

A Meeting of the Meridian City Council was called to order at 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 19, 2026, by Mayor Robert Simison.

Members Present: Robert Simison, Luke Cavener, Liz Strader, John Overton, Doug Taylor, Anne Little Roberts and Brian Whitlock.

Other Present: Chris Johnson, Emily Kane, Curtis Calder, Kyle Ludwig and Dean Willis.

**ROLL-CALL ATTENDANCE**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Liz Strader	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brian Whitlock
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anne Little Roberts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Overton
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Doug Taylor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Luke Cavener
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mayor Robert E. Simison	

Simison: Council, we will call this meeting to order. For the record it is May 19th, 2026, at 4:30 p.m. We will begin this afternoon's work session with roll call attendance.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Simison: Next item is adoption of the agenda.

Overton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Overton.

Overton: There are no changes to tonight's agenda. I move that we adopt the agenda as published.

Little Roberts: Second.

Simison: Have a motion and a second to adopt the agenda. Is there any discussion? If not, all in favor signify by saying aye. Opposed nay? The ayes have it and agenda is agreed to.

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

**CONSENT AGENDA [Action Item]**

- 1. Approve Minutes of the May 5, 2026 City Council Regular Meeting**
- 2. Idaho Power McDermott Substation Water Main Easement No. 1 (ESMT-2026-0104)**

3. **Skybreak Subdivision No. 4 Sanitary Sewer and Water Main Easement No. 1 (ESMT-2026-0106)**
4. **Target at District Ten Mile Water Main Easement No. 1 (ESMT-2026-0107)**
5. **Final Plat for Gasser Land Development Subdivision No. 1 (FP-2026-0005), by KM Engineering, located at the northeast corner of Ten Mile Rd. and Franklin Rd.**
6. **Final Plat for Windrow Subdivision No. 2 (FP-2026-0010) By Conger Group, located at the Northeast Corner of S. Linder Rd. and W. Amity Rd.**
7. **Final Order for Hill's Century Farm Townhomes (FP-2026-0009) by Brighton Corporation, located in a portion of the NE 1/4 of the NW 1/4 of Section 33, T.3N., R.1E.**
8. **Development Agreement (Ledges Business Park H-2026-0008) Between City of Meridian and Rama Group LLC for Property Located at 4120 and 4096 N. Linder Rd.**
9. **Agreement with Killer Whales Swim Team for Use of Meridian Community Swimming Pool**

Simison: Up next is the Consent Agenda.

Overton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Overton.

Overton: There are no changes to tonight's Consent Agenda. I move that we approve the Consent Agenda, for the Mayor to sign and the Clerk to attest.

Little Roberts: Second.

Simison: Have a motion and a second to approve the Consent Agenda. Is there any discussion? If not, all in favor signify by saying aye. Opposed nay? The ayes have it and the Consent Agenda is agreed to.

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

#### **ITEMS MOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA [Action Item]**

Simison: There were no items moved off the Consent Agenda.

## **DEPARTMENT REPORTS [Action Item]**

### **10. Business Improvement District (BID) Presentation and Discussion**

Simison: So, we will go into Department Reports. First item up and, really, the only item under that is Item 10, Business Improvement District presentation and discussion. Turn this over to Mr. Calder.

Calder: Thank you, Mayor and City Council. I'm up here a lot lately. But thanks for having me. This is a PowerPoint presentation based upon your Council memo that was in your packet. This will go into a little bit more detail, but before I start the presentation just a little bit of context. Business Improvement Districts, as you probably well know, are not a new concept, either in America or Idaho. There is quite a few Idaho cities that have Business Improvement Districts. Some of them are probably more successful than others, but, nonetheless, there is quite a few of them. Secondly, one of the things that you might ask is, well, why now? Why would we want to be talking about a Business Improvement District? We haven't had one. We have had some discussions over the years, but they have never really, you know, gained traction. But one of the things that is occurring at the end of this calendar year is that the URD -- the oldest URD in the downtown is expiring in 2026 and that's kind of how the conversation started. The Mayor and I, probably about a year ago, having that conversation, is there another tool or is there something out there that can maybe not replace what a URD does, but -- but some aspects of that in the downtown. So, a good example would be -- I have had situations where a business owner has wanted to replace a trash can, because a car hit it or something and it's damaged. It still functional, but it doesn't look good. We had the ability to go to MDC say, hey, is there some funds available to pay for this replacement of the trash can. They go to the MDC board. MDC board can approve it. Parks Department can help replace it. So, it's kind of a partnership and it gets replaced. So, things as simple as that to -- to some things that might be more complicated. So, that's kind of why answers the why now, but it is something that as we went out and engaged the downtown businesses and tried to focus on property owners where we could, but sometimes it was just the businesses who were leasing property, a lot of confusion about, well, what does MDC and the URD do and what would a BID do and what does the city do, you know. So, there is a lot of education there. So, keeping that in mind, that's the context of this presentation and it is pretty high level, so if you have any questions feel free to stop me, we can get into more detail. So, first question. What is a Business Improvement District? So, in 1980 Idaho legislature passed the code that established the Business Improvement District law. That's what authorizes all incorporated cities in Idaho to establish these organizations. Essentially they are publicly sanctioned, yet privately directed organizations that supplement public services to improve shared geographically defined outdoor public spaces. They can also do projects as well. They are funded primarily through voluntary assessments, which are called special assessments, just like in the recent C-PACE program you guys approved. The same terminology. And, then, additionally, BIDs can be funded through event and sponsorship revenue, donations, grants and voluntary memberships. So, a great example of that is Indian Creek Plaza. If you go to Indian Creek Plaza, yes, they are a

