

A Meeting of the Meridian City Council was called to order at 6:01 p.m. Tuesday, January 2, 2025, by Mayor Robert Simison.

Members Present: Robert Simison, Brad Hoaglan, Joe Borton, Luke Cavener, Jessica Perreault, Liz Strader and John Overton.

ROLL-CALL ATTENDANCE

☒ Liz Strader	☒ Joe Borton
☒ Brad Hoaglan	☒ John Overton
☒ Jessica Perreault	☒ Luke Cavener
☒ Mayor Robert E. Simison	

Simison: Council, we will call the meeting to order. For the record it is January 2nd, 2024, at 6:01 p.m. We will begin this evening's regular City Council Meeting with roll call attendance.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Simison: Next item up is the Pledge of Allegiance. If you would all, please, rise and join us in the pledge.

(Pledge of Allegiance recited.)

COMMUNITY INVOCATION

Simison: Today's community invocation will be delivered by Troy Drake of Calvary Chapel Meridian. If you would all, please, join us in the community invocation or take this as a moment of silence and reflection. Pastor.

Drake: Well, Lord God, thank you so much for this evening and that we can gather here like this. We appreciate so much, God, the freedom that we have in this country and in this great city, this great state, and it's such a blessing. We -- I just ask, God, that you would bless Meridian this coming year even more than you have in the past. We just appreciate so much what we have and -- and, God, we are thinking of those who are not as fortunate, Lord, that maybe someone who is hungry or frightened or cold and I just pray, God, that they would find help, that -- that someone would see them or that they would find a church or services to help them, God, and -- and, you know, we just want to help people and so I pray that you would -- you would see to that. Also, God, we are just thankful for our first responders, all those who, you know, serve us and protect the citizens, God, I just pray that you would protect them this coming year as well and -- and, God, I just appreciate our Mayor and -- and the Council Members, I thank you for -- for those that are incoming and outgoing and -- and -- and that you would bless them, God, give them lots of grace. I pray that their decisions this evening

and going forward would be righteous ones, God, and you would help them, give them wisdom on how to govern our city. So, we just appreciate them and we say -- we just ask that you would bless this evening and it's in your name we pray, amen.

Simison: Thank you.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Hoaglund: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglund.

Hoaglund: For our agenda this evening, Item No. 2, we need to note that that is going to be a roll call vote on the election of new city council officers and do we need one for number one?

Simison: A new roll call vote of the elected's Council as Item 2, with Item 3 being the election of new City Council officers.

Hoaglund: Okay. A new number one, okay, will be a roll call vote.

Simison: For --

Hoaglund: Number two.

Simison: -- number two will be a roll call.

Hoaglund: And this is -- and number two will be number three. It's never confusing up here, folks, at all, so -- so -- okay. We have that. So, Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglund.

Hoaglund: With that amendment I move we adopt the agenda as amended.

Overton: Second.

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

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

PUBLIC FORUM – Future Meeting Topics

Simison: Next we will move on to public forum. Mr. Clerk, did anyone sign up?

Johnson: Mr. Mayor, we do. Casey Feasby.

Simison: Come on up and be recognized for up to three minutes.

Feasby: Thank you very much. My name is Casey Feasby. I live in The Oaks North on the corner of McMillan and McDermott Road. The reason why I wanted to come and talk to you all tonight is because we are having an issue with the school -- specifically Gem Prep and the pick-up and drop-off times that are happening, you know, in the morning and in the afternoon. The issue is is that the school is releasing any student that wants to leave out the back -- that wants to -- essentially, they can go out the back door. The issue is is that parents are taking advantage of that and we have hundreds of cars every day that are picking up in the community. They are speeding, they are parking in front of -- parking in front of driveways or in front of fire hydrants. They are using the walking paths as roads. They are driving on people's lawns. It's gotten to the point where people are actually setting up lawn chairs in our front lawns for 30 minutes to an hour waiting for their students to get picked up. The issue right now is the police officers have said that it's not their responsibility, because it's a public street, which is completely understandable. The school, however, has said that it's not their responsibility, is the fact that they have an agreement with this -- with the HOA, which they don't. There is no crossing guards. There is nobody that's out there making sure that students are getting home safely or crossing the road safely once they leave the premises and the school has basically said, hey, it's -- once they leave our doors it's not our -- it's not our responsibility. Something needs to be done. You know, the community is turning into a parking lot. We have one day a week right now where we are not completely inundated with vehicles due to the school or the church that's in there. You know, I go to church myself, I want to see the churches grow. However, when they are having to use the residential roads to -- to facilitate, you know, it becomes a burden on the community itself. We are at a loss of what to do. The community has been asking the school and the resources around us on what to do, so I'm asking for your help to find a solution, because it shouldn't be the child getting hit and hurt for changes to be made to the policies.

