buck voiced appreciation for CATA's foresight and reminded citizens the Township Board does not have a vote on the BRT. He spoke in support of the Okemos Pointe Brownfield Plan.

Ody Norkin, 3803 Sandlewood, Okemos, stated his support of Erik Lindquist for Township Treasurer. He addressed sole source contracts without any scrutiny or a signed agreement, citing Redi-Ride, CATA and the MERS pension system.

Donna Rose, 6207 Cobblers Drive, East Lansing, did not believe the people on CATA's LAC are representative of the CATA ridership. She objected to a comparison used relative to snowfall in Eugene, Oregon and East Lansing as it affect riders of the BRT. Ms. Rose stated Eugene, Oregon has a 30 year annual average of 4.9 inches of snow while East Lansing has a 30 year annual average of 51.1 inches of snow.

Elizabeth Mohnke, 5606 Mall Drive, W., Apt. 177, Lansing, spoke in opposition to the BRT project. She acknowledged that as a disabled person, she rides CATA on a regular basis. Ms. Mohnke believed public transportation should serve all members of the public. She voiced concern with the elimination of the number of bus stops (from 41 to 26) with the advent of the BRT, as it will require persons with disabilities to travel further and navigate unfamiliar terrain. Ms. Mohnke noted CATA currently has a difficult time keeping the sidewalks and bus stops clear of snow and was unsure how the BRT would improve snow removal.

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, indicated "imitation is the sincerest form of flattery", noting Bath Township desires to model its anti-discrimination ordinance after the one approved by Meridian Township. He stated campaign finance reports from the primary election revealed the Treasurer accepted a campaign contribution from an individual who was approved by the Board as the Township's prosecutor. Mr. Bowlby alleged the acceptance of such a donation was unethical and called her judgment into question. He urged citizens to vote for Erik Lindquist as Treasurer in Meridian Township on November 8th.

Joy Gleason, 1133 E. Main Street, Lansing, has ridden the CATA bus system for 25 years. She acknowledged that CATA has a good bus system, but could be better. Ms. Gleason alleged the BRT has not been completely thought through. She believed the infrastructure will become the responsibility of the municipality it runs through when problems are encountered.

Deb Wiese, 500 Woodingham, East Lansing, Chair of CATA's LAC, explained the makeup of the LAC. She spoke in support of CATA's proposed BRT project. She indicated CATA has taken a proactive approach by engaging in community forums in order to understand the issues surrounding the BRT, including snow removal. She reminded residents snow removal on roads is the responsibility of municipalities, but CATA is cognizant the issue must be addressed.

George Tesseris, 2840 E. Grand River, East Lansing, addressed the Board's resolution of July 19, 2016 in opposition to the BRT as proposed. He indicated nothing has happened to change the existing plan and the Board should take no action AND let the resolution of opposition stand.

Supervisor LeGoff closed Public Remarks.

6. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

Township Manager offered the following:

- Appreciation to the Meridian Garden Club for its Plant it Pink ceremony at the Historical Village and the rededication of the Blue Star Memorial

- Meeting with Ali Damsaz regarding his gas station canopies and a resolution has been offered
- Shaw Street property has been listed as directed by the Board
- Continued negotiations with three (3) of the seven unions

7. BOARD COMMENTS & REPORTS

Clerk Dreyfus reminded residents they can request an absentee ballot up until Saturday, November 5th at 2:00 P.M. for those citizens wishing to take their ballot with them. He noted Monday, November 7th at 4:00 P.M. is the deadline to vote by absentee ballot and it must be requested and voted in the Municipal Building. Clerk Dreyfus announced the polls will be open on Tuesday, November 8th from 7:00 A.M. until 8:00 P.M. He stated citizens who have questions regarding the election are urged to call the Clerk's Office at 853-4300.

Clerk Dreyfus reported absentee ballots will be processed through three (3) absentee voter counting boards for the November 8th General Election. He reminded voters in Precinct 20 their new polling location is New Hope Church on Haslett Road.

8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Treasurer Brixie moved to approve the agenda as submitted. Seconded by Trustee Styka.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried 6-0.