BID, but if you look around you see all the sponsorships. They get a significant amount of money from their sponsorships. They also get donations. There is a way to donate to their -- their project area and, then, I have just noted these three, but there is a lot more in Idaho. Boise, Nampa and Caldwell all have active Business Improvement Districts and those are what the logos are below. So, this question came up again when we were visiting with downtown property owners and businesses. What about urban renewal districts? So, just so there is no confusion for the public or for anyone else here, those are tax increment districts, a completely different animal, different statute and although BIDs are oftentimes located within Urban Renewal Districts, Urban Renewal Districts expire and BIDs don't have to expire, they can be perpetual. So, in the case of Caldwell, at least one other BID is in a former URD, so it's a little bit confusing for people that might have businesses within there. But they are separate organizations and they operate independently and, then, unlike urban renewal districts BIDs are not tax increment tools they have nothing to do with tax increment and as I noted earlier, Meridian's oldest URD, Meridian Urban Renewal No. 1, expires at the end of this calendar year. How is it created? So, in Idaho the process to establish a BID begins with a petition for the proposed district boundaries, uses and estimated costs and, then, as outlined in the code the initiating petition must include signatures from business operators or business property owners in the proposed district who would pay at least 50 percent of the proposed special assessments and that's kind of confusing and I have a slide that will explain that better here in a minute. After receiving the valid initiation petition the City Council would adopt a resolution of intention to establish a district, hold a hearing to consider the establishment of a district and adopt an ordinance to establish a district and, then, once established the City Council have -- has sole discretion as to how the revenue derived from the Business Improvement District is to be used, but may appoint new or existing advisory boards or commissions to make recommendations as to its use and also the statute allows the city to contract with a Chamber of Commerce or similar business association operating primarily within the BID boundaries to manage day to day operations. So, this is a little visual on how that petition works just so everybody's clear. In this example there is ten parcels, four of which are residential, which would not pay the fee. The other six commercial parcels, they would be presented with a petition. Those are some arbitrary numbers of a fee that would be paid. Bigger parcels would pay more, smaller parcels would pay less and in this example the two largest parcels signed the petition, all the other commercial parcels don't, because they are in disagreement, but yet when you total up the mathematics here -- so, that would generate 370 dollars. Half of 370 is 185 dollars. The two largest parcels generate 190, so their vote is 51.35 percent. So, per the statute two parcels out of ten have essentially initiated the petition successfully. Now, that's not what a lot of councils would like to see, you would want to see 80 or 90 percent, but just so everyone understands how you get there, it's not just 50 percent of the parcels and you -- and you are good to go. It could be two big large ones or a bunch of small ones, there is different ways to get there.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Just really quick before we move on. I just want to make sure I understand. Is it based on the value of the property, the -- or how does that voting work?

Calder: Yeah. So, that's a great question, because the statute allows you to create the fees in a lot of different ways and so, for example, Nampa -- the city of Nampa, when they had a first generation Business Improvement District, they just had a flat fee for every parcel. You know, 200 dollars or 300 dollars. You can do it that way. It's probably not very equitable, but that's one way of doing it. Another way of doing it, which is now how Nampa and Caldwell does it, is a percentage of your assessed valuation, a very small percentage of it and so that's -- when we get into that discussion and you look at this map that I'm presenting here, that's how we have come up with these numbers. We are doing a very small percentage of the assessed valuation, which changes from year to year. It can go up. It can go down in some cases. It probably doesn't go down very often. But that's one way to get there. And, then, in Boise's case, because they have a lot of vertical properties, they do it on a square foot basis based on their commercial, because they have sometimes residential on top, which residential is exempted. So, in this map -- and I know it's hard to see --

Simison: Curtis -- Curtis, before we go on, just to put a finer point so that we all understand. For the initiating petition is that decided before it is, because we set the boundaries and ask people to do the petition, or is it those decisions made on what you charge through the process?

Calder: So, that's a great question. So, in order to have a successful initiating process you are going to have to know what the fees are, so you are going to have to make that decision on how you are going to establish fees, as well as define the uses of the fees. In some cases -- let's just say we wanted to use the money for special events. We could make it narrow enough where it's like we are going to charge everybody 300 dollars a year and we are only going to use it for special events. You could do something that simple. In this instance we have come up through, you know, over a year of looking at different boundaries, different ways to mathematically compute this. This is where we have kind of landed. Is this the final? No, because it's up to the property owners. The property owners would have to say, yes, this is how we want it presented, this is the uses to go along with it and they would go out and actually get signatures on that initiation petition and we can't really be involved in that part of it, we can be involved in helping with the maps, helping with, you know, the support services needed to get to that point, but that is going to be something -- in the petition it will have to say this is the boundary, this is the fees, because you will need to know the fees to calculate what the 50 percent is.

Simison: So, Council sets the initial parameters for the business or property owners to determine whether or not they want to sign the petition before they get to the hearing to make final determinations?