Simison: Okay. We will have someone from our office will follow up with you.

Feasby: All right. Thank you.

ACTION ITEMS

- 1. Installation of Elected Officials**
 - A. Robert E. Simison, Mayor**
 - B. Liz Strader, District 2**
 - C. Doug Taylor, District 3**
 - D. John Overton, District 4**
 - E. Anne Little Roberts, District 5**

Simison: Thank you. Okay. Then with that we will move on to Action Items, which is the installation of elected officials. We will move down to the podium and I will be sworn in by the clerk and I will follow swearing in and ask each of you at the appropriate time, given by those that you would like to, to join you for the swearing in and, then, afterwards we will come back and make any remarks that people would like to make at that point in time, if that works. All right. And if my family would like to join me down at the podium I would appreciate it.

Johnson: You can repeat after me. I, state your name, do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Idaho and that I will faithfully discharge the duties of Mayor of the City of Meridian according to the best of my ability, so help me God.

(Repeated by Robert Simison.)

Johnson: Thank you.

Simison: I don't have my piece of paper to know who is coming up next.

Johnson: Mr. Mayor, Council Woman Strader.

Simison: Next up will be Council Woman Strader. If you would raise your right hand and repeat after me. I, state your name, do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Idaho and that I will faithfully discharge the duties of City Council Woman of the city of Meridian, according to the best of my ability, so help me God.

(Repeated by Liz Strader.)

Simison: Congratulations.

Strader: Thank you.

Simison: Mr. Mayor, next is Councilman Doug Taylor.

Simison: Good evening. Raise your hand. Perfect. Like you have done this before. Even -- even though you haven't. That's correct. I, state your name, do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Idaho and that I will faithfully discharge the duties of City Councilman of the city of Meridian, according to the best of my ability, so help me God.

(Repeated by Doug Taylor.)

Johnson: Mr. Mayor, next is Councilman John Overton.

Simison: Raise your right hand and repeat after me. I, state your name, do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Idaho and that I will faithfully discharge the duties of City Councilman of the city of Meridian, according to the best of my ability, so help me God.

(Repeated by John Overton.)

Simison: Congratulations.

Johnson: Next is Anne Little Roberts.

Simison: Already in position. Love it. I, state your name, do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Idaho and that I will faithfully discharge the duties of City Council Woman of the city of Meridian, according to the best of my ability, so help me God.

(Repeated by Anne Little Roberts.)

Simison: Congratulations. I would ask the Council to please rejoin their seats or join for the first time as the case may be. So, before we move on to Item 2 I will ask if any of the people who were sworn in have any comments that they would like to make at this time.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: I do have a lot of comments, so buckle in. First of all, I would just like to say thank you to the voters of Meridian and to the residents of District 2. I am humbled that you are putting your trust in me and I know what an important job this is and it's with great honor that I will serve all of you. Thank you. I have a lot of thank yous. I'm very proud of the grassroots campaign that my team ran and so I'm going to do a few thank yous. To all the folks in public safety who support us every day and keep our city safe, thank you. Thank you to the Meridian firefighters for supporting me. You are a force of good in our community. I was so proud to receive your endorsement, your support and your friendship. The Fraternal Order of Police. I also appreciate your support. It was critical having the largest voice of law enforcement in the state of Idaho beside me was incredible. Three women who are an absolute force of nature. Number one is Sally Reynolds. Since getting involved as an advocate in our community we became friends and she watched my decisions and deliberations on our Council. She painstakingly analyzed all the decisions that our City Council has made and we are better for it. I'm proud to have her support and her friendship. Sally Reynolds personally knocked on thousands of doors for me and I appreciate her steadfast support and her friendship. Jessica Perreault -- there you are. She has been a strong leader on our Council and she never feared facing the big issues head on. She hit the ground with me day after day and you will be sorely missed on our Council. Mary Jones. Mary has been a huge

