



2019

Annual Report

Charter Township of Meridian



Meridian Township

5151 Marsh Road
Okemos, MI 48864
517.853.4000



meridian.mi.us

TOWNSHIP BOARD MEMBERS

Ronald J. Styka, Supervisor

Brett Dreyfus, Clerk

Phil Deschaine, Treasurer

Courtney Wisinski, Trustee

Patricia Herring Jackson, Trustee

Dan Opsommer, Trustee

Kathy Ann Sundland, Trustee





To: Board Members

From: Frank L. Walsh, Township Manager

Date: January 24, 2020

Re: 2019 Annual Report

The Meridian Township Management Team is pleased to present you with the Township's 2019 Annual Report. The enclosed report of departmental activities is meant to satisfy the requirements of the Charter Township Act and provide our residents with a complete overview of 2019 operations. This report is a compilation of activities provided by each department.

Distribution of the Annual Report is limited to those individuals on boards and commissions who specifically request a copy. A copy of this report will be on file in the Clerk's Office, both libraries and posted on the Township's website at www.meridian.mi.us.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions regarding this report. We will continue our efforts in 2020 to work as a team united in spirit for the betterment of our 42,000 Township residents.

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2019

GOALS ACTION PLAN

- A. In conjunction with the Transportation Commission, and Township Board, develop and implement a strategic plan to increase our annual funding for local roads.**

- B. Complete the relocation of the Farmers' Market to the "Marketplace on the Green" at the Meridian Mall.**

- C. Break ground on redevelopment of Downtown Okemos and Downtown Haslett.**

- D. With the support of the Transportation Commission, and Township Board, finalize and implement a long term funding plan for public transportation. The plan shall include a detailed scope for Redi-Ride services.**

- E. Continue to work to connect the Township's pathway system, including construction of the Okemos Road Boardwalk.**

- F. Work closely with Meridian Mall ownership to strengthen the vitality of the mall's future within our community.**

- G. Develop a plan to fairly negotiate new labor agreements with our seven bargaining groups.**

- H. Complete state accreditation of the Meridian Township Police Department through the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police.**

- I. Continue to maximize recruiting and networking efforts to achieve increased diversity in our workforce.**

- J. Explore housing options and alternatives to encourage diverse populations and targeted groups to live in the Township.**

Meridian Township

2019 Action Plan Overview

A. In conjunction with the Transportation Commission, and Township Board, develop and implement a strategic plan to increase our annual funding for local roads.

In Meridian Township, the Ingham County Road Department (ICRD) is responsible for all road (excluding MDOT routes), and bridge maintenance and repairs. For the past several years, the ICRD has only been able to allocate approximately \$173,000 per year towards our 147 miles of local roads for pavement resurfacing. After conducting an engineering analysis, it was determined that our local road system needed annual funding of \$3.5 million to improve the roads to a Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) condition rating of 8 (“good”), within a ten year period.

Upon receiving and reviewing the analysis, the Meridian Transportation Commission recommended, and the Township Board approved, the placement of a proposal on the August 6, 2019 ballot to improve significantly the local road system. The proposal, upon approval of the voters, would provide a dedicated millage of 1.95 mills each year to support a \$35 million, ten-year bond.

Throughout the summer of 2019, Deputy Manager Perry and others, provided over 30 neighborhood association and community group meetings, to discuss facts related to the ballot proposal and the associated strategic plan. On August 6, 2019, 60% of the voters casting a ballot approved the \$35 million, ten-year local road plan.

On December 10, 2019, the Township Board and community was presented with year one of the 10 year plan. The 2020 plan will involve resurfacing work to roads that have a poor condition rating and preventative maintenance work to preserve roads so that they do not continue to deteriorate and require costlier repairs in the future.

B. Complete the relocation of the Farmers’ Market to the “Marketplace on the Green” at the Meridian Mall.

A tremendous amount of legwork has been done in preparation for the new Marketplace on the Green. The contract for construction was awarded to Gordon Construction Services for site work and the pavilion contract was awarded to Mid-States Recreation. The pavilion design/engineering is in process and once finalized, will move to the fabrication stage. Site work is scheduled to begin once we obtain a required Storm Water Permit from the Ingham County Drain Office. We have experienced difficulties in permit approval which has caused a delay in construction. Our hope is to begin site work in December with the pavilion installation in late winter. We have received proposals for play equipment and site furnishings which will be ordered before the end of 2019.

C. Break ground on redevelopment of Downtown Okemos and Downtown Haslett.

True North Development Company submitted for an MUPUD and SUP on April 23, 2019 for a full, two-block development plan west of Okemos Road on the blocks north and south of Hamilton. The Township Board approved the plans formally on July 9, 2019. True North deployed the architects

and engineers to create detailed design plans, which were then submitted to construction companies for pricing for the project. EGLE (formally MDEQ) utilized funds that were granted for the project to begin the mitigation of the source contamination from the drycleaner site. This work was completed in September 2019, as the funds needed to be spent before EGLE's fiscal year end. True North and its partners are confirming final designs for the utilities and other infrastructure needs before beginning construction in the late spring of 2020 on a mixed use project expected to house 200+ luxury residential units and more than 50,000 square feet of commercial space including the new Douglas J flagship salon and spa. A 24-month build cycle is expected with a completion date of spring 2022.

Due to a lack of activity in the Haslett PICA, Director Buck solicited the MEDC for pre-development funding for a market assessment of the broader Haslett commercial district. A grant of \$25,000 was earned and the firm of Giffels-Webster was selected to perform the study. There were two community forums held on July 24, 2019 and September 4, 2019. The result is a document that was finalized in November which clearly states the consultants assessment of the pent up demand for housing, commercial and office space usage that they feel would be welcomed and absorbed if constructed between now and 2025. The results of this study were shared with the Township Board, the Planning Commission, the property owners and prospective developers.

D. With the support of the Transportation Commission, and Township Board, finalize and implement a long term funding plan for public transportation. The plan shall include a detailed scope for Redi-Ride services.

The Capital Area Transportation Authority (CATA) has provided the Township residents with a Redi-Ride transportation service funded with a voter approved dedicated millage since 1999.

In 2019, the Meridian Township voters approved the renewal of a 5-year millage to fund the continuation of the service until 2024. The 0.1983 millage was approved by 63% of the electorate, and will generate \$360,756 in its first year.

In May of 2019, the Township and CATA revised the existing operating agreement to include: an update on the expanded operating hours, an update on the fares to reflect the new rates, the incorporation of new detailed reporting requirements to the Transportation Commission, the implementation of new scheduling and tracking software, new termination language and a commitment from CATA to include new capacity to the service.

In October, the agreement was amended to add an additional bus Monday through Friday from 1:45 to 5:00 pm and one bus on Saturday from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm upholding their commitment to the Township to add additional capacity.

E. Continue to work to connect the Township's pathway system, including construction of the Okemos Road Boardwalk.

Since 1974, the residents of Meridian Township have supported a dedicated pathway millage to fund over 70 miles of seven-foot wide sidewalk throughout the community.

As part of the Pathway Master Plan, a proposed elevated boardwalk along the east side of Okemos Road, crossing the Mud Lake Drain, has existed for several decades. The challenges of the drain, associated wetland, poor soils, frequent flooding and narrow right-of-way made the project prohibitively expensive and difficult to complete.

In 2019, the Public Works and Parks team undertook the challenge to pursue a grant that would fund the estimated \$1.3 million dollar boardwalk. With the assistance of our Ingham County partners, and the County Parks and Trails millage, the funding was successfully secured.

Design, permitting and construction inspection was overseen by the DPW Engineering Team. Construction of the quarter mile wooden boardwalk was completed in the fall of 2019. A ribbon cutting ceremony to a crowd of over 75 attendees, and walk was held on November 4, 2019.

F. Work closely with Meridian Mall ownership to strengthen the vitality of the mall's future within our community.

On February 18, 2019, Launch Trampoline Park opened its doors in nearly 30,000 square feet of the former Gordman's space welcoming a new entertainment option not only for mall shoppers, but as a regional destination. On May 22, 2019, there was a ground breaking ceremony for the Marketplace on the Green, the new farmer's market location. This regional gem will provide ample parking, safe crossing to Central Park - complete with enhanced wayfinding, improved trail system, dog parks, access to Nancy Moore Park and the long awaited "Campus to Lake Lansing" spur of the Lansing River Trail. Not to take away from Launch, High Caliber Karting and Entertainment (HCK) hosted a VIP "soft" opening on August 30, 2019 and a full grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony on September 20, 2019. HCK is located in the former single-story Younkers site comprised of nearly 80,000 square feet. They feature indoor go-karts, axe throwing, pocket soccer, video games, meeting rooms and a full bistro. Located adjacent to Launch Trampoline Park, facing the Marketplace on the Green, the south side of the mall has become the regions premier entertainment district. Director Buck is deeply engaged with CBL Properties, the owners of Meridian Mall, and everything from new restaurants, housing, office space, hotel and convention center have been discussed and there is reason to believe that one or more of these uses could be proposed on the mall campus in 2020.

G. Develop a plan to fairly negotiate new labor agreements with our seven bargaining groups.

Meridian Township has seven bargaining groups including the Administrative Professionals, Supervisory Professionals, Non-Supervisory Professionals, Department of Public Works, Meridian Township Firefighters Association, Meridian Township Police Supervisory Unit and Meridian Township Police Officers. Township Collective Bargaining Team members strategically evaluated township unfunded MERS liability and OPEB risks, current retirement healthcare, dental and vision coverage for Police and Fire units, comparable wages, annual percentage increases for comparable cities and townships, cost of living, recruitment and retention, continued ability for providing a superior benefits package including no employee cost sharing for healthcare, dental or vision coverages and overall work environment conditions. There is also a willingness to look at different contract durations if proven beneficial to both sides. To date, we have settled four of the seven collective bargaining agreements.

H. Complete state accreditation of the Meridian Township Police Department through the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police.

A preliminary accreditation assessment was conducted by outside assessors on September 24, 2019. We will have our final assessment for accreditation on December 9-10, 2019. Once the final assessment is complete, a report will be submitted to the Michigan Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission for review. If the Commission awards our Department accreditation, we will receive accreditation at the February 6, 2020 Commission meeting that will be held at the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police mid-winter conference.

I. Continue to maximize recruiting and networking efforts to achieve increased diversity in our workforce.

Meridian Township as a whole, continues to be represented by Human Resources at the highly recognized and attended MSU sponsored Diversity Career Fair and Lansing Community College

(LCC) Career Fairs. Other primary efforts focused on employee referrals, personalized networking in the community and ongoing outreach through the highest viewed job sites through our on-line application process and social media accounts connected to our Township website. Current employment numbers for the 2019 Bureau of Labor Statistics, Department of Labor, show our utilization as 34% females and 12% minority representation. Equal Employment Opportunity reports generated from voluntary submission for the on-line application system show 824 applicants thus far in 2019 with a 20% minority application rate.

J. Explore housing options and alternatives to encourage diverse populations and targeted groups to live in the Township.

The Township Board in May approved an amendment to the Code of Ordinances to allow for facilities (Senior Living Community) that provide a continuity of residential occupancy and health care for seniors. The first project using the amendment is being proposed on Hannah Boulevard. The special use application for the project is expected to be submitted in early 2020. The Township Board, in September, approved a 49 unit townhouse/apartment development (Woodward Way) on Sirhal Drive that will provide housing for persons of low to moderate income. In November, a Mixed Use Planned Unit Development application was submitted for the western portion of Haslett Village Square shopping center. The proposed project (Pine Village) will include 133 apartment units for seniors. An amendment was also initiated by the Township Board to allow detached single family dwelling units as part of a multiple family development. Staff is currently working on a draft ordinance for the amendment.

ACCOUNTING AND BUDGETING



The Department of Accounting and Budgeting is responsible for all aspects of the Township's accounting system. The Department maintains the general ledger, processes outgoing payments through the accounts payable system, approves purchase orders, processes utility billing transactions, prepares and monitors the budget, coordinates the pension board meeting, coordinates grant accounting, and is the coordinating department for the annual financial audit.

Meridian Cares functions to ensure that the human infrastructure within the community remains strong and vital. To that end, the program strives to help residents by developing, coordinating, and promoting local resources.

Information, referral, or emergency assistance was provided to Township residents for various services on an as-needed basis. 1,326 requests were received and included, but were not limited to, emergency assistance for shelter, utilities, furniture, food, clothing, transportation, food baskets, or other issues. Requests for assistance came from 465 households.

Year	Number of Households Served	Funding Spent
2015	491	\$12,587
2016	488	\$9,810
2017	436	\$8,475
2018	509	\$10,589
2019	465	\$16,855

2019 DEPARTMENT GOALS AND ACTION PLAN

Work with Invoice Cloud to Implement the Online Payment System

Invoice cloud is up and running for both Utility Billing and Tax. As of December 31st, we have had 8,920 payments processed through the system totaling \$3,579,335. There are 1,922 residents signed up for paperless and 1,513 signed up for auto pay. We will continue to see these numbers climb as we transition people off the old system and as we see the payments for the winter taxes start to come into the system.

Implement GASB 84 Fiduciary Activities

Finance will be working on identifying and moving accounts to comply with this new GASB. This will be done as part of the year-end audit.

Implement New Chart of Accounts from MI Treasury

The State of Michigan has changed the implementation of this new chart of account. They have set a new date of December 2021 for this implementation. The State of Michigan is encouraging early implementation. We will look at this for a 2020 goal.

Review and Update Purchasing Policy

Finance will be working with the new Purchasing Coordinator to update this policy. We have extended an offer to a talented candidate and he will be starting in January 2020.

Adopt the 2020 budget

The budget was approved by the Township Board on September 17, 2019.

Prepare the 2018 Audit

The audit has been completed and presented to the Township Board. We received a clean audit.

TEAM MEMBERS

Miriam Mattison, Director
Bernie Faulkner, Bookkeeper
Deanne Muliatt, Bookkeeper
Danielle Hughes, Bookkeeper
Tom Warner, Accountant

Darla Jackson, Human Services Specialist

ADMINISTRATION



The Township Manager works directly with the Township Board and the various departments of Meridian Township. The Manager is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of the Township, budget preparation and administration, human resources, public service, public safety, public works, parks and recreation, and community relations. The Department Directors report directly to the Township Manager.