Calder: And, actually, it's the businesses -- even if we weren't having this presentation, if the businesses wanted to get together and do their own petition and they brought it in,

I wasn't here and they met all the requirements, that would trigger -- trigger the Council to take action. In this case we have kind of done some of the heavy lifting, met with a bunch of different property owners, tried to, you know, understand what their needs are in an effort to try to assist them to get to that point. So, in essence, we are kind of setting the table, but they have got to actually sit down at the table and eat the food before they bring it back to the -- the Council. They could go out and do a petition and end up with 40 percent, you wouldn't even be able to accept it, because it wouldn't meet the 50 percent threshold. So, I know it's kind of convoluted, but that's how the statute works on this. So, walking through this -- this proposed BID boundary map, it looks a lot like the map you saw last week with the boundary overlay, with the exception that goes a little bit further to the north up to Fairview and you can see that it has two different tiers. There is a tier one in the center, there is a tier two at the north and the south end and what that does is replicates what other BIDs in the area are doing. It doesn't have to be structured at full assessment versus half assessment, it can be different ratios, but the concept is that people in the tier one area will get more value from their assessment fee. So, they are going to pay more. People in the tier two area, they are going to still pay a fee, but they are not going to see as much value in either services or projects, but they should pay something. In this case we are just proposing, okay, they pay 50 percent of what tier one pays. When we talk to most of the folks that we were visiting with they were mostly in the tier one. We did talk to some people in the tier two. We talked to about 50 different property owners individually and there was some support for this type of a concept, because people on the northern end were like, yeah, we wouldn't get a lot of benefit from it, but we would get some benefit. So, as long as we are not paying the full amount we could probably get on board with that. So, that's kind of how that worked. And we can come back to this, too. We probably will have to when we start talking numbers. This is statutory. What can you use the BID revenue for. So, let's say we have the Business Improvement District, we have generated all this money. What can you spend it on legally? You can spend it on a parking facility. Not to say that anyone can, because they are not going to generate that much money, but it is an allowable use. What you do see them spend it on is physical improvement and decoration of any public space in the district. So, beautification. Promotion of public events, which are to take place on or in public places in the district. You would see a lot of that in BIDs. Good example would be Oktoberfest, the car show, those events that are already happening in our downtown would qualify. Acquisition and operation of transportation services to promote retail trade activities within the -- in the district. I'm not sure if, for example, these trolleys that go around downtowns, these motorized trolleys, maybe that's what was envisioned and, then, of course, general promotion of retail trade activities in the district, which is very broad. The examples of allowable uses that are happening in the valley right now that we are very familiar with. Special events marketing, staffing, maintenance contracts, such as snow removal, sidewalk cleaning, administrative software to do the assessment, collections, lighting upgrades, beautification projects, that's what you typically would see in a BID. But I think if you wanted to you could use it for anything under the -- the five allowable uses. So, this is where we might have to go back to the map, but estimated levy rates. If we use the lowest rate that we calculated in that map, 0.001 of assessed valuation per parcel per year or a minimum of 500 dollars -- so, if they -- their assessment was only 385, they

would still pay 500. Or in the other case if it was a large commercial property that maybe generated 20,000 dollars per that formula, 5,000 would be the maximum. So, capped at either end, 500 to 5,000. And, then, tier two, dividing that by -- by two -- so, 50 percent of that, .0005 with a 250 minimum, and a 2,500 annual, you come up with an initial projection of 121,000 dollars and that's at the lowest calculation. We also factored in residential parcels, even though they are not charged, but those do convert over time and so if all of those green parcels converted that could be another 64,000 dollars. So, it would be 185. So, when you apply a higher rate -- so, if you did a .0025 you are going to jump it up to 219,735. If you are going to go .033, that's going to be 266 -- so it would be 266,800 annually. So, you can see, depending on what rate you pick, you generate more revenue. So, this is kind of a synopsis of the stakeholder outreach and this is going to involve everything from meeting with the Chamber of Commerce with their subcommittees, with their board, Meridian Development Corporation, mainly Ashley, working closely with her, and, then, other stakeholders throughout the downtown area and so we have property owners, businesses. We met with some of the nonprofits that wouldn't even be assessed, but just to get their -- their feel for what they thought of it. And, you know, divide it into three -- three buckets, concerns, interests and themes and what are the top three in each one of those? And so concerns, cost versus benefit. People don't want to pay a fee if they don't feel like they are getting a benefit from it. They don't want it just to go into a black hole towards overhead. Past negative experiences. There is some history in the downtown. I'm sure you are all aware of it more so than I of, you know, other efforts, other boards not being able to successfully execute and finger pointing and things of that nature. Overlapping efforts between city and urban renewal agency. I would be remiss if I didn't say that there is some people out there that say, well, what are my tax dollars going for? Of course the city should replace my garbage can and they should replace the banner, that's what I pay taxes for. So, they don't understand what URD was paying for versus what city should pay for, what ACHD should pay for -- there is a lot of confusion there. However, under interests there was almost unanimous agreement that if a BID was established that it should go towards special events and programming and activation of the downtown. They see Indian Creek Plaza and they go we should be doing what Indian Creek Plaza is doing. Heard a lot of that. Visible, tangible improvements, everything from minor, hey, I have got a broken sidewalk, how come it hasn't been fixed? Been walking over it for five years. You know, can the BID fix that? Yeah, the BID could if someone else didn't and, then, beautification and clean sidewalks. I think we have all heard the complaints over the years of the sidewalk issue, especially on weekends and people coming in and the business owners having to clean up their own sidewalk from neighboring bars and things of that nature. That's something that -- in Boise's case that's what their BID does a lot of is clean up after hours, snow removal, things of that nature to assist businesses. The themes. People were relatively open to it. There wasn't a ton of people that said, no way, no how, but they were cautious. Said we are open, but, you know, within reason. Equity and fairness. For example, the people on the north and the south ends they don't want to pay full freight for people, you know, that are getting a benefit right on Idaho Street, for example. And, then, there was a theme with just frustration with past efforts of not being able to get something put together. So, that's kind of a -- taking 50, you know, conversations and boiling it down to some -- some highlights there. So,