9. CONSENT AGENDA (SALMON)

Supervisor LeGoff reviewed the consent agenda.

Treasurer Brixie moved to adopt the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Trustee Scales.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustee Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus

NAYS: None

Motion carried 6-0.

A. Communications

Treasurer Brixie moved that the communications be received and placed on file, and any communications not already assigned for disposition be referred to the Township Manager or Supervisor for follow-up. Seconded by Trustee Scales.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustee Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus

NAYS: None

Motion carried 6-0.

B. Minutes

(1) September 29, 2016 Special Meeting

Treasurer Brixie moved to approve and ratify the minutes of the September 29, 2016 Special Meeting as amended. Seconded by Trustee Scales.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustee Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus

NAYS: None

Motion carried 6-0.

(2) October 4, 2016 Regular Meeting

Treasurer Brixie moved to approve and ratify the minutes of the October 4, 2016 Regular Meeting as amended. Seconded by Trustee Scales.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustee Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus

NAYS: None
Motion carried 6-0.

C. Bills

Treasurer Brixie moved that the Township Board approve the Manager's Bills as follows:

Common Cash	\$ 233,903.73
Public Works	\$ 240,867.58
Trust & Agency	\$ 494,741.83
Total Checks	\$ 969,513.14
Credit Card Transactions	\$ 12,468.76
Total Purchases	\$ <u>981,981.90</u>
ACH Payments	\$ <u>597,289.46</u>

Seconded by Trustee Scales.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustee Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
NAYS: None
Motion carried 6-0.

[Bill list in Official Minute Book]

D. City of Caro City Manager Search-Township Manager Employment Agreement

Treasurer Brixie moved that the Township Manager, Frank L. Walsh, be permitted to assist the City of Caro, Michigan in their search for a new City Manager with the understanding that the services performed will not take place during those times that he is committed to the Township's affairs nor on Township property and that he will not assist in additional searches for a period of one year after he concludes the search for the City of Caro. Seconded by Trustee Scales.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustee Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus
NAYS: None
Motion carried 6-0.

10. QUESTIONS FOR THE ATTORNEY (None)

11. HEARINGS

A. Elevation at Okemos Pointe Brownfield Plan

Supervisor LeGoff opened the public hearing at 7:16 P.M.

Director Kieselbach summarized the proposed Okemos Pointe Brownfield Plan as outlined in staff memorandum dated October 14, 2016.

- Applicant
Eric Helzer, Advanced Redevelopment Solutions, PO Box 204, Eagle, stated six (6) parcels make up the brownfield plan, with four (4) of the six (6) parcels having contamination. He noted the property was initially developed in 1963 and has been underutilized since 1999. Mr. Helzer listed several public benefits which will be part of the development (e.g., pocket parks, public seating plaza, pavilions, fishing pier, public art, underground utility upgrades in the area, wetland preservation, uncovered and covered bicycle parking and storage, local

Township path and trail system which will connect to the regional pathway system). He stated the development will be built out over three (3) phases, with Phase 2 and 3 being done together. Mr. Helzer anticipated Phase 1 will be completed by the end of 2017, and Phases 2 and 3 completed by the end of 2020.

Mr. Helzer reported three (3) environmental and two geotechnical investigations were conducted, with over 100 borings revealing a petroleum contaminated area in the center, approximately 200 by 200 feet ten (10) feet below existing grade. He pointed to another central area of contamination with a soil gas concern. Mr. Helzer offered an overview of the site conditions, pointing out the specific areas of contamination and their boundaries. He indicated approximately 160,000 tons of soil would need to be mitigated in some fashion, at a cost of nearly \$10 million. Mr. Helzer stated due to the prohibitive cost associated with removal and fill of 160,000 tons of soil, it was decided to do surgical removal within the building footprints of where the new buildings will be located and replacing them with engineered fill. He indicated the two (2) central areas will be remediated.

Mr. Helzer noted the combined traditional site development costs for a project of this nature would be \$4.4 million. He stated with the brownfield conditions and the proposed remedial approach to be used, the original nearly \$10 million cost can be reduced to less than \$4 million.