Numerous activities and projects were accomplished in 2019 under the leadership of the Township Manager's office:

- Coordinated the 2019 Goals and Objectives process
- Continued to seek opportunities to reduce overall operating costs
- Development and oversight of the Township's 2020 Budget
- Continued the efforts to enhance economic development in the Township
- Created a diversity and inclusion strategy supported by leadership and employee involvement to maintain a well-rounded workforce
- Attended the monthly meetings of the Okemos Downtown Development Authority and the Economic Development Corporation
- Continued our collective efforts to foster an environment that is welcoming, diverse and inclusive
- Facilitated neighborhood development discussions with Bennett Road and Coppercreek
- Prepared for the 2020 Census
- Approved a \$35 million, 10 year local road plan
- Completed the Okemos Road Boardwalk
- Implemented landscaping around the Township's first solar array
- Held groundbreaking for the new Township Farmers' Market

TEAM MEMBERS

Frank L. Walsh, Township Manager
Derek N. Perry, Deputy Township Manager/Director of Public Works & Engineering
Michelle Prinz, Executive Assistant

ASSESSING

The Assessing Department is responsible for establishing assessments of taxable property for the equitable distribution of the property tax burden in accordance with Michigan's General Property Tax Act and other applicable statutes. The Assessing Department's responsibilities include creating the annual assessment roll, maintaining ownership records and property descriptions for taxing purposes, processing Personal Property Statements and personal property exemption requests, and inspecting existing property and new construction for property tax purposes. Taxable values established by the Assessing Department annually are used by the Township Treasurer to produce property tax bills for property within the Township.

2019 TOP TEN TAXPAYERS

2019 TOP TEN TAXPAYERS (BY TAXABLE VALUE)					
RANK	TAXPAYER	PROPERTY TYPE	REAL PROPERTY TAXABLE VALUE	PERSONAL PROPERTY TAXABLE VALUE	TOTAL TAXABLE VALUE
1	CONSUMERS ENERGY COMPANY	UTILITY	\$977,006	\$25,540,300	\$26,517,306
2	MERIDIAN MALL, LP	RETAIL	\$21,608,351	\$509,500	\$22,117,851
3	C150 2929 HANNAH LOFTS, LLC	APARTMENTS	\$21,500,995	\$0	\$21,500,995
4	EAST LANSING I, LLC	APARTMENTS	\$14,427,514	\$0	\$14,427,514
5	EAST LANSING ATHLETIC CLUB, INC.	HEALTH CLUB	\$9,367,924	\$732,500	\$10,100,424
6	TEG CENTRAL, LLC	APARTMENTS	\$9,963,129	\$33,800	\$9,996,929
7	OKEMOS POINTE, LLC	APARTMENTS	\$9,298,893	\$0	\$9,298,893
8	BRANDYWINE CREEK II, LLC	APARTMENTS	\$8,730,746	\$0	\$8,730,746
9	TEG CLUB MERIDIAN, LLC	APARTMENTS	\$8,308,000	\$33,500	\$8,341,500
10	ACC OP, LLC	APARTMENTS	\$8,159,627	\$0	\$8,159,627

2019 VALUE SUMMARY

PROPERTY CLASS	PARCEL COUNT	SEV	TV
Commercial	677	460,826,400	403,817,012
Industrial	42	3,440,100	2,798,499
Residential	13,170	1,539,847,750	1,346,089,088
Personal	1,950	66,539,338	66,539,338
Exempt	340	0	0
TOTALS:	16,179	2,070,653,588	1,819,243,937

2019 DEPARTMENT GOALS AND ACTION PLAN

Defend Tax Appeals with Vigor

Currently, there are four parcels under appeal in the Entire Tribunal Division of the Michigan Tax Tribunal. Seven appeals covering eight parcels were resolved during 2019. The taxable value in contention for pending 2019 appeals is just 0.30 percent of the Township's tax base. Efforts are being made to determine which of the pending cases can be resolved without a trial and which, if any, may need to be defended at trial.

Conduct Annual Assessment/Re-Inspection of Taxable Properties

Approximately 125 residential parcels were re-inspected as part of this program in 2019. Additionally, photographs of all commercial parcels were taken and uploaded to the Township's assessment software. The project resulted in the enhanced accuracy and quality of assessing records to be used for 2020 assessments.

2019 Board of Review Members

Martha Bashore (alternate)	Diane Galbraith
Xavier Durand-Hollis	Charles Hagen (alternate)
Bertice Ellis	Sonya Pentecost
Deborah Federau	Lanny Brunette

TEAM MEMBERS

David Lee, Assessor
Jennifer Flower, Appraiser II
Angela Ryan, Assessing Clerk
Dawn Wozniak, Appraiser II

CLERK'S OFFICE



RESPONSIBILITIES AND 2019 ACTIVITY

The responsibilities of the Meridian Township Clerk are largely set by state statute and include: Election Administration – responsible for all local, state, federal and school board elections; maintaining voter registration files; serving as an officer and voting member of the Meridian Township Board; keeper of official Township records; minutes preparation for the Township Board and Zoning Board of Appeals; updating and maintaining the Code of Ordinances Book and online directory; publishing all legal notices; maintaining the Township general ledger; preparing warrants for checks; reviewing invoices & receipts, serving as Township Freedom of Information Act Coordinator; providing Notary Public services; providing an information and referral service for Township citizens, and other administrative and municipal services.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS MEMBER LISTS

The Clerk's Office maintains the member lists for all official Meridian Township Boards, Commissions, Committees, Authorities, and various public bodies. The Clerk's Office, in conjunction with our Township IT Department, developed a database that facilitates Board member review of Applications for Public Service and makes it easier to recommend applicants for public boards and commissions.

CODE OF ORDINANCES ONLINE

The Clerk's Office is responsible for the codification and publication of Township ordinances. This includes publishing all ordinances in a single binder (with copies distributed to appropriate staff and public officials), checking new ordinances for compliance with Michigan law, and completion of updates for both the full Code of Ordinances Book and the smaller zoning portion of the Ordinance Book.

A high priority of the Clerk was to transition our Codebook to a comprehensive online system that was user-friendly and easy-to-navigate. Meridian Township's ordinances can now be easily accessed through a link on the Township website. Users can enter queries using simple keyword searches and then review a list of results in a format similar to Google search results. The online codebook allows users to quickly find the ordinances they are seeking and makes it easy to print out relevant sections. The online code is updated periodically; new and changed ordinances are merged into the Ordinance Book on an annual basis.

ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

The Electronic Poll Book (EPB) is designed to automate the voter verification and ballot tracking functions carried out by election inspectors at the polls on Election Day. The application also supports the automatic uploading of voter history into the QVF (Qualified Voter File) following the election.

Michigan's Qualified Voter File (QVF) continues to be recognized around the nation for its innovative use of technology to enable efficient statewide voter registration data. The statewide file contains computerized signatures to efficiently assist in validating identity prior to issuing absentee ballots as well as other signature checking requirements. The QVF tracks voters through daily changes to Michigan's Driver License file and simultaneously transfers the information to Meridian Township where it is reviewed, verified and files updated.

The Clerk's Office registers new voters and manages address changes, cancellations, absentee ballots, overseas voting, and the issuance of voter registration cards. Other duties related to election administration include: preparation, publication and posting of all public notices, performing accuracy testing on tabulators and Voter Assistance Terminals, supervising the set-up and logistics for each polling location, providing information related to polling locations, processing ballots, transmitting election data to the County Clerk, and determining preliminary election results. Duties also involve confidential storage and disposal of ballots and other election-related materials as directed by State of Michigan statutes.

The Clerk conducted an extensive recruitment campaign to encourage a variety of citizens to become Election Inspectors. Seeking diversity in age, culture, and technology proficiency, we recruited over 25 new workers in 2019, bringing the total to over 150 Election Inspectors (election workers) that staff the polling locations in our 19 voting precincts. Our office provides several days of training for all election inspectors, including hands-on practice with the Electronic Poll Book and various election equipment.

The Clerk conducted a number of voter registration drives in the Township, including Haslett and Okemos High Schools, the Meridian campus of Lansing Community College, and a number of adult care, senior facilities, and medical rehabilitation facilities.

The Clerk conducted an outreach program to seniors in our community, educating voters on the benefits of signing up to be placed on the Meridian Township Permanent Absentee Voter List. All voters on the list are automatically mailed an Application for Absentee Voter Ballot before every election. A postcard was mailed to all seniors that were registered voters, and a response card was attached that citizens could mail back to be placed on the list. As a result of the outreach program, the Permanent Absentee Voter List nearly doubled – from 3,200 to over 6,200 voters.

In 2019 the Clerk's Office began implementing the changes resulting from passage of Proposition 3 in November 2018. No-reason absentee voting – also called Early Voting – has been implemented in Meridian Township, along with the opportunity for all voters to be placed on the Permanent Absentee Voter List. Additionally, voter registration has been extended from 30 days prior to an election (previous state law), to registration until 8pm on Election Day.

The use of Absentee Ballot Counting Boards (AVCB) is now a critical component of ballot processing during elections. The AVCB greatly improves efficiency in handling and processing absentee ballots during high-turnout elections, while maintaining strict privacy and security protocols to preserve the integrity of the secret ballot. Because absentee ballots are no longer processed at precincts on Election Day, Election Inspectors at voting locations are freed up from having to handle and process AV ballots, resulting in voters spending less time in line. In 2019, more than 50% of voters used Absentee Ballots

in the August election.

A more powerful high-speed tabulator that can better handle folded ballot stock was purchased to address the increasing number of absentee ballots. It has considerably improved AV ballot tabulation, with much fewer paper jams and ballot-reading errors than the previous tabulator used to process absentee ballots.

2019 ELECTIONS CONDUCTED IN MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP

May 7, 2019 Special Election

Okemos Public Schools Bonding Proposal

Election Results

4,236 votes cast (18,303 Okemos voters) → 23% voter turnout

YES: 3,082 NO: 1,148

Bond approved

August 6, 2019 Election

1. Meridian Township Street Improvement Bond Proposal

Election Results

7,134 votes cast (31,106 voters) → 23% voter turnout

YES: 4,250 NO: 2,866

Bond approved

2. Meridian Township Redi-Ride Millage Renewal

Election Results

7,134 votes cast (31,106 voters) → 23% voter turnout

YES: 4,487 NO: 2,622

Millage renewal approved

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (FOIA) COORDINATOR

The Clerk is the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Coordinator for Meridian Township.

The purpose of the Freedom of Information Act (Public Act 442 of 1976) is to allow citizens access to information about the priorities, deliberations, and decisions made by their government. The FOIA supports full disclosure of certain public records, unless a statutory exemption allows an agency or unit of government to deny disclosure. The Act details specific actions and timetables that public bodies must follow in order to remain in compliance.

Under sweeping changes in FOIA law enacted by the State legislature in 2015, the Clerk was responsible for writing and disseminating new, comprehensive Township FOIA policies which were compliant with new State of Michigan policies. The Township Board adopted the FOIA Procedures & Guidelines presented by the Clerk, which went into effect July 1, 2015. All Meridian Township FOIA forms and documents are available on the Township website and at the Township Municipal Building.

The Clerk's Office responded to fifty-six (56) FOIA requests during 2019. The Police Department handles their FOIAs on their own, separately from other Township Departments.

LEGAL NOTICES AND POSTING OF OFFICIAL TOWNSHIP MEETINGS

Numerous legal and public notices, advising residents of upcoming meeting dates, agendas, information for public hearings, proposed resolutions, and ordinance changes were published or

posted during 2019.

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS CONTACT LIST

The Clerk's Office maintains a list of Neighborhood Associations that contains contact names, addresses, and phone numbers. This list is very useful to residents, business owners, township staff, public officials and others who may need to reach out to homeowners throughout our community. The list was updated and "scrubbed" for duplication and out-of-date information, including identifying condominium and homeowner associations in new developments.

NOTARY SERVICE

The Clerk's Office has Notary Public service available to residents. By the end of 2019, all members of the Clerk's Office have served the public as qualified Notary Publics, providing numerous citizens with notary services at no cost. Banks no longer provide this necessary service, and they typically refer their customers to the Meridian Township Clerk's Office for notary services.

PETITION SIGNATURE VALIDATION PROCESS

The Clerk's Office carries the responsibility to verify and validate petition signatures received for school board candidates, all local candidates for public office, as well as, periodic referendum and annexation petitions.

TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING PACKETS & MINUTES/COMMUNICATION

The Clerk's Office coordinates the preparation and distribution of Township Board Meeting packets twice per month on the Friday before meetings, and for Special Board meetings as well. Township Board meetings are recorded and minutes prepared by the Clerk's staff. The Clerk's Office also digitizes the Board packet and uploads the document to the Township website to make them available to the public. The Clerk worked to add oversized documents (such as building site plans and blueprints) to the Meridian Township website so citizens could access all relevant documents used by the Board in its deliberations. The Clerk's Office is responsible for handling communications to the Board from various stakeholders.

TOWNSHIP CEMETERY OVERSIGHT

There were 18 lot sales and 28 burials during 2019. The Clerk's Office responds to genealogical inquiries by referencing the original 11" x 18" leather bound books used to track cemetery records.

TOWNSHIP MAIL SERVICE

The Clerk's Office processes incoming mail and distributes it to appropriate departments. The Clerk's Office works with the U.S. Postal Service to ensure each department is using the most cost-effective method for all mailings. The Clerk's Office utilizes a state-of-the-art mail processing system that provides additional digital features with more accurate scale functions, resulting in faster throughput, lower costs and increased efficiency.

TOWNSHIP RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Evaluation of our record keeping needs, status, priorities, retention periods, and storage options (both paper and electronic) is an ongoing process. Each year the Clerk's Office reviews and updates record management procedures. We have placed emphasis on continually building efforts to permanently preserve records as well as increase the efficiency through which records may be retrieved. Some voter records are now digitally scanned and stored, freeing up valuable space and allowing faster voter data retrieval.

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Clerk's Office staff records and prepares the minutes for Zoning Board of Appeals meetings.