everyone here knows this, the public might not be aware, but I'm counting five -- there could be more than that, but five that are -- that I see all the time. Major projects, initiatives or events that are occurring right now simultaneously within the next year or two. Meridian Development Corporation's revised Destination Downtown plan that has come before the board several times getting feedback on. Expiration of the oldest URD at the end of the year. Ahlquist and Pacific Companies Project, formerly Union 93. Nine Mile Creek Flood Mitigation Project. And, then, the community development's downtown overlay project that you heard about last week. So, you know, any efforts on the Business Improvement District would need to be coordinated with these other efforts. We wouldn't want to be stepping on everybody's toes as we are going through this process and we would want to make sure that the property owners understood what -- what our task was and not get it conflated with some of these other efforts. And, then, on top of this, if we were to pursue BID we have had conversations with Idaho commerce about what does Main Street America look like? Can that be implemented with a BID, without a BID? Is it something that would be valuable to our downtown? We believe it would be, but we would want to kind of get the answer to the BID first, because it might look differently. And I think that's about it. Next steps would be things I have already talked -- spoken about. Formation of the BID is intended to be a citizen driven process at this point. We are prepared to work with stakeholders in a support role to advance the mission -- to advance to the initiation petition stage of the process. To get there I would envision at least two town hall type events to try to get people in one room to have a discussion, rather than trying to go out and have 50 individual conversations. Get some feedback, make sure the boundary looks okay. Is the fee assessment what they were expecting? Do they -- is it too high? Is it too low? Do they want a flat rate? You know, what can we do there. We can make those adjustments to -- to boundary, to mapping tools other -- and perform other support activities, but what we can't do is we can't be directly involved in the petition process. So, we have identified a few champions that said we will do it, but they need the tools to do it and that's where we can probably help and so that's kind of where we are at today and open for questions, comments, et cetera.

Simison: Thank you, Curtis. Council, questions?

Taylor: Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Taylor.

Taylor: Thank you, Curtis. Appreciate it. I got a few questions here. I think one of them you answered already, but I'm just going to ask you to clarify. The party responsible for paying the assessed fees is the property owner, not the tenant of the -- the building; is that correct? Like the business?

Calder: It can actually be done both ways and in our conversations with other BIDs there is -- some of those are set up that way and they have all recommended don't do it that way. In your petition make sure you designate just property owners --

Taylor: Okay.

Calder: -- because it's easier to collect from a property owner than a tenant and that's something that -- the statute gives you that flexibility, but the recommendation is do just property owner.

Taylor: Okay. That's helpful. Thank you. Mr. Mayor, if it's okay I just have like three questions here. On managing a BID, I know we can contract with a chamber or some other business entity. Can you give me a sense in Boise, Nampa, Caldwell who actually manages the BID and, then, if there were a scenario here where maybe we don't have a business group or the Meridian Chamber is not interested, what -- what do we do?

Calder: Yeah. So, it can be done a couple different ways and each one -- Boise does it differently than Nampa. Nampa does it differently than Caldwell. And I will go over that in a second. But typically it's envisioned I think statutorily that the board, the city council could actually do use an existing advisory board, for example. Let's say we had a downtown advisory board made up of downtown property owners, that board could be put together -- and this is how Nampa does it. They have a board of downtown businesses. They are actually in charge of day-to-day operations of the district. Now, they don't have really any employee per se, but they use the city's economic development staff to do things like the assessment billings. They contract with their parks department to do garbage removal. Cleaning of sidewalks. So, there is some contract and some contractual obligations on the part of the city in Nampa. In Boise they do it that way, too. For the snow removal. For the sidewalk cleaning. Their BID contracts with the city of Boise to perform those functions, but they have a nonprofit board with staff that runs the organization. So, it's much more formalized. Caldwell takes it even a step further where they have established a nonprofit called Destination Caldwell. They are the managing entity of the BID primarily for the Indian Creek Plaza, But the BID boundaries go a little bit beyond that and they work in concert with the city, but they have quite a bit of overhead with staff. They have maintenance staff for their ice skating rink. They have administrators that run the nonprofit. And so even though they pull in a lot of revenue, a lot of their revenue is expended on overhead. So, in a very simplistic example and how -- when Julia was still here we envisioned at least starting it as, hey, economic development staff could do some things. We can't run everything, but if there was a nonprofit board, whether it be the chamber or some other organization, they could do some of it. It could be a shared responsibility and we wouldn't consume a lot of the revenue in overhead. So, can be done --

Taylor: Can you -- can you clarify when you say contract with the city, like parks department to do something or economic development team. Are we saying like the BID would actually contract with and pay the city for the services?

Calder: Correct. Yeah. That's how city of Boise and their BID works. They actually -- I want to -- I'm recalling this number, but it was a fairly large number, like 40,000 dollars a year that the Boise downtown BID paid the city of Boise to do sidewalk cleaning, snow removal and those things, because they just didn't have the staff to do it.