Mr. Helzer explained the impact to Meridian Township, stating base taxes are currently near \$133,000, with a collection of \$1.1 million to all taxing jurisdictions. He indicated that post development, the added taxes to all taxing jurisdictions will be \$12.4 million over the brownfield plan period, a projected 12-year capture plan and 14 years of a brownfield plan due to the construction period time frame. Mr. Helzer noted the added benefit to taxes for Meridian Township over the 14-year period will be \$465,000, contemplating a 25% pass-through of the new taxes created.

- Public

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, believed the Board must consider what the Township will lose in taxes annually over the 14-year period. He believed consideration must be given to what the development will bring to the Township. Mr. Bowlby noted earlier Board member objection to allowing the interest payments to be included in the brownfield plan, stating the federal government allows residents to deduct interest on home mortgages to encourage people to buy homes. He thought allowing the developer to deduct interest encourages him to clean up the site and build this project. Mr. Bowlby spoke in favor of the Okemos Pointe Brownfield Plan as proposed.

Sandra Gower, Ingham County Economic Development Coordinator, 121 E. Maple Street, Mason, stated the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority unanimously approved the proposed brownfield plan on October 14, 2016. She explained the three (3) step process used by the county for brownfield plan approval.

Carl Dorshimer, Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP), 1000 S. Washington Avenue, #201, Lansing, spoke in support of Board approval of the Okemos Pointe Brownfield Plan. He stated 65% of the new taxes generated over the lifespan of the plan will flow to local governments and the state (an extraordinarily high amount in his experience), while only 35% (\$4.4 million) of the new taxes paid for by the developer will be used to reimburse him for costs incurred for the brownfield. Mr. Dorshimer noted the \$4.4 million in taxes captured represents only 6.5% of the total \$67 million cost of this project. He stated he normally sees 5%-10% pass through, not the 25% as shown for this plan and provides an immediate new revenue source to the Township. Mr. Dorshimer recommended the Board approve the brownfield plan as proposed.

Ody Norkin, 3803 Sandlewood, Okemos, spoke in support of the Okemos Pointe Brownfield Plan as it is the type of plan which covers police and fire expenses “up front”.

Supervisor LeGoff closed the public hearing at 7:38 P.M.

12. ACTION ITEMS

Supervisor LeGoff opened Public Remarks.

Renee Korrey, 4633 Okemos Road, Okemos, spoke in opposition to CATA's proposed BRT project. She stated CATA is questionable. Ms. Korrey spoke to the need for the Township Board to do its due diligence and review the plan closely. She believed what people love most about the BRT can be accomplished with changes to the current bus system.

Bill Collette, 2373 Barnsbury Road, East Lansing, questioned where all the riders of the proposed BRT are going to park their cars. He also questioned why there would be a basic BRT plan, pitched to serve the public, which eliminated Frandor, Meijer and Meridian Mall as stops. Mr. Collette addressed a concept he titled "CATA, caviar and cash." He stated the five (5) so-called alternatives were only framed as possible items, with no commitment attached to anything.

Mindy Randolph, 4586 Blackstone Trail, Okemos, explained CATA is currently working with private land owners (e.g., Frandor, Meijer) to place stations at those locations which are publicly accessible to everyone. She indicated the five alternative plans to the BRT created by CATA addressed issues raised by citizens. Ms. Randolph spoke to appropriate behavior which should be displayed at Board meetings. She indicated the BRT is being constructed to develop the community as a whole, citing parking spaces at Meridian Mall and Meijer to access the BRT. Ms. Randolph believed the easier you make mass transit for people, the more it will be used.

Deb Wiese, 500 Woodingham, East Lansing, Chair of CATA's LAC, stated CATA is working diligently to address issues concerning stations located on private land. She believed the proposed BRT will provide the opportunity for access not currently afforded to persons with disabilities. Ms. Wiese indicated the BRT system is a coordinated effort to allow for the use of audible signals and tactile cues in areas which will provide easier access and travel from one stop to another. She held these enhancements will greatly enhance the usage for disabled citizens.

George Henley, 943 Allison House Lane, Lansing, stated the improvements which the BRT will provide will increase the safety of college students as well. He urged Board members to take a day out of their schedule to solely utilize public transit in order to garner a better understanding.