CLERK'S ACTIVITIES

- Chair of the Meridian Township Election Commission
- Election Official for Haslett and Okemos Schools
- Member of Tri-County Region Planning Commission: Urban & Rural Services Management Committee
- Member of Regional Groundwater Management Board
- Member, Capital Area Municipal Clerks Association
- Member, Michigan Association of Municipal Clerks

In 2015, the Township Clerk graduated from a comprehensive three (3) year training program and attained the designation of Certified Michigan Municipal Clerk (CMMC). Instruction for the official Clerk certification program is provided by Central Michigan University in partnership with the Michigan Association of Municipal Clerks.

TEAM MEMBERS

Brett Dreyfus, Township Clerk, CMMC (Certified Michigan Municipal Clerk)

Robert Cwierniewicz, Deputy Clerk and Assistant to the Clerk

Daria Forbes, Administrative Assistant II

Rebekah Kelly, Records Technician II

COMMUNICATIONS



The highest priority of the Communications Department is to provide residents with an increased access to transparency in governance with relevant information in a timely fashion. The Department is responsible for coordinating a strategic and comprehensive effort to inform the public of the Township's goals, plans, activities and events through various multimedia platforms including web, digital and print. The Department oversees, creates and coordinates the writing, publication and production of all communication products – printed materials, photos/videos, website and social media postings generated from the Township. The Department ensures that all media and communications successfully reaches their intended audience. Other main functions of the Communications Department includes serving as the Local Franchise Authority for nine Public, Educational and Governmental (PEG) Channels in Meridian Township, overseeing the operations and production for HOMETV (Government Access Channel) and CAMTV (Public Access Channel), operating a multimedia television internship training program and providing staff support to the Township's Communications Commission.

2019 DEPARTMENT GOALS AND ACTION PLAN

Continue CSC Communication Efforts

These efforts were continued in 2019 through social media, programming and the website.

Website Enhancements

Major enhancements to the website in 2019 included recreating the project section, creating a new marijuana section, redesigning the layout for park pages, updating information for individual parks, creating a section for redevelopment, reconfiguring navigation links, reconfiguring the resident section and creating layouts for every mobile page. With the restructuring of the Communications Department, additional staff were trained on how to create news items, share news items on social media, archive digital newsletters, create meetings and events, retrieve documents and properly replace documents.

Create/Find Additional HOMETV Revenue Sources

Additional revenue sources included contractual agreements for programming, launching the Alumni Giving Program and hosting a summer kids' camp. Staff looks to create a marketing plan for the Alumni Giving Program in 2020 that includes involvement by the Commission. They also seek to continue offering the Summer Kids Camp.

Develop HOMETV Video Archive System & Integrate in to Current System

The archiving system has moved forward this year with the digitization of approximately 300-500 hundred hours of historical programming. Part of the importance of this process is to tag footage with information about it that makes the files searchable by location, topics, people or show name, rather than just a filename. Interns and staff have been working on reviewing footage, tagging and organizing so that this footage is in a logical order and follows the

production manager's structure, and that all current and future files and information follow this same structure for organization.

Repair and Update Intern & Alumni Access Database

The Intern and Alumni Database has a new design layout, which will allow for a more efficient workflow during the exit interview process. The next steps will include transferring the paper records to digital records and reconfiguring some of the database queries. This will assist with the Alumni Giving Program that the Communications Commission approved and supports.

Develop Township Visitor's Guide

Director Guthrie worked with Graphic Designer Lynn Meikle to create the framework for a Visitor Guide size, ad space, costs and layout. Given the careful time taken in restructuring the department, the Communications team put the visitor guide on hold. With reduced staff, it may be more difficult for the Communications Department to take this project on, but this could be something the Township may wish to work with the EDC, or hire a marketing firm to accomplish. The framework is in place if the Township desires to publish a Visitor Guide.

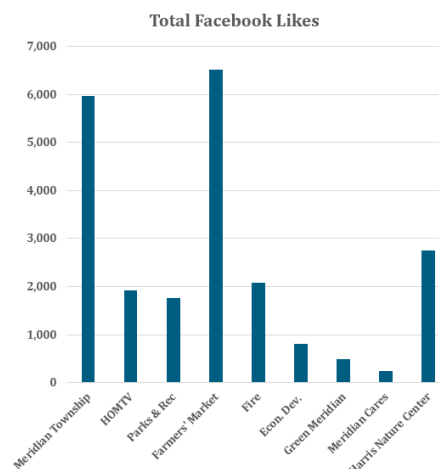
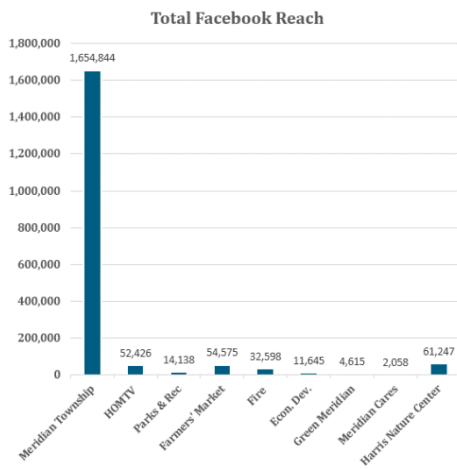
Branded Meridian Signage

Director Guthrie led efforts with the sign committee to create a proposed plan of action for internal and external signage, wayfinding, directional and entryway signage and corridor signs. She conducted an internal audit of needed signage in each area. She worked with Graphic Designer Lynn Meikle and Johnson Signs on proposed signage. The back-end elements are complete and the elements are in place, ready to move forward once a budget presents itself.

Digital/Print Analytics

The Communications Department oversees the content development and engagement of 25 different social media accounts across multiple platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Flickr, YouTube and Nextdoor. The Township was added to Nextdoor as an agency in June 2019. Nextdoor is a communications platform that allows neighborhoods to connect and have conversations. The platform allows the Township to post messages to specific neighborhoods and then verified residents will automatically receive the updates.

In 2019, staff evaluated the Michigan Economic Development Facebook page and made the decision to fade out the page. Future postings and shares were made on the Township Facebook page. The Meridian Cares and Green Meridian Facebook pages were also evaluated, and based on the engagement, reach and followers, these pages will not move forward into 2020. All postings and shares will be made on the Township Facebook page.

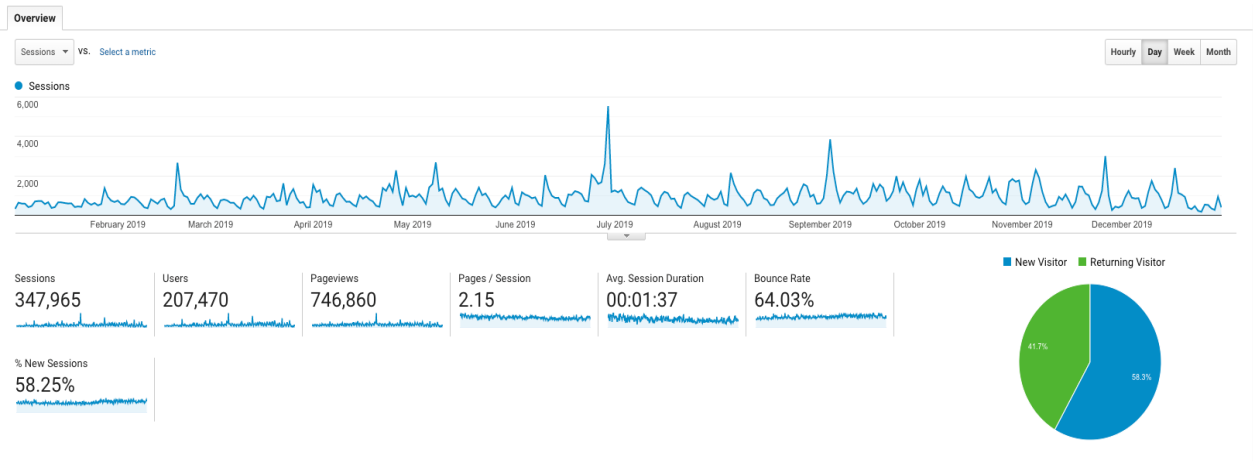


In 2019, staff began live streaming Township meetings on HOMTV’s Facebook page and additional videos were posted to the various social media accounts. On Facebook, over 116,000 minutes of video were viewed and nearly 200,000, 3-seconds of video were viewed. These results show that our audience is engaged with the content that is being shared and also, how important social video sharing is for relaying information to the community.

Staff created various print publications, including three editions of the Prime Meridian Magazine, six Senior Center Newsletters and weekly Township digital newsletters. In September 2019, staff redesigned the Township weekly digital newsletters to include HOMTV and the Farmers’ Market rather than offering separate newsletters. Marketing materials such as flyers, programs, brochures, logos, posters, signage, website and social graphics were created for Township events, activities, ribbon cuttings, groundbreakings and social campaigns.

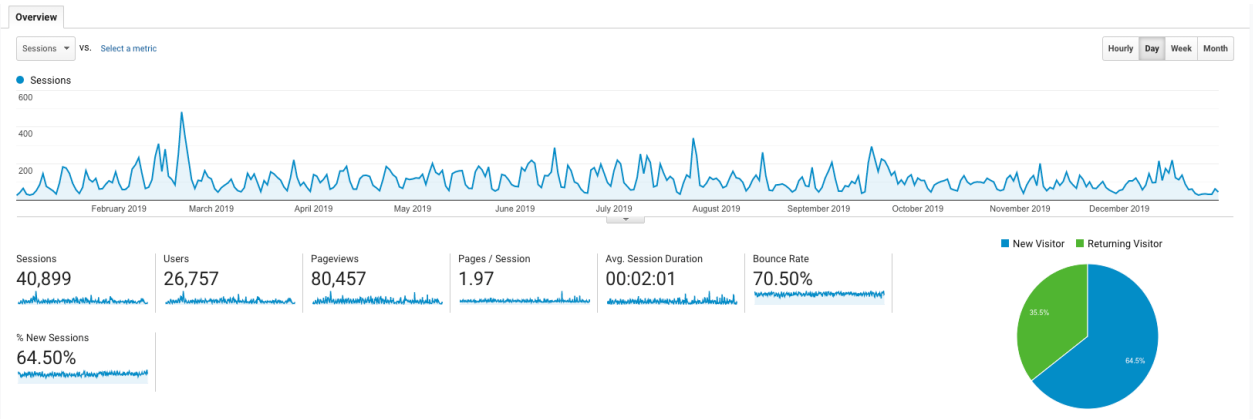
Meridian Township Website Traffic 2019

The Meridian Township website experienced increased traffic with 746,860 page views from 207,470 visitors. 58.3% are new visitors, which shows that over half of the website traffic are new people discovering the website and utilizing the information presented on it.



HOMTV Website Traffic 2019

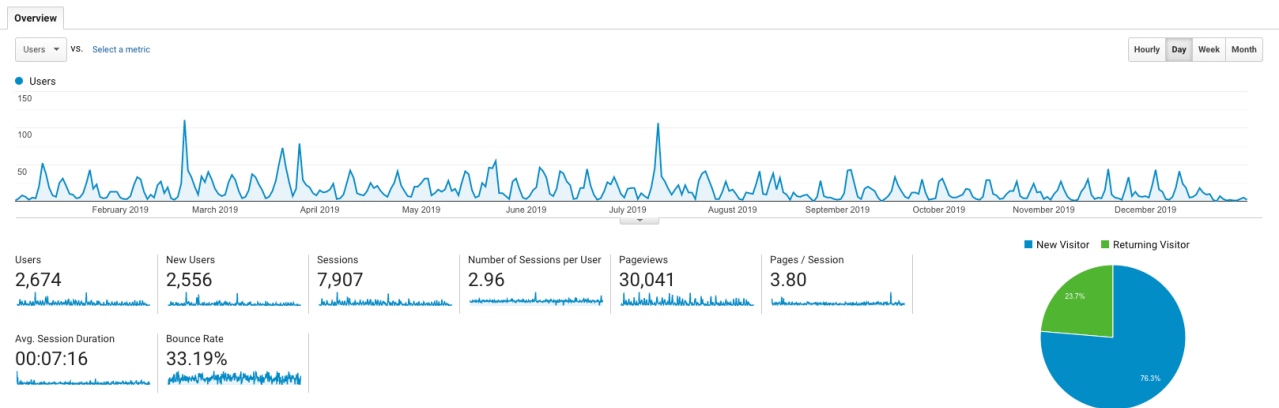
HOMTV.net statistics for 2019 show a total of 80,457 views to the website, coming from 26,757 visitors on the site, in which 64.5% of those visitors are new. This shows that people are seeing stories on social media or other sources and visiting the website to see additional information, reading articles and watching programs.



HOMTV Video On-Demand Traffic 2019

Video On-Demand had 30,041 page views from 5,230 visitors, of which 76.3% are new visitors

to the HOMTV website showing a positive trend that new people are discovering and watching HOMTV's programming online.



HOMTV Programming

To better serve the diverse cultures in the community, HOMTV began incorporating bilingual newscasts as part of the 2019 program lineup. A weekly Mandarin version of the “Meridian News Now” program began airing in February 2019. This program is expected to continue in 2020. In 2019, HOMTV aired a total of 234 regular programs, 75 live Township meetings, 60 PSA’s and 82 social media videos. A new switcher was installed at the end of 2019, due to the old equipment experiencing technical difficulties during Township meeting coverage. The new equipment has streamlined production processes and allows for multiple source streaming and additional production capabilities.

HOMTV Internship Program

Thirty-nine (39) interns participated in HOMTV’s multimedia television internship program with a total of seven paid interns and freelance employees. The interns contributed approximately 13,385 hours, produced more than 600 stories and promo/PSAs, covered approximately 50 Township events and served as crew, as well as, on-air talent for 234 programs and 75 Township meetings.

Awards

HOMTV received an Alliance for Community Media (ACM) 1st place national award for “Overall Excellence in Governmental Access Programming”. HOMTV received an “Award of Honor” for “2018 General Election Night Coverage” in the Election Coverage Category in the 2019 National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA) Government Programming National Awards Competition. HOMTV also received “Finalist Awards” from ACM’s Central States Region 2019 Philo Festival of Media Arts Competition in the Overall Excellence Access TV Category as well as the Health Category for “Open Line – Opioid Crisis”.