Taylor: I will ask one more question, then, I will let my Council Members go. I still have some more. I wasn't quite sure when we were talking about establishing the boundaries and the fee structure, what I thought I heard was that the City Council would need to initially decide what the fee structure would look like first. Am I -- I might just be a little slow in tracking that, because that's what I thought I heard, is that we -- when -- if we were to move ahead with this and set this up, we actually would be deciding what that fee structure would be and I might be misunderstanding.

Calder: You would be deciding on it at a later stage, almost retroactively, because it's really based -- like I said, the property owners could put the petition together in a vacuum without our input or guidance and if it met the statutory requirements and it checked all the boxes, you guys would approve it and move on to the next steps of -- of creating the BID, but it could be their idea, not our idea. We are proposing on behalf of staff, hey, this is a reasonable way, this is a reasonable boundary, this is a reasonable way to get to the assessment fee, but it's not the only way to skin the cat and so it's definitely a citizen driven process, but we are trying to assist those citizens to come up with some sort of a proposal that would actually be functional and work and I think that's why these efforts kind of die on the vine is that a group of citizens can get together having a beer and they go, wow, this is a great idea, this is a great idea, you know, and, then, they go, well, who is going to do it? Well, I don't want to do it. I'm too busy, you know. And, so, then it just languishes. Whereas in this project exercise that the Mayor and I have been talking about for a while, city staff in -- in our spare time we were going down and having those conversations and a lot of times some of these businesses aren't talking to one another. It was pretty clear in our conversations that some do, but some don't and some of the big businesses, they are all on board, whereas some of the smaller businesses are like, well, gosh, I can't afford another fee, it will put me out of business. I mean that's how -- the wide range of comments we were getting. So, yeah, probably not a real clear answer to your question, but, yeah, it's something that we don't get to dictate to the -- the -- the businesses, they actually get to propose it to us and if it meets the statutory requirements, then, the Council could approve it.

Whitlock: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Whitlock.

Whitlock: Going on with that line of thinking, again, I didn't see in the statute any rates being set in your proposal that -- or your overview. It does talk about potential --

Calder: Yeah.

Whitlock: -- images and not to exceed certain amounts. And, then, at the bottom you had -- or you could do a different percentage.

Calder: Uh-huh.

Whitlock: And I'm assuming you could change the not to exceed amount as well.

Calder: Correct. You could.

Whitlock: That's entirely up to those businesses as they petition each other and -- and decide what it is that they would like to --

Calder: Yeah. And that's correct. And I think that when we get to that stage with -- with the Ahlquist and Pacific Companies project, you know, pending out there and we have The Lofts and you have these mixed uses, I think in those larger commercial projects you are probably going to have to come up with a square footage calculation, like Boise does, to make sure it's equitable, because, you know, The Lofts, for example, when you look at the Ada county assessor, those -- they are all individually condo'ed and it's really hard to get a base level assessed valuation of what the commercial on the bottom would even be assessed at. You would be guessing. And so probably for those types of scenarios, you know, the commercial on the ground level, going with kind of a Boise model of a -- you know, a -- you know, so many cents per square foot would be the assessment for them. Everyone else might be a percentage of assessed valuation. But it's definitely very flexible. The -- the statute doesn't give a lot of guidance, but those are the three models that are used in the state of Idaho, percent of assessed valuation, square footage or a flat rate and everyone that had the flat rate has advised us don't do a flat rate. You don't generate enough money to do anything and everybody just gets mad at the BID. How come we don't have anything? Well, we don't generate any money.

Little Roberts: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman -- Council Woman Little Roberts.

Little Roberts: Mr. Mayor. Curtis, thank you so much for the presentation. I have got a few questions. You mentioned that the business owners are looking at doing more like event type special things and kind of compared it to Caldwell and if I remember right Caldwell started out with kind of creating the hardscapes that bring the numbers downtown, so -- and started out with a pretty significant -- because I remember some business owners or building owners kind of choked on the first assessment they got and so is downtown wanting to do anything that's a hard scape to bring people downtown or are they just looking at trying to figure out how to do events kind of as is?

Calder: Yeah. They would all love to have a place like Caldwell has a hardscape, whether or not they would be willing to, you know, pay the freight on that is a different question, but they -- they -- of course, we are going through these conversations when we didn't know what was going on with Union 93. So, you know, some of the primary first questions is what's going on with Union 93? How come there is weeds? How come it's not moving? You know. So, we are dealing with that question. Now it's a little bit different environment. There is something that's going to happen there. The Festival Street concept may get implemented. The plaza may get implemented. So, if something like that were to occur in conjunction with that project now all of a sudden they do have some placemaking ability and that's what that whole concept is is Caldwell

latched on to placemaking. We need a place to hold events. So, they -- Caldwell -- the city of Caldwell bankrolled the construction, not the BID. The BID was brought in more as an operator of it once it was established and BIDs just don't generate that much money. So, they really can't be expected to build parking structures and ice skating rinks and things of that nature.

Little Roberts: My next question was going to be if the URD bankrolled it, but you said the city did.

Calder: I think it was a combination actually. They did have a URD. It has since expired and I think the URD and the city of Caldwell collaboratively found the funding to build the Indian Creek Plaza, because there was a lot going on. There was a lot of shared responsibility when they did that.

Little Roberts: Thank you. I think that pretty much covers -- thank you.