Diana Engle, 2164 Quarry, East Lansing, explained CATA's LAC consists of people with disabilities and seniors. She stated the committee serves in an advisory capacity to improve the public transit system in the area. Ms. Engle reported a presentation was made at the last LAC meeting about the BRT where numerous questions on a variety of issues were asked of and answered by the Assistant Executive Director of CATA, Debbie Alexander. She stated all committee members understand the BRT to be a good deal for people in the disability community. Ms. Engle requested Board members not make the Township look like it does not want to be part of the overall community through its continued opposition to the BRT.

Ody Norkin, 3803 Sandlewood, Okemos, noted the LAC members are appointed by the CATA Board and if they do not reflect the view of CATA, they are removed. He stated any member of the LAC who advises their appointing authority (CATA) has a conflict of interest. Mr. Norkin believed people on the Transportation Commission should not be appointed if there is even a perceived conflict of interest as they will be serving in an advisory capacity to the Township Board.

Elizabeth Mohnke, 5606 Mall Drive, W., Apt. 177, Lansing, uses CATA on a regular basis and would be uncomfortable attempting to maneuver the logistics for a center running BRT as a blind individual. She shared there is debate whether audible signals are useful or harmful for blind persons, noting her personal experience has shown them to be distracting as it takes away her ability to hear

cars traveling past her when crossing a street. Ms. Mohnke questioned who will be responsible for snow removal with the bus stops being moved to the median. She expressed concern that although there will be traffic signals at the proposed 26 stations to allow riders of the BRT to cross to the center, it does not mean everyone will obey those traffic signals.

Donna Rose, 6207 Cobblers Drive, East Lansing, voiced her personal preference for accessing the bus from the curb. She spoke to the fact CATA will not be responsible for shoveling snow at their stations. Ms. Rose indicated CATA put forth a great deal of effort in providing the five (5) alternatives. She believed Alternative #5 would be the one Meridian Township would choose, where the BRT ends at Charles Street in East Lansing and links to Route 1, as the stop would not need to be moved to accommodate parking spaces. Ms. Rose stated Meridian Mall does not want to accommodate parking for the BRT near the front door, and that is not a good plan for riders with disabilities. She stated LAC can make a difference in the decisions made by the CATA Board.

John Ware, 1964 Yuma Trail, Okemos, emphasized he likes to use a center lane to make left turns into businesses when he drives his automobile and then use the center lane when he leaves a business in order to not cross all five (5) lanes of traffic. He stated the BRT would "barricade" center turn lanes and would necessitate additional travel to reach a Michigan turn around to frequent a business across the street from where he had just left. Mr. Ware voiced his continued opposition to a BRT.

Leonard Provencher, 5824 Buena Parkway, Haslett, expressed appreciation that the creation of a Transportation Commission is on tonight's agenda. He spoke in support of appointing Tim Potter as a non-motorized representative and Karla Hudson as a member representing riders with a visual disability. Mr. Provencher stated CATA must bring forward specificity for the BRT in order for the Township Board to consider changing its position. He did not believe there is need for Board action or approval of the BRT at this time.

Kathy DeVito, 470 Chimney Oaks, Okemos, questioned the non-profit status of CATA given the statement by Mr. Norkin, part-owner of Indian Trails and Michigan Flyer, who stated he can provide Redi-Ride type service at one-third of the cost charged by CATA. She asked what happens if the BRT is constructed and CATA does not have funds to maintain the system.

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, clarified the ridership data provided by CATA concerning the 1.78 million riders was correct, not incorrect as he previously reported. He noted CATA's documentation showed the BRT was needed because buses are frequently at capacity. Mr. Bowlby questioned if a bus leaves downtown Lansing at capacity or near capacity, logic would dictate having an additional empty bus ready to follow behind, a solution which does not require the implementation of a \$140 million BRT project. He characterized the five (5) alternatives presented by CATA as only ideas and urged the Board to let the previous resolution of opposition stand.