motivator for me. She was the ultimate party planner in my campaign. She did a phenomenal job, especially giving me more support and helping me in the neighborhood of Paramount. Randy Spiwak and I served on the Solid Waste Advisory Committee and since I asked him to support me last spring he never wavered. Thank you, Randy. To my friends Amy, Holly, Alexis, Genesis Milam, former council woman, Rachele Klein, Melissa Barnard, my fairy godmother who is out there, each of you provided moral support and encouragement. I want to thank especially our city employees for keeping your eye on your jobs, for moving our CARE values every day and throughout this election not letting it distract you from your important work and making Meridian the best city. It is an honor to serve our city together. Thank you for giving me the chance to serve you again. I would like to thank outgoing City Council President Hoaglund. I appreciate you and it was a tough campaign, but I know your heart is true and I'm glad that we can remain friends and that I can seek your advice and support going forward. I have big shoes to fill. Finally to my family. First to my parents who are a critical part of our circus. I could not have done this without your incredible support, especially anchoring our family with your caring grandparenting during the campaign and thank you to my kids, Evan and Lori and Ezra and Ava. Evan and Lori did a great job door knocking with me, boosting me when I needed support and being my cheerleaders. And, finally, I saved the best for last, my husband Chris. Hates social media, hates politics and hates attention, but he deserves a big public thank you and recognition. I want to especially thank and honor my husband Chris. Honey, you are my rock. You have stood by our family through everything I have ever wanted to accomplish in life and building our dreams together. You are a true partner in love and in parenting. I'm so proud of the beautiful family that we have built together. Thank you for being so strong for us through thick and thin. Love you.

Overton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Overton.

Overton: I'm going to do this a little different. I was appointed a year ago. In fact, tomorrow will be exactly a year. So, I just did this. But I'm going to reverse things, because the person I forgot to thank last time -- and luckily the Mayor kept her from leaving the building -- I'm going to thank first, which is my wife. It took her a few weeks to figure out that every time I said I had a meeting I had a meeting and there were a lots of them when I first started out. There were times in this position that it feels like a full-time job at city council pay, but it's the passion that knows you are doing the right job for the right reasons. It's -- it's been incredible. It's the -- the friendships that I have had for 25 plus years with members of this city. It has just gotten better. If it wasn't for the people that sit up here and for the people that work for the city, I probably wouldn't be as passionate about working for the city and serving it. It's a pretty amazing place and I just want to make sure it continues to remain that way and just serve as long as I can and I think everyone that works for the city -- past city council members, you have all had a guiding amount of force in my life watching you do the job and watching you lead this city and I thank you all and especially my wife. And my grandkids do not understand what I do on Tuesday nights and that's okay. Thank you very much.

Simison: Councilman -- whoever you are.

Taylor: I know, it's a new --

Simison: It's a new one. Councilman Taylor.

Taylor: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Taylor.

Taylor: I will figure it out. It's a little different from his vantage point. Well, I wasn't prepared to say anything tonight, because my first order of business was do no harm, but I will say a few words since it would be appropriate. I do want to echo a little bit what Council Woman Strader said about being elected. I have been involved in campaigns and politics for close to 20 years and it's a little different experience to be elected, as opposed to working with those who are elected, and the night of our election night was -- brought feelings and emotions I had never really felt before in terms of feeling entrusted by the citizens of Meridian who voted for me. It was an honor and I felt it deeply and I was really touched and really excited and I have been very excited for the last couple of months to sit here. I have never been nervous until I was driving to the building tonight and I realized this is -- this is getting real and it's too late to back out and so -- but I do appreciate the trust that's been entrusted with me by the citizens of my -- my district. I want to -- I want to acknowledge Riley Gilbert, who is here, who helped me with my campaign, who personally also knocked on I think about 1,200 doors and a lot more than I did, but all those who helped me. My kids knocked on a few doors. They helped me out and that was great and I really appreciate it. But I just -- I do want to mostly thank my family. My wife Adele, my children Ava, Torin, Brock and Lindy, this means a little more time away from home for me and we had a family discussion when I was considering running and we explained to them what that meant and so I just really appreciate their support and their love and if you look at them, people ask, well, why do you want to run and I just look at my family and say, well, this is a wonderful place to live and I want it to stay that way and I just look at my family and my kids and it reminds me why we serve and above all I want to thank my wife, who is my sweetheart and not just that she picks up the slack when I'm gone, but she encourages me to serve and to be a better person and so I really appreciate that. In my family we were always taught the importance of service, whether that was in your school, in your church, in whatever way and so this is an opportunity for me to serve in this capacity and I'm very grateful and humbled for that. I do hope to stand on the shoulders of all the good people who have served before, members of city council and others, and I'm really excited about that to serve with my colleagues here up on the dais. It's going to be a great privilege and so I just really appreciate it. I hope you will be patient and let me learn with you and the Hoaglund Rule -- I think of some patience and understanding when we make mistakes is going to be in full effect on me. So, with that I thank you for the honor.