Simison: And, Council, I think -- you know, just for from my perspective on some of this, you know, I know -- I think a lot of stuff has happened in our downtown and people have come a little bit to expect money from the URD for events. You know, MDC has been a funder of a lot of the downtown events and activities and, you know, I have stated this to Steve, this was a Concerts on Broadway conversation was I did not see when the city started receiving revenue when the URD went away that we just intended to return that money back to supporting downtown events that was not -- that was not my intention with -- with -- with those funds. So, that really is kind of what drove this is that if the -- if they want to keep having those events and having money for those events this was really the -- the fairest way we felt to try to have collaboration amongst our downtown business partners who, in theory, all receive some value, depending upon their involvement, compared to the city trying to -- to continue to fund things in that manner. So, I think that's where a lot of this conversation has been generated about is what's -- what's replacing the URD for funding of events, you know, and they do fund chamber events, they funded city events, they even funded other non-chamber -- non -- non-city events with their donations and so that's kind of in my mind the base level conversation about what is a BID -- can they do to help fund things the secondary was who is going to do it. And I think that is where the Chamber generally has been thought of as the place that would step in, but they also have their own needs and their own staffing and it's got to be at a high enough level to support their staff to do the work if that's what it's going to be. So, it's a delicate conversation all the way around and if ultimately it doesn't happen it doesn't happen, but it also -- I think it's important for our downtown businesses to understand, you know, we are putting together the FY-27 budget for the city, it does not have any money going into downtown events that were once funded by MDC and our city budget. So, if this is the direction we want to go, but they want those sponsors -- those dollars, this is one way where this could help achieve that outcome.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Curtis, one, thanks for the presentation. This is something I have got a high interest in, but very little knowledge. So, I appreciate you taking some time and walking us through and answering some questions and, Mayor, I appreciate your added context as well. Also thanks for going and doing some like on the ground work with our downtown stakeholders. I think that is such a difference maker is to go really meet people where they are and communicate with them. In your presentation to us you touched on some cities that do this really really well.

Calder: Right.

Cavener: Are there -- I'm not looking for specific cities, but are there lessons learned that is important for Council to consider -- maybe, again, a city that has went down this path that with the knowledge they have now they would have done things differently that we need to be thinking about?

Calder: Yes. And I will just use Caldwell, because Caldwell -- you know, that was one of the things we asked all the BIDs if -- if you had to do it again would you do things differently. You know, a lot of the people we asked at Boise are like the tenth iteration of staff, because they did it in the '80s. There was a lawsuit and there was a lot of history there that they didn't even know how they navigated it. But Caldwell's is new enough that one of the things that they pointed out was be careful about property owners versus businesses on the assessments like we talked about. The collections is a real issue, so not only is it an administrative overhead, it's something the city has to do. It's not something that the contractor does necessarily. So, you have to have some level of -- you know, it can be a pretty simplistic program. I mean we are talking about 170 bills that go out, you know, once a year perhaps or quarterly or however you want to do it. So, it can be something as simple as I set up a spreadsheet with everybody's name and address and we do a mass mailing and we get, you know, 70 percent of them back and they pay. Well, there is going to be a percentage that they don't pay and we are going to have to go spend a lot of extra time getting the collection and that's what Caldwell struggles with to this day is that they don't get full collection and there were people that were opposed to being in a BID from the get go and those people are still there and they are not cooperative. Now, granted, there are very small percentage, because a lot of people see the success and they were great or they have been replaced by other people that have come in and bought property and they are okay with it. But they said, you know, it's like a lot of things when you have that situation you spend, you know, 80 percent of your time going after the 20 percent that don't want to cooperate and one of the things that was -- was interesting, because they have taken over the maintenance responsibility, like garbage collection, cleaning sidewalks, this and that. So, some of those people will pay their fee and let's say they are a low fee payer, like they pay -- I think their minimum is 350 a year. The 350 dollar a year people are sometimes the ones that expect ten thousand dollars' worth of service and they are the ones calling every day. So, that was what I gathered in our conversations with Destination Caldwell of if we could -- if you set up your BID do it a little bit differently to try to minimize that if you can. It's not going to be perfect, but -- and they also mentioned the more people

you get on board at the petition stage, you know, yes, 50 percent is the statute -- you know, the statutory threshold, they said shoot for 80 percent, 90 percent. If you can get that it will make your life easier as you try to manage the -- the ongoing operations.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Is the obligation to pay the fees a tax lien? Like how -- like how does that work? So, I'm just curious, because like if -- so, let's say if someone doesn't pay is it attached to the property like a tax lien and, then, when they try to sell the property they have to clear that lean or like how does that work?

Calder: So, we asked that question of all of the BIDs and all of them gave kind of different answers, because they are set up differently. So, the ones that set it up with businesses they don't really have anything to lean, because it's a tenant and they are there one month and they are gone the next and they can't really -- because they didn't set it up with the property owner, they don't have any type of hammer. We have not advanced to the stage to get with legal to talk about can we do a legitimate lien on a property owner for a special assessment? Would we be able to really collect that? We have talked to Ada county of saying, hey, would you guys be willing to issue the assessments and they said, nope, we don't do special assessments. That's on the cities. So, we do know that and we -- you know, we would love that -- if Ada county would do that, but they won't. So, not a clear answer on if we were to lean them if it would -- if we could actually collect it at time of sale or when a new owner came in, but you might be holding on to that lien for a long time.

Taylor: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Taylor.