Lorie Lechler, 3833 Dobie Road, Okemos, voiced apprehension over people who do not pay attention while driving. She expressed concern people with disabilities, students on their cell phones and dog walkers will find traffic more of a challenge with the BRT.

Rhonda Bueche, 4126 Leeward, Okemos, identified herself as an occasional CATA rider. She stated opponents to the BRT are not against public transit, but believe improvements can be accomplished without the \$140 million BRT plan. Ms. Bueche noted the Township needs a new Treasurer who is fiscally responsible and has sound financial ideas. She found it interesting that Erik Lindquist, the past Chief Financial Officer of CATA, does not find the BRT a fiscally responsible plan. Ms. Bueche stated she has unsuccessfully requested answers from CATA concerning its right to deny access of customers to established businesses, its right to deny access of businesses to their customers, its right to deny access of established businesses to their deliveries, its right to deny access of the disabled to the easiest public transportation solution and its right to deny access to the only level one trauma center in the region.

Supervisor LeGoff closed Public Remarks.

A. Transportation Commission

Trustee Styka moved to establish the Meridian Transportation Commission (MTC) as follows:

The MTC shall consist of 7 members. One member shall be a member of the Township Board, appointed by the Supervisor with the consent of the Board. Six members shall consist of residents of the Township of Meridian appointed by the Supervisor with the consent of the Board to serve through and including December 31, 2018.

The resident members shall include individuals who regularly use the following modes of transportation: CATA buses, Redi-Ride and/or Spectran services, bicycles, trails and pathways, and motor vehicles.

The MTC shall review the provision of transportation services of all types, public and private, within Meridian Township as to their efficiency, sufficiency, and costs. The MTC shall make a report to the Board semi-annually on the status of transportation services within the township. It shall make recommendations, if necessary, for improvements to modes of transportation services, including the priority of needed actions and on potential millage proposals. The MTC shall receive citizen complaints and citizen comments on the provision of transportation services within Meridian Township and provide assistance to township staff, as necessary, to resolve or respond to citizen submissions.

The MTC shall annually elect a chairperson and vice-chairperson from its members.

The MTC shall meet monthly for its first six months after appointment and at least bi-monthly thereafter.

The Township Manager shall cause public notice to issue, inviting individuals to apply for membership on the MTC. Applications shall include information on the applicant's experience in using transportation services in Meridian, including the types and frequency of transportation services used. Seconded by Trustee Scales.

Treasurer Brixie offered the following amendment:

- Amend the third sentence of the motion by adding "and qualified electors" after "residents"

The amendment was accepted by the maker of the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustee Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus

NAYS: None

Motion carried 6-0.

Board discussion:

- Appreciation for Trustee Styka's work on this issue
- Wording of the motion included items of discussion among Board members during previous meetings
- Appreciation to Trustees Scales and Veenstra for their service on the Redi-Ride Review Committee, from which the Transportation Commission was born
- Communication in the Board packet expressed concern the proposed commission must include all aspects of transportation in its mission

Trustee Scales offered the following amendment:

- **Add the sentence “All appointments shall be made after November 20, 2016.” At the end of the first paragraph of the motion. Seconded by Treasurer Brixie.**

Board discussion:

- Rationale for using the aforementioned date is the current term for Board members ends November 20, 2016

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustee Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus

NAYS: None

Motion carried 6-0.

ROLL CALL VOTE ON THE MAIN YEAS: Trustee Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus

MOTION: NAYS: None

Motion carried 6-0.

B. CATA-Bus Rapid Transit

Board discussion:

- BRT has major problems with the elimination of several stops
- Proposed BRT eliminates several important locations and is a disservice to mass transportation
- Board member belief any potential net benefits of the BRT are not worth \$142 million
- Requirements contained in the resolution dated July 19, 2016 have not been met
- No action by the Board tonight allows the resolution of opposition to the BRT in its initial configuration to stand
- Language contained in the resolution of July 19, 2016 required an agreement between the Board and CATA regarding the BRT which has not been reached
- CATA has not communicated its five (5) ideas to the Township Board
- Five (5) ideas are not alternatives and would not be brought to the Board
- Board member belief the majority of Township citizens and business owners are in opposition to the BRT
- Majority of Township residents have stated they are not in support of the design at 30% complete and, therefore, would not logically be supportive of moving forward to see what the remaining 70% would look like
- Board member belief energies can be centered around creating a better CATA Route 1
- Timed progressive traffic signaling along the Grand River Avenue Corridor will produce an immediate reduction in congestion and improvement in safety
- No agreement has been reached between the Township and CATA subsequent to the July 19, 2016 resolution of opposition to the current BRT proposal

[Supervisor LeGoff recessed the meeting at 8:47 P.M.]