MEMBERS OF THE CABLE COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION IN 2019

Walter Benenson, Chair
Tunga Kiyak, Vice Chair
Leslie Charles, Commissioner
Mike Nevells, Commissioner
Brian Seipel, Commissioner
Kevin Thatcher, Alternate Commissioner
Riti Adhi, Alternate Commissioner

TEAM MEMBERS

Deborah Guthrie, Communications Director/Public Information Officer
Brandie Yates, HOMTV Executive Producer/Internship Coordinator
Andrea Smiley, Administrative Assistant II
Roy Kellerman, Studio TV Production Manager
Ben Makulski, Video Programmer
Erin Cornett, Part-Time Social Media Specialist (Resigned May 2019)
Lingfanglu Han, Temporary Part-Time Social Media Specialist (Hired June-December 2019)
Lynn Meikle, Freelance Media/Print Publications/Graphics

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT



During 2019, the Department of Community Planning and Development continued to provide quality service to the community related to permit applications, zoning updates, building inspections, code enforcement, and rental housing. In addition to working closely with Township residents, business owners and leaders on a day-to-day basis, staff provided ongoing services to various Boards, Commissions, and Committees, including the following:

- ✓ Township Board
- ✓ Planning Commission
- ✓ Zoning Board of Appeals
- ✓ Building Board of Appeals
- ✓ Environmental Commission
- ✓ Transportation Commission
- ✓ Brownfield Redevelopment Authority

2019 DEPARTMENT GOALS AND ACTION PLAN

Consider Adoption of Form Base Code in Portions of the Township

The Planning Commission has been working on Form Based Code for the properties along Grand River Avenue from Brookfield Drive to Park Lake Road. Form Based Code, which emphasizes the design and placement of buildings to create a more walkable and pedestrian-friendly development, will replace traditional zoning along the corridor.

Complete a Plan for the Review and Update of the Master Plan in 2020

The Planning Commission has reviewed a list of potential updates to the Future Land Use Map and will be considering if any other amendments are desired in 2020. Amendments to the Future Land Use Map will be proposed in 2020 as part of the overall Master Plan update process.

Update and Amend the Mixed Use Planned Unit Development Ordinance

The Planning Commission had several meetings devoted to updating the Mixed Use Planned Unit Development ordinance. Issues discussed included the amount of commercial space vs. the number of residential units, establishing a minimum square footage of commercial space required, improving the list of amenities to be more substantial and essential elements of the development, considering the horizontal and vertical design of a building to better define what

the Township wants in development projects. Staff will continue to focus on updating the ordinance in 2020.

Revise the Sign ordinance so it is Content Neutral

Staff shared the concept of content neutral sign policy at meetings with the Planning Commission in 2019. A review of the existing sign ordinance and proposed changes to meet content neutral standards will be considered in 2020.

Finish updating all Applications used by the Department

The rental housing application has been modified and a section has been added to the electrical permit application with regards to outdoor lighting requirements. Updates are still needed for the applications for development projects.

Adopt 2018 International Property Maintenance Code

The Township Property Maintenance Code is based on the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC). In December, staff presented to the Township Board a proposed amendment to adopt the 2018 edition of the IPMC with Township amendments. The 2018 edition of the IPMC with Township amendments was approved for adoption in January 2020.

Evaluate the Need for an Additional Part-Time Rental Housing Inspector

After evaluating the need for an additional part-time rental housing inspector staff determined it was not necessary at this time. Staff will continue to monitor the situation.

Streamline the Scheduling of Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing Inspections

Inspectors now have access to the Township permit system, not only for scheduling inspections but also for data entry resulting from completed inspections.

Evaluate Providing Office Hours to the City of Mason for Reviewing and Issuing Building Permits

Staff has had ongoing discussions with the City of Mason’s Community Development Director. The Service Agreement with the City may need to be amended to cover the additional cost of providing the services.

Complete the Ordinances for Commercial Medical Marihuana Facilities

Non-zoning and zoning ordinances were approved by the Township Board in May. The first lottery was held in September for provisioning centers in Overlay Areas 1, 2, 5, 6, and 7. The second lottery for a provisioning center in Overlay Area 3/4 was held in October. Special use permit applications for the provisioning centers in Overlay Areas 1, 2, 5, 6, and 7 are currently under review by staff, with public hearings likely to commence in 2020.

2019 COMMISSION AND BOARD MEMBERS

(* indicates former member)

PLANNING COMMISSION

John Scott-Craig, Chair
Holly Cordill
Kenneth Lane, Vice-Chair
Gerald Richards

Scott Hendrickson
David Premoe, Secretary
Alisande Shrewsbury
Peter Trezise

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Brian Beauchine, Chair
Alexia Mansour, Vice-Chair

Phil Deschaine*
Kenneth Lane

Courtney Wisinski
Rick Shafter (Alternate)

Monique Field-Foster

TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Chris Hackbarth, Chair
Phil Deschaine
Bob Lovell
Jon Kolbasa

Tim Potter, Vice Chair
Karla Hudson
Steven Vagnozzi

BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

James E. Jackson
John Matuszak
John Scott-Craig, Chair
Jade Sims

Joyce Van Coevering
Frank L. Walsh
Jeff Theuer, Vice Chair

TEAM MEMBERS

Mark Kieselbach, Director of Community Planning and Development
Debbie Budzynski, Administrative Assistant II
Silva Brownlee, Administrative Assistant I
Peter Menser, Principal Planner
Justin Quagliata, Assistant Planner
Mackenzie Dean, Assistant Planner
John Heckaman, Chief Building Inspector
Ron Rau, Building Inspector
John Martin, Building Inspector
Frank Christmas, Rental Housing Inspector
Kevin Reed, Rental Housing Inspector
Joe Wade, Code Enforcement Officer

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Village of Okemos Rendering

The Economic Development Department is designed to implement many aspects of the Township Master Plan. The Township is committed to building a sustainable and vibrant community where businesses thrive and residents have a variety of local shopping, dining and housing options.

The Meridian Township Economic Development team is here to help with starting or expanding your business, providing feedback on a development project and engaging with residents, business owners and land owners on new ideas.

The Economic Development Director works closely with the Township business-related volunteer boards & commissions: the Downtown Development Authority, the Economic Development Corporation, the Corridor Improvement Authority and assists the Planning Department with the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority.

2019 DEPARTMENT GOALS AND ACTION PLAN

Formally Engage Haslett Village Square Project in the Approval Process

Cypress Partners approached the Township in March 2019 with a desire to build a modern 55+ housing complex. Director Buck facilitated a driving tour which included the Haslett Village Square. On November 19, 2019 the Township received a site plan and MUPUD project on 9.6 acres of the Haslett Village Square. The public hearing occurred at the Planning Commission on December 16, 2019, and a recommendation to approve occurred on January 13, 2020. The Township Board will review the project throughout February and March of 2020. These nearly ten acres are a part of over 28 acres that make up the Haslett Village Square. Another 16.5 acres is actively being marketed for development projects, leaving approximately 2.5 acres for a final phase of the complete redevelopment of this underutilized space within the Haslett PICA, as defined by our 2017 Master

Plan. Director Buck believes strongly that once these three phases are complete, the Haslett Village Square will be very similar to what was outlined in the Master Plan.

Online Database for the Township Business Community

With the help of Executive Assistant Michelle Prinz, Director Buck implemented a free version of the software Hubspot. Contact information for businesses in the Township that staff has amassed over the years is currently loaded. Each business can be filtered by geographic location or by industry type. There is still some data entry to complete and more businesses to be added, but once that is done access will be shared with department directors.

Series of Educational Presentations on Population and Housing Needs for the Township Resulting in a Generally understood Direction for the Planning Commission and Township Board to Lead the Development Community. Amendment to the Master Plan?

Director Buck has attended numerous seminars and has read dozens of articles in an effort to educate himself on the housing stock that is becoming more popular around the country and in Mid-Michigan. He has advocated for projects that meet these criteria and has shared some content with members of the Planning Commission and Township Board in both formal and informal settings. When it is time for a Master Plan update, Director Buck will have plenty of information to share.

Form Based Code, Deeper MUPUD Revision and/or Creation of the MFPUD (multi-family without need for commercial). Consider Adopting Small Square Footage Minimums for Single Family and Apartments for Micro-Unit Abilities

Form Based Code has been the primary focus in 2019 and Director Buck has engaged with the Planning Division in its many work sessions and full meetings to approve a draft for a public hearing and recommendation to the Township Board, slated for the first quarter of 2020. It is Director Buck's opinion that if/when Form Based Code is adopted, a decision will need to be made as to whether implementing it on more districts is the solution, or if further MUPUD or possible MFPUD is the best move-forward plan.

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Susan Fulk, Chair
Peter Campbell
Bill Cawood
Renee Korrey, Vice-Chair
Ronald J. Styka, Township Supervisor

James Spanos, Secretary/Treasurer
Will Randle
Scott Weaver
James Raynak

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Jade Sims, Chair
Phil Deschaine, Township Treasurer, Ex-Officio
Kathy Sundland, Township Board Liaison
Frank L. Walsh, Township Manager
Shawn Dunham
Brenda Chapman

Dave Ledebuhr
Kim Thompson, Vice-Chair
Tom Conway
Adam Carlson
Joel Conn
Mikhail Murshak

CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY

Chris Nugent,
Ron Styka, Township Supervisor

Kellie Johnson
Bruce Peffers

Barry Goetz
Jeff Ross, Chair
Eric Foster, Vice-Chair

Chris Rigterink
Brian Jones

TEAM MEMBERS

Chris Buck, Economic Development Director
Michelle Prinz, Executive Assistant

EMS/FIRE



Serving our community with Pride, Integrity and Professionalism since 1929.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to provide efficient, dependable, and professional services to the citizens of Meridian Township. Our values are to educate and to provide caring, compassionate service with excellence and dignity. Our vision is to exceed the expectations of the community by proactively responding to the established priorities and needs.

Following the mission, MTFD has developed into a multi-faceted department responsible for providing a wide range of emergency and non-emergency services. Being a “Full Service Department,” MTFD supports Meridian Township by providing emergency response to all phases of emergencies. Being the second busiest department in Ingham County, MTFD responds to an average of 4,680 emergencies annually.

The Meridian Township Fire Department organizational structure consists of 36 personnel. Fire Suppression has 32 firefighters/paramedics and administrative staff includes the Fire Chief, Administrative Assistant, EMS/Training Chief, and the Fire Inspector.

- Administration
 - Chief
 - Administrative Assistant II
 - Training/EMS Chief
 - Fire Inspector
 - Safety Inspections
 - Fire Prevention Education
- Fire Inspector
 - Arson Investigation
 - Plan Review
- Training
 - Provides EMS, fire safety and fire prevention and other safety education to Township employees and the community.

- Provides superior and proactive training to the members of the MTFD to develop and retain a staff of 32 full time employee
- Suppression
 - Provides quick response and action to reduce or eliminate real or perceived emergencies.
 - Emergency Medical Calls
 - Structure Fires
 - Vehicle Extrications
 - Water & Ice Rescue
 - Hazardous Materials
 - Building Inspections
 - Public Education
 - Technical Rescue
 - Rope Rescue
 - Trench Rescue
 - Collapse Rescue
 - Confined Space Rescue

Since 2012, the Metro Lansing Fire Shared Services Initiative, consisting of Delta, Delhi, Lansing, and Meridian Townships as well as the cities of Lansing and East Lansing, have worked jointly for the protection of citizens and the safety of firefighters. Together the following joint efforts were instituted:

- Metro Shared Services Committee
- Metro Training Consortium
- Ingham 911 Advisory Committee
- Ingham County Chiefs Committee
- Metro Technical Rescue Team
- Metro Hazmat Response Team
- Metro Arson Investigation Team
- Metro AVI Response Team
- Ingham County Office of Emergency Management
- Automatic Aid for Structure fires from East Lansing and Williamston (NIESA) Fire Department
- Automatic Aid on I-96 Extrication with Delhi, Mason, Williamston and East Lansing
- Automatic Aid into Alaiedon Township with Mason and Delhi Township Fire Departments
- Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) Ingham County Program Director

Meridian Township Fire Department, working with Delhi Township, NIESA (Williamston), and Mason established Automatic Aid for fire response to vehicle accidents and medical emergencies on I-96 and US-127 in 2019. This adds to the existing 2018 auto aid agreements for structure fires. Ultimately, these agreements support a safe response with the correct number of personnel to meet NFPA minimum response standards to protect the safety of firefighters.

Firefighter/paramedics responded to 261 chest pains of which 16 of these resulted in cardiac arrests. The national survival rate for cardiac arrest is 4 to 16%. MTFD firefighter/paramedics were able to save three patients (18%) from cardiac arrest all of whom are alive today. Today cardiac arrest survival is increasing due to more bystander CPR, advances in technology, staffing levels, and quicker paramedic response times.

Fire Prevention completed 71 plan reviews of construction projects, 412 fire inspections, 21 fire alarm inspections, 17 fire sprinkler inspections, and 6 commercial hood inspections. Twelve fire investigations were completed in the year including two as part of mutual aid with neighboring municipalities. The annual Fire Prevention Open House was held on Saturday, October 12th. It is estimated nearly 300 people attended the event where they were able to tour the fire trucks and

ambulances, participate in fire safety drills in the smoke trailer, watch a car cutting demonstration, and learn about how fire and smoke moves throughout a building

In 2019, the Meridian Township Fire Department demonstrated it continues to be a leader in the State through its many accomplishments. Over the past 10 years, MTFD has seen an overall increase of 33% (4% annually) in its call volume. This includes a 107% increase in fire and 21% increase in EMS incidents over the same time (see Table 1). This increase correlates with population growth, Medicare and Medicaid changes, the Affordable Care Act, a decreased number of primary care physicians, an aging population, availability of mental health, the Opioid epidemic, and access to preventative care. These issues affect the fire service throughout the United States.

Since the 2010 Census, the Township has grown in population by approximately 7.5 % with the US Census estimating Meridian Township at 42,636 as of July 1, 2018. This increase has been a direct result of decreased populations of cities and increased populations of townships. “A Prime Community”, Meridian Township is expected to have significant population increases as it continues to attract new residents and businesses. There are many proposed developments over the next five years with a potential population growth of 5 to 15%.