Taylor: My other Council Members asked a lot of the questions I did have, but one question -- I'm not sure if you covered it in your presentation. As the downtown grows and more the residential turns into commercial or let's say -- depending on how the assessment is set up, maybe there is more square footage brought in to a particular development that is new to the city and, therefore, they would be maybe assessed a little bit of a higher fee depending on how we set it up, I guess my question is would -- given the dynamics that could change over time, does that -- is that the primary way in which the budget would change and grow? I'm just imagining -- let's say if -- the BID is bringing in a hundred thousand dollars today and, then, in five years, you know, a handful of new people have come in and now it's 150,000. I guess I'm just trying to understand -- you know, let's say if it's set up and, then, Union 93 fully comes on board and, then, suddenly there is a big commercial property in the BID, are we just going to add more revenue to the BID to do more when more people come on or is there any way where it says, hey, this is kind of our budget, we will reduce your assessment every year based on any new ones that come in. I'm just kind of curious if it's a flexible --

Simison: And maybe add in tier two, maybe it needs to become tier one --

Taylor: Yeah.

Simison: -- because they are now doing more things in that area. How do you maneuver within everything? How do you evolve? How do you change? How do you grow it? How do you shrink it?

Taylor: Yeah.

Calder: And the one way you make those adjustments to boundaries, for example, or to rates or to even uses is you come back to the City Council through the ordinance process and you adopt that. So, whatever gets adopted in the ordinance, once the petition comes in and they say, hey, this is our petition, everyone likes it, you guys adopt the ordinance, that's what you live with until you change the ordinance. But the ordinance can be changed in the future as demonstrated by the city of Nampa. In 2024 -- I think pre-2024 they were at that flat rate I discussed, like 200 or 300 dollars. It wasn't working. They came back with a different formula, which is a percentage of the assessed valuation and if you read through their ordinance now they are phasing it in over time. They are starting at one rate and each year the rate goes up a little bit more -- it goes up a little bit more until it matches with what the city of Caldwell has, which the city of Caldwell their tier one is the 0.033 and their tier two is 0.0025. So, that's what Nampa is trying to match. But prior to that it was just flat rate. But they had to do it through ordinance and, you know, I guess there is a risk that in the future who is to say if an ordinance could get passed. I would assume if it was reasonable it would have a good chance of doing that if they had the property owner's support and that's one of the things that we again heard time and time again, work with the property owners, work with the property owners. We know you are going to have businesses with tenants and they are going to want to be involved, but where the real power is is to work with the ownership of the -- the parcels and, then, something else that is interesting, what -- what city of Boise does is they have member -- association memberships, because their downtown has grown over the years and it's popular and more people want to be in their downtown, but they are not in the district and they go, well, how -- how do we get involved? How do we get a seat on the board? How do we do this? Well, you can become an associate member and pay a fee, which goes into the bucket, but you don't have the same, you know, rights as someone within the district. So, that's another thing that you can set this up to get, you know, not just your normal BID special assessment, but set it up so people can donate, so people can give association fees, sponsorships and those types of other creative revenue sources, but -- and, then, one final point I think if you do an assessed value -- a percentage of assessed valuation you kind of cover the growth as assessed valuation grows -- people's assessed valuation grows, so would the revenues back to the BID, assuming you didn't have a recession where all the assessed valuations dropped, which would -- I just think happen mechanically as you did the calculation if that were to occur.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: I think one thing that would be very helpful would be like an example budget, just to see like, you know -- all hypothetical; right? But like what -- what does a -- you know .001 or .0025 be on assessed value. What would that bring people? I think that would be part of this. I think that would be really illustrative and it could help people kind of decide what they think about it. I agree it should really be driven by the businesses that want this and I think that's really important. So, maybe if you are listening to them and talking with them you guys have an idea. Would you take a stab at that kind of -- producing those sorts of materials for them?

Calder: Yeah. I --

Strader: Okay.

Calder: -- we could do something like that. I think where -- when I -- when I visited with legal on this they said you -- you know, support, staff's okay, but city shouldn't be out going, hey, here is what we are doing, can you sign a petition type thing. So, I think there is just a -- a practical expectation that for the maps and the calculations and the budgets and things that's where we can act as a -- as a support role and -- for example, if we are -- if we hold these town halls we can get a lot more feedback with people in a group than we did -- I think individual was helpful as a starting point, but I think it's important for us to get 50 people in a room and hear them all out and really see if they really have the wherewithal to want to get into the petition stage and really take this across the finish line. I think there is three or four larger property owners that have indicated an interest in being the champion and if they are willing to do that I think they have got a good shot at, you know, persuading people that might be on the fence. But without really having business and -- business owners and property owners both -- I think it's important to be both -- you know, if they are not willing to advocate for it I don't think it will ever get back to the City Council.

Strader: Thanks.

Taylor: Mr. Mayor?