[Supervisor LeGoff reconvened the meeting at 9:00 P.M.]

C. 2016 3rd Quarter Budget Amendments

Finance Director Miriam Mattison provided an overview of the 3rd quarter budget amendments.

Board and staff discussion:

- \$6,000 request for additional funds for the Community Needs Fund is the same amount as requested last year at this time

- Appreciation to the Finance Director for bridging the gap during the audit and putting together the budget in her first position with local government
- Fire Chief and the Parks and Recreation Director have turned in their vehicles to further reach the Board goal of a reduction in the Township's auto fleet
- Fire Chief and Parks and Recreation Director are now receiving an auto allowance

Treasurer Brixie moved to approve the September 2016 budget amendments with a decrease in budgeted fund balance for the General Fund in the amount of \$16,634 which projects a use of fund balance of \$1,379,301. Based on audited 2015 results, the projected fund balance at December 31, 2016 will be \$6,224,681. Seconded by Trustee Styka.

Continued Board discussion:

- Board member belief the expenditures for the Lake Lansing consultant are too high
- Board member belief the expenditures for the wetland consultant are too high

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS: Trustee Scales, Styka, Veenstra, Supervisor LeGoff, Treasurer Brixie, Clerk Dreyfus

NAYS: None

Motion carried 6-0.

13. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

Supervisor LeGoff opened and closed Public Remarks.

A. Elevation at Okemos Pointe Brownfield Plan

Board, applicant and consultant discussion:

- Over 100 soil borings were conducted on the property
- 160,000 tons of contaminated fill was identified on the property
- Uncertainty as to how the large amount of contamination "ended up" on the property
- Board member preference to see itemized costs for each identified area of contamination
- Board member opposition to including \$600,000 of interest
- Board member preference to reduce the contingency fund from 15% to 5%, a savings of \$400,000
- 25% pass through goes to all jurisdictions
- This industrial property was rezoned and the level of standard is not to residential criteria
- Property is industrial and contamination could have happened over a long period of time
- Consultant statement about the contamination standards used in the 1960s v. today
- Leaking underground storage tank was previously located in the 200 X 200 square foot area in one of the primary areas on the property
- Leaking underground storage tank was dealt with at the time through the state's existing compliance program in the 1990s
- Two boundaries have been identified: one is the fill and the other is the extent of contamination
- Contamination varies in depth similar to the fill
- Contamination is not consistent to the fill boundary line and lends itself to some type of operation or spill which may have occurred on the property
- Experts are unsure what is the source of the chlorinated solvents which is creating the soil gas issue in one of the "hot spots" being focused on
- Cleanup must now be made to the standard for the intended use, which is residential and the "ultimate" standard
- Board member belief the degree of contamination (160,000 tons) comes from the excellent job done with the over 100 soil borings
- Current base taxes total \$78,202 annually for the subject site
- Post brownfield plan capture period taxes paid to all taxing jurisdictions will be \$1,397,165
- Post brownfield plan capture period taxes paid to Meridian Township will be \$169,244 beginning in 2030