2019 DEPARTMENT GOALS AND ACTION PLAN

Installed 1,250 Combination Smoke/CO Alarms as part of the FEMA grant

In 2017, the Fire Department received a FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant to install 2,500 combination smoke and carbon monoxide alarms in resident homes. This grant, awarded over a two-year period, afforded the fire department the ability to install 2,514 detectors in 617 homes. Knowing that smoke and carbon monoxide detectors save lives, this project supports the safety of the residents of Meridian Township.

Outdoor Warning Sirens

The Meridian Township Fire Department, with support of the Township Board, has committed to a multi-year plan to install outdoor warning sirens for the protection of its citizens. This year, a new siren was installed on Dobie Road near Kinawa Drive. Being six years out from expected project completion, there are currently eight sirens in the Township with an additional seven more installations planned.

Fire Department Safety Equipment

Maintaining a strong budget is important to stay fiscally smart while evaluating the operation of the Fire Department. All equipment used by the Meridian Township Fire Department is evaluated annually for life safety and life expectancy based on national standards.

As MTFD's five-year plan is updated annually, it includes replacement schedules supporting NFPA 1971 and MISOHA Part 74 for Personal Protective Equipment such as structural firefighting clothing, saws, hose, SCBA, tools and more.

This year the department was able to meet equipment needs by purchasing structural firefighting suits, hose, saws, tools, a positive pressure fan, self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) cylinders, medical cots, and new computers.

New Ambulance

A Braun custom ambulance was ordered and placed into frontline service in July. Staffing three Advanced Life Support ambulances 24/7 supports 81% of all emergency responses.

Table 1: 10 Year Incident Count			
Year	Fire Incidents	EMS Incidents	Total Incidents
2010	588	3,490	4,078
2011	532	3,711	4,243
2012	600	3,847	4,447
2013	737	3,619	4,356
2014	714	3,683	4,397
2015	623	3,884	4,507
2016	925	4,028	4,953
2017	1,181	3,988	5,169
2018	991	4,226	5,217
2019	1,217	4,220	5,437

Table 2: Confirmed Fire Responses (Incident Type)	
Fire, other	1
Building fire	33
Fires in structures other than in a building	1
Cooking fire, confined to container	27
Chimney or flue fire, confined to chimney or flue	2
Trash or rubbish fire, contained	4
Passenger vehicle fire	11
Natural vegetation fire, other	2
Brush, or brush and grass mixture fire	6
Grass fire	1
Outside rubbish fire, other	2
Outside rubbish, trash or waste fire	2
Dumpster or other outside trash receptacle fire	5
Outside equipment fire	1

Top Medical Responses by Complaint Type	
Sick Person	751
Falls	648
Breathing Problem	321
Medical Alarm	329
Chest Pain (Non-Traumatic)	261
Abdominal Pain/Problems	242
Unconscious/Syncope/Near-Syncopal	152

MVC/Transportation Incident	162
Seizure	141
Psychiatric/Behavioral/Suicide Attempt	127
Average Age of all Patients: 59 years old	

A Note from Fire Chief Michael Hamel:

The Meridian Township Fire Department has a long history of providing a high level of fire and rescue services to the community. Our men and women are highly trained and professional individuals that place their lives on the line every day to keep the Township safe. It is my goal as the Fire Chief to continue to work closely with our community to identify risk and mitigate those potential hazards that impact life and property while tasking our firefighters to rise and meet new challenges.

HUMAN RESOURCES



The Human Resources Department is responsible for multiple employment related matters including labor relations and contract negotiations, staffing, diversity and inclusion initiatives, payroll, personnel record keeping, benefits administration, pension administration, risk management, legal compliance, personnel policy manual administration and skill-based training programs.

2019 DEPARTMENT GOALS AND ACTION PLAN

Labor Relations

The Township successfully negotiated 3-year contracts (2020-2022) with four units: Department of Public Works, Administrative Professional Employees, Professional Non-Supervisory Employees and Professional Supervisory Association. Negotiations continue with the 312 groups, Police Command (CCLP), Police Patrol (POAM) and Fire (MTFFA).

Personnel Policy Manual

The 2020 update is on schedule for a March 31 completion. The update requires language that is consistent with certain applicable content in the seven Collective Bargaining Agreements. Ongoing negotiations and settlements for police and fire units through the first quarter 2020 may influence the revisions.

Diversity Initiatives

The Township maintained a 12% minority utilization over the course of 2019 for full-time employees whereas voluntary 2019 EEO applicant data is about 20% minorities applying for positions (see table). HR Director Marx represented the Township at two (2) Diversity Career Fairs; one at Michigan State University (Police jointly represented, as well) and one at Lansing Community College. A continuing challenge is recruiting in a very competitive field for Police Officers, Firefighters, Engineers and Public Works positions.

Additional employment statistics: Full-time employee ratio is 28% female and 72% male; 43% of Township employees have ten (10) or more years of service and 20% of employees have twenty (20) or more years of service. There were twenty (21) separations: seven (7) retirements, nine (9) voluntary quits, four (4) involuntary and one (1) reduction in force. Fifteen (15) new hires included three (3) Police officers (2 of which filled retirement openings) and two (2) Firefighters. The remaining hires filled other department vacancies due to separations. Turnover for 2019 averaged 13.5% overall, or 9% excluding expected retirements.

Healthcare Benefits

For the fourth year, the self-insured Blue Care Network (BCN) product continued to save money for the Township even with rising healthcare costs. The Township calculations continued to remain under the PA 152 Hard Cap allowing for no employee premium cost sharing for BCN insurance. Calculations under the hard cap provided an opportunity for a Health Savings Account (HSA) deposit for those employees with BCN coverage. There is a nominal employee premium cost sharing for the alternative option for Blue Cross Blue Shield Michigan (BCBSM) insurance. The expected costs for active employees is running 3.5% below a fully insured product and expected costs for the whole group (includes retirees) is running 1% below a fully insured product. The HR Team, along with Gallagher Healthcare Benefits Consultants, closely monitored actual expenses versus maximum expected costs throughout the benefit year and will continue to do so in 2020 to ensure maximum cost effectiveness.

Loss Prevention

Greater Safety Committee involvement provided awareness that is more practical across Township departments. More detailed incident reports with direct follow-up investigations has reduced repeat injuries. For employees with lost work time, mandated specific re-training is conducted upon return to work. All township vehicles are now equipped with first aid safety kits in case of an emergency. Township-wide mandatory Acts of Violence training for emergency preparedness and procedures will continue into 2020. First Aid/CPR/AED employee training and certification covering every building in the Township continues through instruction provided by EMS/Training Chief Priese.

Workplace Ergonomics

Employee workstation assessments resulted in recommendations for sit-to-stand workstations and ergonomic chairs. This is the first step for implementation in 2020.

TEAM MEMBERS

Joyce A. Marx, Human Resources Director
Carol Hasse, Human Resources Specialist/Payroll
Michelle Prinz, Executive Assistant

2019 EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION REPORT

Job Categories		Number of Applicants (Report employees in only one category)														Total Col A-N
		Race/Ethnicity														
		Hispanic or Latino		Not-Hispanic or Latino												
				Male						Female						
		Male	Female	White	Black or African American	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	Asian	American Indian or Alaska Native	Two or More Races	White	Black or African American	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	Asian		American Indian or Alaska Native	
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O		
Executive/Senior Level Officials and Managers	1.1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	5
Mid Level Officials and Managers	1.2	4	1	75	2	0	3	0	2	36	4	0	0	0	0	127
First Level Officials and Managers	1.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Professionals	2	1	1	48	12	0	1	0	2	31	2	0	0	0	0	98
Technicians	3	6	5	100	12	0	10	0	6	64	16	0	11	0	2	232
Sales Workers	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Administrative Support Workers	5	1	6	41	5	0	3	1	0	169	17	0	8	3	8	262
Craft Workers	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Operatives	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Laborers and Helpers	8	0	0	25	0	0	0	0	0	46	2	0	0	0	1	74
Service Workers	9	2	1	39	4	0	0	0	4	18	2	0	2	0	0	72
Other		0	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	5	2	0	0	0	0	12
TOTAL	10	14	14	334	36	0	17	1	14	379	45	0	21	3	11	882

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



New Technology in Ambulances

METHODOLOGY FOR OPERATIONAL IMPERATIVES

1. Highest priority is given to core infrastructure stability and keeping existing services and resources operating at optimum performance and availability.
2. Resolution of emergent end-user issues related to technology is an important function that all Department personnel spend a significant time addressing.
3. Training initiatives are utilized in cases where staff resources are recognized to be deficient in the use of available technology or additional expertise would increase employee productivity.
4. Remaining resources are committed to replacing technology that is still functioning, but aging, and at end of useful life.

2019 DEPARTMENT GOALS AND ACTION PLAN

The year brought with it many unexpected challenges & opportunities. Foremost was the departure of two System Administrators mid-year. With the assistance of the Township Manager's Office & Human Resources Director, the decision was made to combine the two lesser skilled positions into a single position that would attract candidates with a higher level of technical ability to efficiently meet end-user needs. The process culminated with the hiring of the Assistant Director of IT in late August. The new assistant director brings a wealth of knowledge and skills that have proven invaluable in the provision of services to the other Departments throughout the organization.

Routine Items

The Department serviced over 780 requests for service throughout the year, and also managed a network with over 1,000 nodes, including security and backup services.

Telephone System Renovation

IT staff replaced the core telephone system for the Township, and over 250 handsets throughout six of our facilities. The new voice over IP system is a step forward in integration with our existing network infrastructure, and provides a much lower cost of ownership than the other considered alternatives.

Replacement Closed Circuit Camera System at the Public Safety Building

The aging system was overhauled with a new central recording system, conversion of five existing analog

cameras, and the addition of new digital cameras around the facility, including those used in the interview rooms.

Replacement of Public Works Mobile Computing Devices

The aging Public Works tablets were replaced with newer Dell semi ruggedized tablets to support enhancements to the constantly evolving Cartegraph Work Order Management System.

Replacement of Ambulance Technology

The aging ambulance panasonic toughbooks were replaced with newer Dell semi ruggedized laptops to improve performance and provide better integration with other equipment including the Cradlepoint routers and Zoll Heart Monitors used in the rear of our ambulances. Dual mounts were included to better facilitate the manner in which the equipment is actually used in the rigs.

Expansion of Mobile Computing Options for Desk Workers

Enhancements were made to the mobile computing devices used by Building & Rental Housing inspectors. In cases where users had a need to be more mobile with their computing devices, laptops with docking stations were installed.

TEAM MEMBERS

Stephen Gebes, Director of Information Technology
Troy Kaminga, Assistant Director of Information Technology

PARKS AND RECREATION



We put the “P” and “R” in PRIME! In 2019, the Parks and Recreation Department continued their dedication to keep Meridian Township a vital and vibrant place to live through programs, special events, and management of publicly owned parks and natural areas.

This was accomplished through the dedicated efforts of the Park Commission, Land Preservation Advisory Board, a professional and enthusiastic staff of 15 full-time parks and recreation employees, numerous part-time and seasonal staff, and many passionate volunteers from the community. These individuals worked in concert to manage 955 acres of parkland, 76 miles of pedestrian/bicycle pathway, 20 miles of nature trails, the Harris Nature Center, Snell-Towar Recreation Center, Meridian Senior Center, year-around Farmers' Market, Meridian Historical Village, 968-acres of land preserves, and a wide variety of community recreation programs, special events and senior activities.

2019 DEPARTMENT GOALS AND ACTION PLAN

Marketplace on the Green

This year the project was awarded to Gordon Construction Services for the site work and restroom/office facility. The pavilion portion was awarded to Mid-States Recreation/Coverworx. This facility, when completed will contain a large pavilion, music stage, playground, patio area, rain gardens, and open green space and will become our premier community event location as well as the new home for the Meridian Township Farmers Market. Construction will begin in January 2020 with completion in late spring.

Central Meridian Regional Trail Connector Project Footbridge and Restroom in Historical Village

Staff worked with Wolverine Engineering and Surveyors on the design and specifications for the paved trail, boardwalk, and restroom projects in Central Park, and following DNR and Planning Department review, the projects were put out for bid. All the proposals we received were rejected due to higher than anticipated costs. Based on the outcome of the first bids, we were able to re-evaluate the plans and make minor adjustments to help bring the costs more in line with our budget. The plans have been revised and the project will be re-bid in January. Construction is planned for spring of 2020.

Small Dog Park

The new Small Dog Park opened in 2019 in Nancy Moore Park. This fenced facility contains a welcoming area with a drinking fountain for pets and owners, dog washing station and benches. The control gate regulates use on a registration basis. Inside the fenced area is green grass, trees and fun agility equipment. Much of the installation work was done in-house by the Parks Maintenance staff. A total of 172 dogs are registered to utilize the park. Two special events took place there this year including a Howl-o ween Costume Party and a Holiday Hounds party that included pictures with Santa!

Large Dog Park

Planning for development of the large dog park has been underway with many of the components completed in 2019. These elements include clearing of dead trees, grading and seeding of the central hub area, purchasing the perimeter fencing, gate and access system, new signage, and awarding of a bid to create an internal loop trail. All the pieces will come together in the spring of 2020, in conjunction with construction of the Central Meridian Trail Connector, which will provide access to the park. A ribbon-cutting event will be scheduled for early summer 2020.

Pavilion and Restroom at Harris Nature Center

Grants were received from the LWCF and the MNRTF for the addition of a pavilion and restroom building at the Nature Center. Site plans and bid specifications were developed and approved by the DNR and the Meridian Township Planning Department. The projects were put out for bid this fall and was awarded in December 2019. Construction will take place in the spring for early summer 2020 grand opening.

Senior Center Outdoor Improvements

The Meridian Senior Center is a joint collaboration between the Okemos School District and Meridian Township. With a current membership of 510, the senior center is an important facility for enrichment, socialization, and fitness for our older adults. In order to take advantage of the space provided Chippewa School, the outdoor courtyard was developed with a paved loop trail, outdoor furniture, raised plant beds and landscaping which will provide additional opportunities and experiences for seniors. A ribbon cutting was held with school and township officials present in October.

Parkland Additions

Nearly 45-acres of parkland were added to the park system in 2019. A big THANK YOU to the following donors:

- T.J Acquisitions, LLC donated 9-acres adjacent to Hillbrook Park in Haslett.
- Marilyn Pinnavaia Trust donated a 2-acre parcel adjacent to Brattin Woods Park in the Sleepy Hollow neighborhood.
- Dr. Maureen Sander donated a 31-9 acre parcel on Dobie Road named the Sander Farm Preserved Natural Area.
- In preparation for development of Marketplace on the Green, Meridian Township acquired 2.5 acres of green space on Central Park Drive as part of a land transfer agreement with CBL Properties/Meridian Mall.