Taylor: Yeah. Just maybe a comment kind of concluding some thoughts here. I think the idea has a lot of merit and I appreciate your context about how sort of this conversation sort of has its roots in what's going to sort of replace the downtown Urban Renewal District, because there are a lot of requests to MDC about the concerts and paying for things that, frankly, I have always found to be a little bit off topic or off -- really not aligned with what the Urban Renewal District should be doing, but I understand why there is that desire. So, I think there is value in that, because having something downtown to kind of help people coalesce around something and be organized, I think there is -- there is merit to that and I would much rather be a BID than the URD. I think that's very appropriate. But what you are also describing in some ways is very much what sounds like Downtown Business Association, a membership driven, let's promote

ourselves, let's -- let's bring things down here for our own benefit, but, then, we are layering on just a little bit of enforcement or perpetuity of government action. So, to me I think there is a lot of value and I want to get into it, but it's going to be really important that -- the way we sort of set it up feels like we are not stepping into the role of a nonprofit business association, should -- that should be promoting itself for its own benefit. We have to really -- in my mind we have to establish why a BID, why the city Council, why the city should take this step and why that's important. So, a lot of value in the discussion where it's going. I think we should do it and bring a lot of people in, but when we get down to nailing down the specifics to me that's going to be really important to make sure that we are not stepping over to a place where the private sector should be coordinating and organizing itself and I know there has been stops and starts in downtown Meridian on this. I -- I know that's the history here, too. So, maybe that's part of the conversation. But to me I think that's just kind of really important that we sort of figure out the -- the nuances, because to me I'm a little bit -- there is a lot of questions I have about the actual application of doing this and how we set it up that's going to be really important, but I do think it's valuable that an entity like this could do a lot of good if -- especially if the business owners are opting in -- the majority of them saying this is something that would be really important to us. But, hopefully, that -- to me I just hear, you know, private sector membership organization that could exist and, then, we are just adding a little bit more to it that I want to make sure that it's appropriate, so -- but I appreciate -- this has been very helpful. Thank you.

Calder: Yeah. Councilman Taylor, a lot of communities -- I looked at Missoula's, for example. You know, they have a DBA, they have a BID, they have a URD -- I mean they have got like a five legged redevelopment stool. Not to say you need five legs, but it seems like a lot of communities are using a lot of different tools to get across the goal line and when you talk to people familiar with those communities there is all sorts of back stories and politics and that group doesn't like that group and so you got to be cautious about having too many variables in the equation. But point well taken. I think in a perfect world a downtown business association, they could go have a meeting in a -- in a thing and say, hey, our fees are going to be a thousand bucks a year. We will pool the money and we will go hold a concert. That's in a perfect world. You know how that works, you know, three out of the ten agree to pay the thousand dollars and the others don't and, then, everybody is mad at each other. So, that's where I think BIDs are probably a helpful tool.

Simison: And what I have tried to equate it to in my head -- we are really talking -- this is like CenterCal for downtown, you know, the businesses that are going into The Village, they pay a premium, they -- they have everything taken care of for them, they have events that are put on as a value benefit to everyone and everyone pays that in their rents, you know, that's kind of how they are set up and I think the same can be said even for other shopping centers that, you know, provide joint services to the entire area, whether it's sidewalk cleaning or other types of things, and, unfortunately, in your downtown where you traditionally have individual property owners, so it's hard to replicate those type of activities efficiently and you -- and -- yeah. But that's kind of how I have tried to like in my head articulate, you know, you are kind of creating that and

while the Chamber makes a lot of sense, what the Chamber does not do for all their -- as a membership driven by people opting in, you know, they are not out there taking care of sidewalks for -- for their businesses and so it has some similarities and it has some differences and -- and ultimately that's what the businesses want and are willing to pay for, because it doesn't -- you know, they can -- they can triple that money if they want, people to take care of everything for them, you know, but it's really what do they think that they have time for or don't have time for as a value benefit to it. So, it's a great conversation.

Calder: Well, thank you for the comments. I will note those down and I will certainly report back to the stakeholders that we have had this meeting and see if they -- if they want to get together for some sort of a town hall to bounce off ideas on boundaries and things. Again, it's their -- their process, you know, if they can make it happen they can come back with a petition. So, thank you.

Simison: Thanks, Curtis.

Calder: Yep.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION [Action Item] Per Idaho Code section 74-206(1)(c): To acquire an interest in real property not owned by a public agency; 74-206(1)(d): To consider records that are exempt from disclosure as provided in chapter 1, title 74, Idaho Code; and 74-206A(1)(a): Deliberating on a labor contract offer or to formulate a counteroffer.**

Simison: Okay. Next item up Executive Session.

Overton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Overton.

Overton: I move that we move into Executive Session per Idaho code Section 74-206, Subsection (1)(c), Subsection (1)(d) and 74-206(a), Subsection (1)(a).

Little Roberts: Second.

Simison: Have a motion and a second to go into Executive Session. Is there discussion? If not, clerk call the roll.

Roll Call: Cavener, yea; Strader, yea; Overton, yea; Little Roberts, yea; Taylor, yea; Whitlock, yea.

Simison: All ayes. Motion carries and the item is agreed to.

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: (5:31 p.m. to 6:01 p.m.)

Simison: Council, do I have a motion?

Overton: Mr. Mayor, I move that we come out of Executive Session.

Whitlock: Second.

Simison: Have a motion and a second to come out of Executive Session. All in favor signify by saying aye. Opposed nay? The ayes have it. We are out of Executive Session.

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

Overton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Overton.

Overton: I move that we adjourn our City Council work session.

Little Roberts: Second.

Simison: Motion and second to adjourn the work session. All in favor signify by saying aye. Opposed nay? The ayes have it. We are adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 6:01 P.M.

(AUDIO RECORDING ON FILE OF THESE PROCEEDINGS)

\_\_\_\_\_  
MAYOR ROBERT SIMISON

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE APPROVED

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
CHRIS JOHNSON - CITY CLERK