- A portion of the 25% pass through will first be realized in 2018 upon completion of Phase 1
- Balance of the 25% pass through will be realized in 2021 when Phases 2 and 3 have been completed
- Debt mills cannot be captured and will continue passing through
- Plan is being self-financed by the developer through borrowed money
- Borrower's costs assumes an interest rate slightly greater than 5%
- Ingham County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (ICBRA) has approved a 2.5% simple interest
- When calculated out, the 2.5% simple interest equates to less than 2%
- Developer will be paying for additional costs up front
- Interest is important because it offsets the developer's borrowing costs
- Calculation for the projected 200 new full time jobs created upon completion was based on the Flint City Market numbers, as it is approximately the same sized facility
- Large residential development (588 beds) will alter this area of the Township
- Board member calculation that the brownfield is approximately 7% of the total "build" cost
- Board member belief a brownfield is a means to allow the public, through taxpayer dollars, to help a private property owner engage in eligible activities to redevelop an unproductive piece of property
- With a brownfield redevelopment project, local government becomes a financial partner by providing cash to the developer over a period of years
- Benefit to the Township is that it will receive more money through a bigger tax base "down the road" through improvements to the land
- Board member belief the contamination is due to previous uses by the developer over many decades
- Board member belief that because the contamination was caused by the property owner, he is responsible for some portion of the cleanup process
- Interest amount is approximately 1% of the entire cost of the project
- Board member belief the interest amount should be borne by the developer
- Board member belief part of the brownfield process is an "outright grant"
- Board member belief the project will still go forward without the \$660,000 of interest being included
- Clarification the applicant is requesting a tax capture, not a grant
- Explanation of the tax capture process as the Township takes in future tax dollars for this project, captures the money and gives it back
- Importance of using proper terminology for clarity purposes
- If the property is not assessed at the estimated amounts contained in the brownfield plan, the recapture period would be longer
- If all phases of the development are not built, it would take longer to pay off the cost
- If there is not sufficient revenue to pay the developer back at the end of the plan, the developer bears the remaining cost
- Capture period is statutorily limited to 30 years
- None of the six (6) ICBRA approved brownfield plans in Ingham County have gone through the tax appeal process
- ICBRA has been in existence for approximately ten (10) years
- Inquiry if the statute allows for a shorter capture period irrespective of the dollar amount
- Developer will be reimbursed the maximum amount contained in the plan and if taxes come in faster than anticipated, the capture period will be shorter
- Developer will be using a phased approach for cleanup
- Cleanup of the two (2) hot spots in the central area and the dewatering will be addressed in Phase 1
- Contaminated fill for the Phase 1 buildings, mass grading, utility work, "take up" of the slab for the market and asbestos abatement will also be done in Phase 1
- Cleanup in Phase 2 will include removal of the lead based paint side off the market building and the soils
- Approved reimbursement is based on actual money spent by the developer for cleanup

- Only money spent by the developer can go into the recapture
- Feasibility of the developer going ahead with the project without the interest is based on formulas and takes the higher risk for the developer and the bank into account
- Brownfield plan has been vetted over a period of ten (10) months
- Developer will not really know the extent of the contamination until he starts digging up the ground
- Developer is improving this land to a higher and better use which fits the Township's vision and values
- Developer has worked with the Township Board for 2-½ years to create a plan which will bring a social center to this southern area of the Township
- Total amount for eligible activities cannot change, but can be switched among categories
- Projected taxable values were based on information from the Township's Assessing Department
- Lowering the tax base through a challenge at the Tax Tribunal would reduce the amount of tax revenue
- During the tax capture period and the reimbursement of the plan, the developer can establish within the development reimbursement agreement that no tax return will go back to the developer if he chooses to challenge below the base
- Developer's consultant to provide samples and citings for the aforementioned language to be included in the development reimbursement
- Board member inquiry as to how and when the interest accrues
- Developer looks at the number of years to pay off eligible activities and applies the simple interest calculation against the years from the reimbursement schedule to create an "interest pot"
- After all other activities are paid, the "interest pot" is then reimbursed
- Inquiry to staff if the amount of money under this plan is sufficient to cover costs of services (police, fire, etc.) for the duration of the capture period
- Staff to provide a response at the next Board meeting
- Projected taxable value is based on an income model which is based on rents from surrounding properties
- Both the City of East Lansing and the City of Lansing project their taxable values in the same manner
- Board member concern the developer will choose the income model calculation for the projected taxable value as the SEV will be \$14 million less
- Assessor in the taxing jurisdiction is the one who makes such a decision
- If the Assessor chose to use half of the market value, it would require a discussion with the developer as it would completely change the plan
- Board member inquiry what happens if the cleanup costs exceed the approved amount
- Developer can attempt to amend the plan by going before the Board or absorb the extra costs
- Developer went through six (6) independent investigations to avoid such a scenario
- Developer will continue to look for cost savings
- Money received by the developer is a reimbursement for actual costs incurred
- Costs must be submitted to the ICBRA for approval prior to reimbursement
- Tax Increment Financing plan is site specific
- Lansing, East Lansing, Lansing Township and Delhi Township have their own Brownfield Authority
- Possible consideration of Meridian Township establishing its own Brownfield Authority
- Meridian Township's reimbursement would be the first in Ingham County
- Possibility of the \$187,000 Local Site Remediation Revolving Fund (LSRRF) capture being negotiable
- LSRRF used to be optional and the Township could opt out
- The Township opted out of all previous brownfields which were not mandatory
- Ingham County Board adopted a policy a few years ago which created the LSRRF and, moving forward, would be a requirement for all plans
- Purpose of the LSRRF funds is to provide loans to finance items in advance of the tax capture and assist in the payment of assessment costs to be used throughout Ingham County