New Trailhead and Directional Signage in Parks

This project began in 2018 and continued throughout 2019 of adding new trailhead and directional signage in multiple parks with the goal of making our parks more welcoming, informative and easier to navigate. All 20 miles of park trails were GPS marked and uploaded to a Google-based smartphone app called "All Trails". The remaining 15 parks will receive new signs in 2020.

New Fence at Riverside Cemetery

The fencing in Riverside Cemetery had deteriorated to the point that repair was no longer an option. Therefore, new black fencing was installed this summer that replicates the wrought iron that existed there previously. We saved some portions of the old fence for a future amenity in the Historical Village.

RECREATION PROGRAMS

Recreation Programs for Youth, Adults and Seniors

Providing recreation services to our residents creates a positive connection with government, other participants, as well as to our community. Programs were offered for persons of all ages and abilities including exercise and enrichment programs for seniors, environmental education classes and team sports for adults and youth, as well as our ever-popular Sporties for Shorties.

Okemos

- K-6th Spring Season/556; Fall Season/423; Total = 979
- K-7th Grade Flag Football Program: 120
- T-Ball-8th Grade Baseball Programs: 109
- 1st-8th Grade Softball Program: 106

Haslett

- K-6th Grade Spring Soccer/247; Fall Season/247; Total = 553
- K-6th Grade Basketball Program: 268
- K-7th Flag Football Program: 140
- 1st-5th Softball Program: 43
- 1st-8th Grade Baseball Program: 98
- T-Ball Program: 42

Sporties for Shorties: 380 (4-6 year olds)

Adult Kickball Leagues (Summer & Fall): 14 teams

Adult Softball Leagues (Summer): 21 teams

4 on 4 Sand Volleyball Leagues (Summer & Fall): 25 teams

139 registered Seniors participated in exercise class at Meridian Mall M,W,F year around.

Special Events

Conducting special events engages a wide cross-section of community members with multiple areas of interest. Some of the larger events include:

- Love a Park- over 100 volunteers and service group members spruced-up nine park areas with flowers, mulch, trail building, playground surfacing maintenance
- Senior Health and Fitness Day – this event was held in Wonch Park and included vendor booths, demonstrations, dancing and food and was attended by 62 seniors.
- Halloween Adventures at Harris Nature Center – record setting attendance with 1,475
- Christmas in the Village in the Historical Village – Hosted by the Friends of Historic Meridian
- Blue and Grey Civil War Reenactment in the Historical Village –Hosted by the Friends of Historic Meridian
- Chinese New Year Celebration – this event is conducted at Meridian Mall each year and serves as an cultural education experience with a wide variety of entertainment.
- CELEBRATE MERIDIAN FESTIVAL This event was the major event of the year that included the farmers market, arts and crafts fair, pet adoption, inflatable obstacle course and children's games, dunk tank, live music, car show, Historical Village tours, food trucks, beer and wine garden and FIREWORKS! It was great event with approximately 20,000 people in attendance.

Harris Nature Center

The Harris Nature Center continues to be one of the top gems of our park system by educating and engaging a large number of youth in environmental education and programs. Notable stats include:

- Adopt-an-Animal donations totaled \$625 for 8 animals
- Hosted 7 weeks of Annie's Big Nature Lesson exposing 290 students to a weeklong of learning in an outdoor classroom
- 8,439 drop-in visitors
- 8,634 program participants (this includes ALL programs including school groups)
- Halloween Adventures had a record year with 1,475 participants
- Summer Camp had a record year with 440 participants

- Kicked off Music in Nature with 3 dates and had 225 attendees
- Welcomed a new American Crow to our education programs
- Designed and installed new interpretive signs at the Boulder Garden
- HNC is the only nature center in the Great Lansing Area with Live Animals. Harris is home to 24 animals including several species of reptiles, amphibians and birds.
- Welcomed Allison Goodman to our staff full-time!
- Upgraded rooms at HNC to create new, much needed, classroom space

Pavilion Rentals

In 2019, the Township rented pavilions at the following parks: Wonch, Central Park, North Meridian Road Park, Hartrick Park, Nancy Moore Park and Towner Road Park.

	Total Days
Pavilion Rentals	161
3 Special Events (7 days)& 4 - 5K Races (4 days)	11
Weddings	6
7 Tournaments	27
Cricket	12
Total Reservation Days	217

Meridian Township Farmers Market

The Meridian Township Farmers Market continues to be a valuable community resource and social gathering opportunity. New this year was the time change on Wednesdays from 8am-2pm to 3pm to 7pm. This change welcomed new vendors and food trucks and better accommodated after-work customers.

- The Spring and Summer Markets had a combined total of 85 unique vendors – 58 of whom were seasonal and 27 daily vendors.
- Winter (Dec-April) 10 dates 10am-2pm inside Meridian Mall - The Winter Market hosted 42 vendors

The Market once again participated in State and Federal Food Assistance programs including SNAP, Double-Up Food Bucks, Senior Project Fresh and WIC. A total of \$12,350 of assistance money was redeemed at our market in 2019.

During the last five weeks of the outdoor season, we collected produce donations from our vendors and forwarded them to the Haslett Food Pantry at Haslett Community Church. This donation served 127 different households (240 adults/156 children).

Meridian Senior Center

The Meridian Senior Center, located at Chippewa Middle School, provides for the educational, enrichment and social needs of adults aged 55 and over for all older adults in the Township. This program is a joint effort between Meridian Township and Okemos Public Schools.

In 2019, 2,552 programs were conducted with member attendance at 25,050 and non-member attendance at 1,283. The three most popular programs were:

- Games (with 2,948 participants)
- Fitness and exercise (with 3,619 participants)
- Congregate meal program (with 15,743 participants.)

The Senior Center ended 2019 with 503 members (82 new members) and had 35 volunteers. A new addition to the center was the outdoor patio area that now expands available use and opportunity for new programs. The Haslett-Okemos Rotary Club funded much-needed upgrades and landscaping to the front sign.

Deer Management Program (9th year)

The Deer Management Program utilized local archery hunters to assist with managing the white

tailed deer over-population in Meridian Township by participating in this highly managed cull program. All participants were background screened, participated in an orientation and proficiency test, and then assigned to a specific location to hunt. In addition to the 80 deer that were culled through the program in 2019, Township maintenance staff picked up 88 additional dead deer along Township roadways.

Deer Management Program Statistics

(Collision based on data provided on the MSP “Traffic Crash Reporting System – Crash Statistics Report Selection Criteria”)

	Total Hunters	Properties Hunted	Deer Harvested	Reported Deer/Car Collisions
2011	25	7	43	152
2012	50	18	90	153
2013	60	20	127	180
2014	73	21	150	137
2015	30	19	63	144
2016	73	31	73	164
2017	66	30	80	129
2018	74	38	57	129
2019	85	38	80	Available 2/20

PARK COMMISSION

The Meridian Township Park Commissioners are elected to 4-year terms and have the responsibility of setting policy and direction for the acquisition, development, and maintenance of parks. In 2019, they held eleven (11) regular meetings. Mark Stephens was re-appointed as the Park Commission’s representative to the Land Preservation Advisory Board.

PARK COMMISSION MEMBERS

- Michael McDonald, Chair
- Amanda Lick, Vice Chair
- Mark Stephens
- Annika Brixie Schaetzl (resigned 11/2019)
- Courtney Wisinski (appointed to Township Board 1/2019)

LAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM

Description of the Land Preservation Program

The Meridian Township Land Preservation Advisory Board members are appointed to 4-year terms with a two term limit. The LPAB has the responsibility of advising staff in implementing the land preservation program. The program was developed to preserve lands and waters that provide valuable habitat for native plants and animals, protect air and water quality, add aesthetic value, and enhance public enjoyment of the outdoors. To date, 968 acres have been acquired in 22 preserves located throughout the Township. Strong efforts have been made to implement stewardship plans. The Board held eight (8) regular meetings, and conducted four (4) site visits to properties.

LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

- Jon Mayes, Chairman,
- James Kielbaso, Vice-Chair and Environmental
- Commission Liaison
- Roland Harmes (resigned October, 2019)

Jamie Hiller
Yu Man Lee
Kirk Lapham

Dan Opsommer, Township Board Liaison
Mark Stephens, Park Commissioner Liaison

Program Highlights

- Installed five new land preservation signs
- Held a total of 13 stewardship days
- Worked with over 300 volunteers in the land preserves during 2019

Site restoration refers to anything that increases ecosystem health within the preserve.

Davis Foster

- Removal of invasive species, autumn olive from front field
- Prescribed burn was conducted March, 2019 (33 acre area)
- 90 students from Murphy Elementary participated in seed ball project

Towar Woods

- Tree planting- 500 trees planted and tubed in the spring
- Invasive species management - glyphosate around newly planted trees to kill weeds
- Over 5 acres of mature Buckthorn treated with basal bark herbicide
- \$1,000 received as a generous donation to the tree planting project for 2019

SW Meridian Uplands

- Continue grassland/prairie monitoring

Serafine

- Four workdays complete removing shrubby invasive species such as Buckthorn, Autumn Olive and Honeysuckle
- Jim Hewitt has also been working on his own multiple days a week to treat the shrubby invasives along the roadside
- HOA paid for native plants to enhance the grassland area

Red Cedar Glen

- Continue the removal of invasive autumn olive with neighbors

Ponderosa Preserve

- Contracted for Japanese/Bohemian Knotweed removal over the next four years.

Sower Woods

- Over 100 blue stem and zig zag goldenrod planted

DEPARTMENT RETIREMENTS/RESIGNATIONS

- Dennis Antone, Facilities Superintendent, retired and was replaced by Kati Adams (new Parks and Land Preserve Superintendent); and Rob MacKenzie (new Public Works Superintendent)
- Kit Rich, Director of Harris Nature Center, retired and was replaced by Kati Adams. Kati's former position was replaced with the hiring of Allison Goodman, Park Naturalist
- Darcie Weigand, Recreation Programmer, moved out of state and was replaced by Kayla Scelfo
- Kelsey Dillon, Stewardship Coordinator, resigned and was replaced by Emma Campbell (start date January, 2020)
- Corey Patrick, resigned as the Farmers Market Manager and was replaced by Tom Cary
- Welcomed two new Utility Workers to the Parks Maintenance Division: Mike Love and Tom Baker

TEAM MEMBERS

Administration

LuAnn Maisner	Director of Parks and Recreation
Robin Faust	Administrative Assistant II
Michael Devlin	Parks and Recreation Specialist
Kayla Scelfo	Parks and Recreation Specialist
Jane Greenway	Senior Parks and Land Management Coordinator
Kelsey Dillon	Park Naturalist/Stewardship Coordinator
Kati Adams	Parks, Pathways and Land Preservation Superintendent
Tom Cary	Farmers' Market Manager

Harris Nature Center

Kati Adams	Parks and Land Preservation Superintendent
Allison Goodman	Park Naturalist
Ali Olsen	Assistant Naturalist
Audra Francis	Assistant Naturalist
Jacey Jackard	Assistant Naturalist
Molly Link	Assistant Naturalist
Daniel Kontra	Assistant Naturalist
Kayla Glenn	Assistant Naturalist

Parks, Land Preservation and Pathways

Kati Adams	Parks and Land Preservation Superintendent
Larry Bobb	Parks, Land Preservation & Pathways Maintenance Lead
Don Cuson	Utility Worker
Josh Cannon	Utility Worker
Dan Inman	Utility Worker
Tom Baker	Utility Worker
Mike Love	Utility Worker

Meridian Senior Center

Cherie Wisdom	Center Coordinator
Courtney Caltrider	Administrative Assistant
Laura Schultz	Kitchen Lead

POLICE



The Meridian Township Police Department is committed to establishing and maintaining partnerships in our community; and with understanding, cooperation and equality; we strive to enhance the quality of life and protect the rights of our community.

CORE VALUES

COMPASSION

We care for and empathize with our fellow human beings.

COURAGE

We face danger to ensure the safety of others. We will stand up for what is right. We will be brave when others may not. We strive to eliminate fear through our actions.

EXCELLENCE

We employ those who strive to achieve a higher standard. We listen to our employees and the members of our community to continually improve our effectiveness and reliability. We strive to exceed community and professional expectations.

FAIRNESS

We will treat all individuals impartially. We will act in a just manner. We appreciate different points of view. We exercise discretion appropriately.

INTEGRITY

We will fulfill our mission in its entirety using sound principles, honesty and sincerity.

RESOURCEFULNESS

We can be relied upon for help and support. We have the ability to deal with situations effectively. We build on our mutual experiences to effectively resolve problems.

RESPECT

We value the rights and beliefs of others. We are courteous. We treat others as we expect to be treated. We appreciate diversity.

WORK ETHIC

We are self-motivated and self-directed. We do what is asked and strive to achieve

expectations. We hold ourselves to a higher standard.

In 2019, there were 18,552 calls for service (excluding traffic stops 4,873).

2019 Written Reports	
Alarms	771
Traffic Crashes	891
All Other	4,759
Total	6,421

Yearly Comparisons

Written Reports

2016	2017	2018	2019
6,332	6,282	6,801	6,421

Calls for Service

2016	2017	2018	2019
18,364	17,545	18,588	18,552

Arrests

2016	2017	2018	2019
700	559	577	563

Citations

	2016	2017	2018	2019
Citations Issued	2,272	1,752	1,922	2,096
Total # of Charges	2,768	2,188	2,379	2,857

TRAFFIC SAFETY

The Meridian Township Police Department views traffic safety as an important key to keeping the community safe. The Department works with the Ingham County Road Commission and the State Highway Department to address road design related concerns. Officers take enforcement in areas identified as directed patrols based on complaints from citizens. Additionally, the speed trailer and speed sign are utilized to educate motorists regarding speed-related safety concerns.

Three of our officers provide car seat inspections at the Department. A total of 26 inspections were completed in 2019. Officers completed car seat inspections at the annual Halloween Open House at the police department in October.

