

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF HIGHLAND  
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
Record of the March 25, 2015 Special Joint Board Meeting  
APPROVED**

**Members Present:** Roscoe Smith, Matt Barnes, Jim Stevenson, Mike Maher, Dale Feigley, Rick Hamill, Cassie Blascyk

**Staff Present:** Melissa Dashevich, Director  
Karen Beardsley, Recording Secretary

**Visitors Present: 53**

SUPERVISOR HAMILL called the meeting to order and stated the representation of the following boards: the Zoning Board of Appeals, Planning Commission, Highland Beautification, HDDA, Library Board, Highland Activity Center and Highland Township Board. He stated the reason for this joint meeting is to bring together all entities, to discuss common goals. Working together is key to accomplishing any task in the township.

Supervisor Hamill described the presentation that he was introducing. He said it was borne from Township Strategic Planning Sessions, where strengths and areas of improvement were defined. He identified the seven areas that are necessary to create a vibrant & desirable community:

Sewer/Septic - a must-have in the business districts and lakes areas - forward thinking and newer technologies will be required to achieve progress in this area

One Stop Ready - this portion is communication based and is critical to building a one-stop program to help inform business owners and investors and provide a way to learn about opportunities, ordinances, and requirements

Community and Business Roundtable - improving the communication between citizens and business owners by way of surveys, interaction, and transportation.

Tech248 - exploring alternative phone service, internet access, cellular service and fiber optic opportunities to enhance current businesses and entice high tech businesses.

Master Plan - needs to be redesigned to meet the needs of our changing demographics, such as senior living, families without children, single person households; upgrade mobile home park facilities and look at tiny homes, multi-family, etc.

Brownfield & Incentives - focus development in existing service areas, through tax abatements, reimbursed activities, private development tax base enhancements and creative property developers.

Parks & Recreation Plan - update our expired plan to investigate new possible uses for these properties, via partnering with Oakland County Parks, grant writing, and the use of trails and pathways to connect neighboring communities.

Supervisor Hamill elaborated on each of these topics, relating many circumstances, hurdles, ideas and solutions for consideration.

Supervisor Hamill also commended all the individuals on the boards and commissions for their commitment and dedication, and realizes the value of their experience and expertise. He also encouraged others to come forth bringing talents and time for the benefit of our community.

Mr. Dittmar, Highland Township Board, commented on the scope of the work, and encouraged the community to reach out and become involved in any of the projects. Supervisor Hamill agreed, and noted several instances in which change has been brought about by individuals who were seeking solutions to their unique situations. Ordinances are constantly evolving, and as new technology and innovation is introduced, community input is crucial to ensure that issues are brought to the forefront and voices are heard.

Additional comments were heard, and several discussions took place. Supervisor Hamill stated that he would be putting each of these projects on the website, and adding updates, so anyone who is interested in becoming involved can learn about the needs and status of each project. It was also suggested that emails be sent periodically to keep the general community informed. Mr. Howe, Highland Township Board, also thanked Mr. Hamill for his efforts and wanted to encourage the general public to participate in community events. Much work goes into putting these events together and the show of support is very important to gauge their success and determine their future.

Lastly, Supervisor Hamill commended the Highland Township Board for their honesty, support, generosity and guidance, and cited each member for their strengths and the benefits and assets they provide on behalf of Highland Township.

**Supervisor Hamill adjourned the meeting.**