- LSRRF is a tool to “get these projects going”

14. FINAL PUBLIC REMARKS

Supervisor LeGoff opened Public Remarks.

Neil Bowlby, 6020 Beechwood Drive, Haslett, addressed the inclusion of language which prohibits challenge to the taxable value during the duration of the Brownfield tax capture. He inquired if the developer can challenge the taxable value once all money has been received from the Township. He reviewed comments contained in the minutes since 2008 regarding the unfunded pension liability and stated nothing surfaced until 2015 regarding the Treasurer, despite the Treasurer’s statement at the last meeting that she had expressed concern about this issue for many years.

Leonard Provencher, 5824 Buena Parkway, Haslett, indicated he would miss both Trustee Scales and Trustee Veenstra’s service on the Township Board. He indicated he is endorsing Ron Styka as Supervisor, Brett Dreyfus for Clerk and Erik Lindquist as Township Treasurer.

Supervisor LeGoff closed Public Remarks.

15. FINAL BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Treasurer Brixie reported the Pension Board met last week and evaluated the actuarial report as well as reviewed the investment results from the investment manager’s report. She stated the Pension Board continues to monitor the assumptions. Treasurer Brixie noted the Township Pension Board lowered their assumed rate of return several years ago (2012), from 7%. She also reported the Land Preservation Advisory Board (LPAB) met last week and approved continuation of the Towar Woods invasive species removal program.

Clerk Dreyfus reported his attendance at the October 6th EDC meeting, where the Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA) was discussed, including membership and outreach efforts. He noted three (3) of the four (4) businesses he contacted expressed interest by submitting an application for public service. Clerk Dreyfus added discussion ensued concerning initiatives for industrial zoned properties, the BRT, the Greater Lansing Regional Prosperity Initiative and the regional transportation study in which the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission is engaged.

Trustee Veenstra announced that during Board recess he witnessed a CATA bus, labeled Redi-Ride, waiting at the curb of the Municipal Building. He requested a report on who paid for the CATA bus, as he was concerned that CATA used taxpayer funds to bus people to tonight’s Board meeting to speak on behalf of CATA and its BRT.

Trustee Scales reported he is working towards the establishment of an Okemos Black Student Union and development of its bylaws.

Trustee Styka announced a fundraising event at Panera’s on October 26, 2016 for Meridian Township’s 175th Anniversary. He also announced Halloween activities will take place at the Harris Nature Center and the Central Fire Station On October 22nd. Trustee Styka reported the Okemos Education Foundation (OEF) is hosting its 20th anniversary celebration Awards Banquet on Thursday, November 17, 2016 beginning at 5:30 P.M. at the Kellogg Center. He indicated tickets may be purchased at www.oefsite.org or www.ronstyka.com.

Trustee Veenstra addressed a letter contained in the packet regarding the mural in Haslett.

16. ADJOURNMENT

Supervisor LeGoff adjourned the meeting at 10:18 P.M.

ELIZABETH LEGOFF
TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

BRETT DREYFUS
TOWNSHIP CLERK

Sandra K. Otto, Secretary