TRAFFIC CRASH INVESTIGATION TEAM

Traffic crashes involving fatal or potentially fatal injuries require investigators with specialized training and equipment. Area law enforcement agencies have committed personnel to a regional crash investigation team. On-duty team members are called to assist participating agencies with potentially fatal crash investigations. This effort has increased the experience of the investigators while reducing overtime costs for the Departments.

VOLUNTEERS

We are fortunate to have three volunteers who assist the Department on a regular basis. One volunteer helps with the annual Halloween Open House by greeting and organizing the visitors as they arrive in the lobby of the Department.

Two Volunteer Parking Enforcement personnel provided a total of 75 volunteer hours in 2019. The total number of department citations written was 305 for the year. The Department does not require payment of handicap citations when the disabled person shows that he/she had a permit that was not displayed. Our concern is to keep the spaces available for those who have permits, not collecting fines from persons with disabilities.

COMMUNITY POLICE OFFICERS

Community policing is an important element of fulfilling our Mission Statement and effectively serving the community. Officers are in regular contact with their neighborhood leaders and residents to improve communication and build trust with the community. The officers contact the leader a minimum of once per month to check in and provide the leader with information on crimes that have occurred and upcoming events.

National Night Out is an annual event to promote community partnerships with law enforcement. Officers attended twenty-six events with some locations receiving a visit from McGruff the Crime Dog, the police motorcycle, canine teams, and fire trucks and ambulances.

ADULT CROSSING GUARDS

The Department hires, trains, and manages the six adult school crossing guards for the six schools in the township. The guards are supervised by the School Resource Officers.

CANINE TEAM

In 2019, the Department maintained a single K9 Team, Officer Tobias and K9 Yukon. The team was trained for article searches, building searches, narcotics detection, and tracking. The K9 Team was also assigned to the Ingham Regional Special Response Team (IRSRT) to assist with perimeter, high risk tracking and area searches during activation. Area departments request and/or provide mutual aid from canines when they either do not have a canine on duty or they do not have a team on the Department. The canine team completed 192 hours of monthly training. In addition, Officer Tobias and Yukon trained with the IRSRT for a total of 48 hours in 2019. Officer Tobias was promoted to the rank of Sergeant in June of 2019. This promotion led to fewer uses of K9 Yukon because of other duties. K9 Yukon was retired and purchased by Sgt. Tobias in December 2019 after 6.5 years of service.

SPECIAL RESPONSE TEAM

The Ingham Regional Special Response Team (IRSRT) is comprised of personnel from the Ingham County Sheriff's Department, East Lansing Police Department, MSU Police Department, and Meridian Township Police Department. The team is called upon by agencies when a tactical team is needed to respond. Meridian Township commits three officers and one sergeant to the team. Meridian Township Officers received 528 hours of regular monthly training and 180 hours of annual training. This totals 708 hours of yearly training. IRSRT had three call outs in 2019.

IRSRT also has a Negotiator Team comprised of hostage negotiators. The negotiators are not activated unless the situation dictates a need for negotiators. Meridian Township has one officer and one sergeant assigned to the team.

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY RESOURCE UNIT

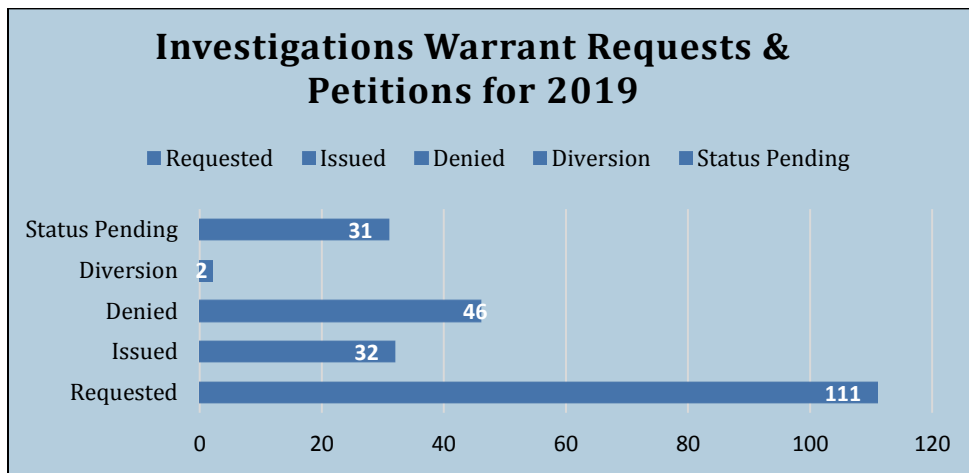
The School and Community Resource Unit is comprised of two officers who work with the Haslett and

Okemos Public Schools. The officers provide a number of services to the schools in an effort to provide a safe environment for children to learn. The officers also assist with a number of community events.

The officers participated in “No Senior without Christmas” event. This is a Tri County TRIAD program. There were 350 holiday baskets delivered in the tri-county elderly residents. Meridian Township had 35 of those.

Meridian Township held their own “Shop with a Cop” event in 2019. The officers worked with school counselors and 14 area students participated. The officers worked in conjunction with Walmart, Jets Pizza and Haslett Okemos Rotary Foundation, as well as the FOP and POAM unions.

The officers attended annual DARE training and received updates to include Vaping lessons.



A total of \$131,177.47 worth of stolen property was recovered in 2019. The majority of the recovered stolen property was returned to the victims.

Noteworthy investigations for 2019 include:

- A homicide investigation that spanned two jurisdictions. The suspect is awaiting trial.
- Multiple armed robberies across several jurisdictions. Worked with multiple agencies to locate and arrested four subjects. Suspect’s are currently awaiting trial.
- A large illegal marijuana dispensary was discovered operating in the township. The case is still be investigated.

COURT SERVICES

The Court Services Officer (CSO) processes criminal complaints and submits them to the Ingham County Prosecutors Office and the Township Attorney to request arrest warrants and juvenile petitions. The CSO swears to warrants, arraigns prisoners, attends juvenile hearings, serves subpoenas, delivers citations to the court and collects bond money posted and delivers it to the court. Registered Sex Offenders report to the CSO as required by law. The CSO schedules Sex Offender Address Verifications on a regular basis. The CSO investigates Sex Offender Registry Act violations and submits those complaints to the Ingham County Prosecutor’s Office for arrest warrants.

COURT SERVICES	2016	2017	2018	2019
Arraignments	273	215	154	143
Subpoenas Served	952	842	832	692

Personal Protection Orders	38	67	38	41
Warrant Requests	641	522	605	614
Warrants Signed by CSO	418	431	429	378
Twp. Attorney Requests	212	177	188	144
Total Petition Requests	74	152	134	102
Retail Fraud Requests	342	319	332	234
OWI Requests	60	80	66	62
Assault Requests	60	62	48	42
Assault Requests-Domestic	137	144	175	180
Larceny/Fraud Requests	87	76	95	82
Narcotics Requests	53	75	75	20

TRAINING

Under the direction of the Chief of Police, the Training Sergeant oversees all training for the Department. The Department provided employees with 5,432.5 hours of training in 2019.

The in-service training program consists of monthly training for all sworn employees, periodic roll call videos, policy tests, quarterly firearms sessions, and computer based instruction. The external training program utilizes universities and private providers to handle specialized training outside the scope of the Department trainers. The Department strives to remain at the forefront of progressive policing by acknowledging the importance of both continuing education to retain current skills and the acquisition of new knowledge for officers to expand their skill base.

MID-MICHIGAN POLICE ACADEMY

The Services Division Commander is assigned as a coordinator for the Lansing Community College's Mid-Michigan Police Academy. During the seventeen-week academy, the coordinator works closely with the recruits in training and career development. The coordinator also has the unique position of monitoring the recruit's individual progress and identifying potential future Department employees.

21st CITIZENS' ACADEMY

The Department hosts a ten-week Citizens' Academy that meets once a week for three hours in the fall. This academy exposes the attendees to police operations and procedures. Sixteen citizens from Meridian, Lansing and Williamstown Townships participated in 2019.

13th YOUTH CITIZENS' ACADEMY

The Department hosts a seven-week Youth Academy that meets once a week for two hours in the spring. The students learn about police work while being able to experience hands-on activities. Eleven students from the Haslett, Okemos, Lansing, and Bath school districts attended the Academy in 2019.

2019 DEPARTMENT GOALS AND ACTION PLAN

In conjunction with the Township Manager, the Department establishes goals to help in the delivery of law enforcement services. Many of our goal accomplishments and other activities are listed as follows.

Complete State Accreditation through the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police

A preliminary assessment was conducted by outside assessors on September 24, 2019. Our final assessment for accreditation was December 9-10, 2019 and a report was submitted to the Michigan Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission for review. If the Commission awards our Department

accreditation, we will receive accreditation at the February 6, 2020, Commission meeting that will be held at the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police mid-winter conference.

Continue Efforts to Reduce Workers Compensation and Lawsuits Claims

The Department is an active participant in the Township Safety Committee and we continue to seek safer and more efficient ways of conducting business. The Department has conducted numerous trainings to reduce liabilities. Some of the trainings attended by officers included: emergency vehicle operations, fair and impartial policing, vulnerable and impaired persons as well as legal update.

Upgrade the Public Safety Building Video Surveillance System

The Department completed this project and the new system has been operational since November 15th. The new camera system added eight new cameras to increase the coverage on the public safety building to include the exterior. This expansion allows for coverage on the main parking and front entrance.

Work Diligently toward Full Staffing (41)

The Department has hired four new officers in 2019 and we continue to work with the Mid-Michigan Police Academy to identify qualified applicants. The Department has attended several job fairs and sends recruiting team members to academies throughout the state. We are also partnering with Michigan State University Athletics Department in an effort to recruit from a more educated and diverse candidate pool than what we traditionally are exposed to at the police academies.

Continue Collective Efforts to Foster an Environment that is Welcoming, Diverse and Inclusive

The Department's recruitment team is attending various police academies around the State to encourage applications for employment to our Department. The Department also attends the monthly Advocates and Leaders for Police and Community Trust (ALPACT) meetings and receives input and feedback from a diverse group of community leaders.

The Chief's office, and command staff continue to have an open door policy with employees in regards to improvements in our business practice. This openness has led to implementing a Senior Watch program, voluntary range days for officers, and other improvements to the Public Safety Building. Welcoming input from employees and including them in the process has led to employee ownership of their work product.

Continue to Seek Opportunities to Reduce Overall Operating Costs

The Department seeks competitive bids on all purchases over \$250.00. The Department has also adjusted work shift hours to reduce the potential for overtime needs. Supervisors have been diligent in controlling staff overtime throughout the year when possible.

Deploy a Portable Fingerprint Scanning System to Identify Missing or Endangered Children and Adults, as well as, Persons with Outstanding Warrants

The Department deployed the fingerprint scanner in the field in February 2019. Since the deployment of this equipment, it has been used 66 times and 17 persons have been identified that attempted to conceal their identity.

Take a Leadership Role in Finalizing the Police Department's 2020-2022 Collective Bargaining Agreements

Contract negotiations have begun and preliminary offers have been exchanged with the command group. Negotiations are set to continue in 2020.

WILLIAMSTOWN TOWNSHIP POLICE SERVICES

The Meridian Township Police Department provides law enforcement services to Williamstown Township. The 2019-2021 contract arranges for Williamstown Township to compensate Meridian Township \$225,217.00 for calendar year 2019, \$229,721.00 for calendar year 2020 and \$58.41 per hour outside of the 80 hours of weekly patrol for emergency and non-emergency responses.

Williamstown Township Statistics				
	2016	2017	2018	2019
Written Reports	379	381	384	323
Calls for Service	1546	1616	1769	1451
Calls for Service (excluding traffic stops)	1103	1226	1239	1038
Arrests	11	12	20	17
Citations Issued	159	73	101	170
Total Number of Charges	175	89	120	204

Written Reports				
	2016	2017	2018	2019
Alarms	68	66	61	52
Traffic Crashes	127	115	116	107
All Other	184	200	207	164
Total	379	381	384	323

MTPD TEAM MEMBERS

CHIEF

Ken Plaga

ASSISTANT CHIEF

Brad Bach

LIEUTENANT

Richard Grillo

SERGEANTS

Scott Dawson**

Bart Crane

Andrew McCready

Edward Besonen

Chris Lofton

Jason Clements

Brian Canen

Andrew Tobias

OFFICERS BY SENIORITY

Kristi Lysik**

Paul Rambo

Dave Metts

Christina Scaccia

Jeff Adams

Curt Squires

Brett Reed***

Erin Linn

Kyle Royston

Rebecca Payne

Kevin Harvey

Mark Divney

Michael Hagbom

Bryan LeRoy

Doug Strouse

Aaron McConaughy

Dan King

Adam Slavick

Stephanie Lewis

Ian Mandernack

Kolby Casaday

Lerico White

Megan Klein

Austin Dietz

Blaine Anderson

Lorenzo Velasquez

Antonio Trevino

Kyle Cornell

Jaclyn Allen*

David Reinke*

Dustin Badder * ***

Wes Talbot*

CIVILIAN PERSONNEL

Kristi Schaeding, Administrative Assistant

Lynne Bach, Records Supervisor

Lori Hagan, Records Technician

Marcie Barnum, Records Technician

Jennifer Ramsey, Records Technician

CADETS

Evan Buckner***

Jonathan Kendrick*

Ryan Tunkl*

Baylie Kaiser*

Danielle Huettner*

Yutaka Benson* ***

Dhospina Qipo***

Maryam Masood

Marissa Fura***

Matthew Kristufek***

Allison Akins***

Jannah Wilson***

Maxwell Bland*

Cody Lefler*

*Hired in 2019

**Retired in 2019

***Resigned in 2019

PUBLIC WORKS



Charter Township of Meridian Code of Ordinances: Chapter 2, Article 1

A Department of Public Works shall be created and the department shall be headed by the Director of Public Works and Engineering. The department shall be responsible for all matters relating to the management, maintenance, and operation of all the physical properties of the Township. This department shall have exclusive control of the construction, maintenance, and operation of the Township sewers and water mains, the operation of Township dumps and landfills, the operation and maintenance of the cemetery, and the maintenance of all Township facilities.

2019 DEPARTMENT GOALS AND ACTION PLAN

Complete the Haslett Road Water Main Replacement Project, the Valve Replacement Project and the South Water Tank Improvements

In conjunction with the Ingham County Road Department (ICRD), the Department reprioritized the replacement of the water main on Haslett Road and valves replacement and used the existing funding to replace the water main on Towner Road and Lake Lansing Road. Both projects were completed in the fall of 2019. The Haslett Road water main will be replaced in 2020.

The south tank improvements, which included a new overflow discharge, were completed in November of 2019. In addition to the south tank, the Lansing Board of Water and Light (BWL) expressed interest in the placement of an antenna to read their meters on the north tower. As compensation for the placement, an attachment agreement was negotiated that provides a cash payment over three years and covers the cost of the installation of a safety handrail on the top of the elevated tank. The installation of a handrail and antenna were completed in December.

Implement the Improved Cross Connection Control Program as Required by the MDEQ

The State of Michigan requires all public water supplies to adopt cross connection rules to protect the public health and safety of its customers. A cross connection is a plumbing connection that could allow an undesirable reversal of flow of water of questionable quality, waste or other contaminants.

In the summer of 2019, the Department of Public Works contracted with Hydrocorp to assist and enhance our existing cross connection program. The current program focuses on industrial and commercial properties in the Township, but will eventually include residential customers of the system. The first inspections using the proactive notification and highly trained inspectors from Hydrocorp began in November.

Begin the Water Service Material Inventory as Required by the MDEQ

The Meridian Water Service Material Inventory was submitted to the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) in December, meeting the required deadline of January 1, 2020.

We are more fortunate than many of our neighbors, as we do not have any lead services in our system. This new State mandate is the result of the health hazards posed by lead water service to homes and businesses.

Complete the Sewer Main Rehabilitation Projects as Outlined in the 2017 MDEQ SAW Grant and Complete the Installation of an On-Site Backup Generator at the Mud Lake Lift Station

685 feet of 16-inch on Grand River and 805 feet of 12-inch sanitary sewer main was lined by our contractor, Insituform Technologies in October and November of 2019. The cured-in-place-pipe (CIPP) process restores the structural integrity of the pipe, reduces infiltration and eliminates the need to excavate and remove the deteriorating sanitary sewer main.

DVT Electric has been selected to provide the new 30kW standby generator; concrete foundation and automatic transfer switch for the Mud Lake Lift Station. The generator is currently on order and is expected to be installed and placed in service in the spring of 2020.

Assist with the Installation of the Haslett Beautification Association Art and Landscape Project at the Haslett Triangle Property

The Meridian DPW assisted the Haslett Beautification Association with installation of the sailboat art pieces and provided an irrigation system to water the associated landscaping this summer. The Township also installed a small section of pathway on the north end of the property to connect and service the Marsh Road pathway and Lake Drive paved shoulders.

Complete the 2019 Local Road Program, Including the Delayed 2018 Projects

In 2019, the Township resurfaced 3.1 miles of local roads using the Hot-In-Place Recycling method that we were not able to complete in 2018. The roads resurfaced included: Island Lake, Cade, Biscayne Way, Hallendale, Jo Pass, Burcham, White Owl, Woodfield, Sheldrake and Starboard.

In addition, Towner Road, from Marsh Road to Saginaw Highway was also completed. This long delayed project to allow for the construction of the Township Park, now provides a new paved surface and improved paved shoulders along the roadway for biking and walking.

The final local road project for 2019 was the resurfacing of five cul-de-sacs with PASER ratings of 2. The five cul-de-sacs selected for work included: Arundel Place, Hazy Lane, Coventry Circle, Wood Valley and Moss Glen Circle. All five cul-de-sacs received their base paving, with Hazy Lane and Coventry Circle receiving final paving on November 23, 2019. The remaining three roads will receive final paving in the spring of 2020.

The Township also provided direction to the Ingham County Road Department (ICRD) regarding the replacement of the Okemos Road Bridge over the Red Cedar River. The Township will continue to collaborate, and work cooperatively with the County in 2020 on its final design and coordinate with its construction in 2021.

Complete the Municipal Building HVAC Replacement Engineering Study

Final design was completed on the Municipal Building HVAC replacement by our engineering contractor in the summer of 2019. Bidding will occur on the estimated \$2.2 million dollar project over the winter of 2019/2020, with selection and installation in 2020.

Complete the 2019 Facility Projects Funded in the 2019 Budget (kitchens, HVAC and drainage improvements at the fire stations, parking lot surface maintenance, rain gardens installations and building energy lighting replacements at the Municipal Building)

The Solar Panel Landscaping, which included over 530 perennials, grasses, shrubs and trees, was completed in October. An irrigation system was also included as part of the project.

The Municipal Building and Service Center parking lot crack received crack sealing and seal coating over the summer. The North Fire Station Drainage and rear parking lot improvements were also completed.

New kitchen appliances were purchased for the Fire Stations and the South Fire Station HVAC improvements are in progress and will be completed by the end of the year.

Continue to Actively Participate and Represent the Township with the Ongoing and Proposed Improvements at the East Lansing Water Reclamation and Reuse Facility (WRRF)

Throughout 2019, we attended and participated in quarterly meetings with Michigan State University (MSU) and the City of East Lansing regarding progress on the improvements at the WRRF. Work continues steadily on the headworks screening and grit removal portion of the project, as well as, the solids handling and digestion. As part of the State Revolving Loan fund (SRF), the WRRF qualified for \$1.94 million in loan forgiveness because of the inclusion of an anaerobic digester that will provide both heat and electricity for reuse at the WRRF.

Continue the Implementation and Enhancement of the DPW Cartegraph Operations Management Software system (OMS)

The Department continues to improve its use of the Cartegraph OMS system in conjunction with our ever-increasing GIS mapping and asset tracking functionality. This year we began to incorporate the Verizon Fleet modules into our vehicle fleet to track odometer and error codes so that preventative maintenance schedules could be created in Cartegraph to improve the maintenance and repair of our fleet of vehicles and equipment.

A significant reorganization of the DPW and Parks maintenance team occurred this year with the retirement of the Facility Superintendent. With no increase in the number of overall employees, the new organization has the DPW Maintenance Team responsible for Water Distribution, Sanitary Sewer Collection, Buildings and Grounds (Cemetery) and the Motor Pool. The Parks Maintenance team will now solely focus its efforts on Park properties and facilities, Recreation fields, Land Preservation properties and maintaining the pathway system.

Fully participate in the Local Update of the Census Addresses (LUCA) program in preparation of the 2020 US Census

Our LUCA was prepared and submitted to the US Census in the summer of 2019. In preparation for the 2020 US Census, we have organized a Meridian Complete Count Committee, assisted with census taker recruitment and outreach and prepared our 2020 information campaign to promote the census.

Operation and Maintenance Highlights in 2019

Our dedicated field crew completed 3,607 MISS DIG requests, repaired 15 water service breaks, repaired 14 water main breaks, repaired 20 fire hydrants, cleaned 84,602 feet of sanitary sewer main, televised 19,852 feet of sewer main, cleaned 24 lift stations, completed 756 vehicle maintenance and repair requests, completed 306 facility maintenance requests, and completed 32 burials at Glendale Cemetery. The Engineering team processed 232 soil erosion permits, inspected 139 utility service repairs and connections, reviewed 143 utility development plan permits and approved 35 pathway and sidewalk permits.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Bill McConnell, Chair
J. James Kielbaso
Linda Burghardt
Aparna Krishnamurthy

James E. Jackson, Vice-Chair
John Sarver
Susan Masten
Kirk Lapham

TEAM MEMBERS

Administration

Derek N. Perry Deputy Township Manager
Director of Public Works & Engineering
Denise Green Administrative Assistant II

Engineering

Younes Ishraidi, P.E., C.F.M. Chief Engineer
Nyal Nunn, C.F.M. Senior Project Engineer
Jay Graham Records Manager
David Liviskie Engineering Technician
Tom Westerfield Engineering Technician

Geographic Information Systems

Cara Maney GIS Specialist

Environmental Programs

LeRoy Harvey Environmental Programs Coordinator (PT)

Public Works Superintendent Rob MacKenzie

Water Utility

Chad Houck Lead Utility Worker
Mike Ellis Utility Worker
Dan Palacios Utility Worker
James Arnett Utility Worker
David Lester Utility Worker
Derrick Bobb Utility Worker
D'Destin Kaufmann Utility Worker
Robert Stacy Utility Worker

Sewer Utility

Matt Foreman Lead Utility Worker
Kyle Fogg Utility Worker
Ben McCann Utility Worker
Jacob Flannery Utility Worker

Buildings, Grounds and Cemetery

Tyler Kennel Lead Utility Worker
Keith Hewitt Utility Worker

Motor Pool

Todd Frank Lead Mechanic
Jim Hansen Mechanic

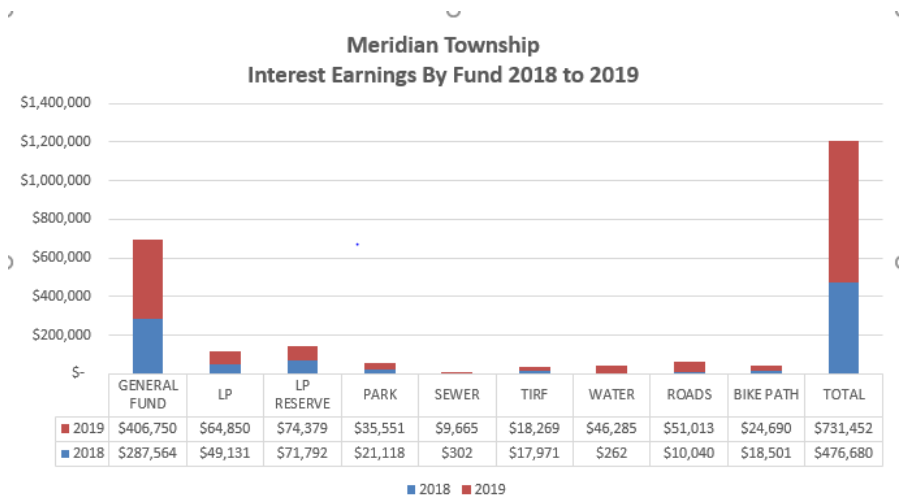
TREASURER'S OFFICE



The Treasurer's Office is required by law to receive and take charge of all funds belonging to the Township and those funds to be distributed to other taxing authorities. These collections are primarily real estate and personal property taxes, but also include fines, licenses, permits, deposits, bonds, and fees. Included in this responsibility is the accurate accounting of all funds. The Treasurer is also required to pay out funds to local school districts. In Meridian Township, these include Okemos, Haslett, East Lansing, Williamston, Ingham Intermediate Schools, and Lansing Community College. Other governmental units also receive tax money from Meridian Township according to each taxing authority's millage. Temporary surplus funds are invested prudently with the emphasis on the safety of the principal as required by statelaw.

During the calendar year 2019, the Treasurer's Office reported:

- Total property taxes collected and processed in 2019 were \$102,919,239.76. In 2018, \$91,411,904.19 in property taxes collected in 2018.
- Total delinquent personal property taxes collected in 2019 for the 2013 to 2018 tax years were \$35,008.78. At the close of 2019, there were \$5,658.39 owed in delinquent personal property bankruptcies, down from \$10,770.46 at the end of 2018.
- In 2019, interest earning for all investments made by the Treasurer were \$732,452. This is an increase of \$254,772 over the \$476,679 in interest income earned in 2018. By Michigan statute, all investments must meet strict criteria for safety, liquidity, and yield.



- There were three new bankruptcies/receiverships filed by businesses in the Township in 2019, down from five bankruptcies in 2018.
- In January 2019, Treasurer Deschaine earned accreditation of Certified Public Funds Investment Manager (CPFIM). This certification is awarded by the Association of Public Treasurers of the United States and Canada.
- The Treasurer worked with the Finance Director to implement a new on-line payment system, Invoice Cloud. This new on-line payments portal provides more options for electronic payments for to our residents, without any additional costs to our tax and utility payers. The move to Invoice Cloud will save Meridian Township approximately \$50,000 annually in bank fees and other costs associated with the previous on-line payment system.
- In October 2019, the Treasurer worked with the Finance Director, and Township Manager, to sell \$11,500,000 in bonds for road improvements in Meridian Township. Due to Meridian's excellent bond rating, the Township financed the bonds at a 1.3% interest rate. The extremely low interest rate will effectively allow the Township to receive an additional \$300,000 of net bond proceeds, over the next three years, without increasing the 1.9429 millage rate.



- The Treasurer served as a Township Board member and attended semi-monthly meetings. This responsibility includes deliberation and voting on all Board actions
- The Treasurer presented quarterly and special reports to the Township Board on Township investments and collections.
- The Treasurer served as a member of the Meridian Township Pension Board, which meets in November to oversee its financial condition.
- Treasurer Deschaine served the Meridian Economic Development Corporation (EDC) as treasurer and attended monthly meetings to report finances and provide input on development projects.
- The Treasurer provided three Consumer Education seminars at the Meridian Senior Center in 2019: Phone, Email and e-Scams (6/18), On-Line Safety (10/8), and Identity Theft (11/19). In all, over 75 residents attended the series that was led by staff from the Michigan Attorney General's and the Meridian Police Department.
- The Treasurer served on the Transportation Commission and attended all of its meetings in 2019.
- The Treasurer attended weekly meetings of the Rotary Club of Haslett & Okemos, and served as director of Kiwanis Club of Haslett & Okemos. As an active member of these groups, the Treasurer improved communications between the Township and the business and non-profit community.
- Treasurer Deschaine attended monthly Meridian Area Business Association (MABA) meetings in order to facilitate communication between the Township and the business community.

- The Treasurer served on the Capital Area Treasurer’s association, and hosted 25 members for the August meeting.
- The Treasurer collaborated with Delhi Township and the City of Mason in the statutory cancellation of delinquent personal property taxes.
- The Treasurer assisted with various Tax Tribunal property tax appeal cases.
- The Treasurer assisted the Finance Director with approval of paperwork for audit purposes.
- Taxpayers can receive free tax information on their own property by using the Township website (www.meridian.mi.us) or calling the Treasurer’s Office at (517)853-4140.

TEAM MEMBERS

Phil Deschaine, Treasurer
Mary Ann Groop, Deputy/Assistant to the Treasurer
Stephaney Guild, Bookkeeper