Little Roberts: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Little Roberts.

Little Roberts: Mr. Mayor, it is an honor to be back. It's been four years. I had the privilege of serving prior and really honestly didn't think that I would do this again, but I had so many people reach out and it has been such a privilege to serve and through the campaign, Mr. Mayor, you were such a support. Many of you were so excited to be back with Luke and Joe. Hopefully, Joe, you are still listening to us. Stuck in the airport. But just -- I was not prepared to speak either tonight, but just want to thank so many people that worked hard. My son Nick and bonus son Garrett were out putting up signs and doing the things that I needed to do. Nick was always there as an emotional support. Both of you have been. I'm just so proud of you two boys and just thank you so much for being here tonight and thank you so much, Fire, for your amazing support and walking and knocking and talking to me. And Police, Fraternal Order of Police, it's been an honor that you selected me and so many of you that have become friends reached out. Couldn't do things individually, but were always there to say, hey, we are excited and -- and want you back and that has meant a lot to me, because my biggest reason for running again are the people that work for Meridian. We have got an amazing team here and the citizens benefit so greatly because of the amazing team that the city has and I love Meridian. I chose it 20 plus years ago as my home and want to be able to give back and this is my way of giving back to the community. So, thank you for those of you that went out and worked and those of you that voted for me, it's greatly appreciated.

Simison: I want to start off by thanking my family. You know, that's -- the last four years have been unique to say the least. Challenging at times. And we try to balance it all in the house with the -- as best we can, but I still know I would never be able to give to you what you deserve. So, thank you for letting me serve. You all are the reason why I get up, why I come to work and what I try to do for our community, but I know I don't say it enough, maybe this is what I had to do in order to make that happen, but I value you all more than you realize, more than I say and thank you for sharing me, but the community I love you very much and, you know, four years ago when I did this my sister and my family that was here to be part of it -- and I didn't ask them to come back and I don't even think I told him that we were doing it and maybe they will go online and watch, but, you know, the support that came through all of my family in different states here locally, it means more to me than I really can say in that respect. So, Roy, Kent, dad, mom, who was there -- who are not here, I value you all for your support in this endeavor and many more beyond that. Okay. So, I got that done. But, you know, the cutting back into this role and when I -- when I set out four years ago I said if I didn't make a difference I wouldn't -- I wouldn't try to come and run again and I would like to think that the last four years we have made a positive difference in the community. You know, we set things up. We continued on a path that was laid out, but I think we made advancements to the community in a way that are being felt every day by the residents, by our employees, by our businesses, by our visitors and beyond and I think that's because it's been by the great work of the employees that are here, by our directors for their leadership that they show, by our Council for the way they think and process information and make decisions and some of those were hard decisions. They were big

decisions and I think we weathered that as well as we could over the last four years. But as I said during the campaign, there is more to do and we have achieved a lot, but we are not there yet. When you have a growing, evolving, changing community I don't know that you can never be there, quite frankly, but we are -- again, we are going to find a way to move the community forward every day together to make things happen. To those out in the community that supported the campaign, you know, like I say, it was a little different this time where I got to run citywide and everyone else got to just take a little sliver, but it was still a very interesting unique opportunity and I want to say thank you to the multitudes of people who put signs in their yards, who reached out, who did letter writing, who volunteered their time at night, on weekends, who donated, because it takes the entire team to make something happen. I think we fought for something during this last election. We fought for the heart and soul of our community. And I think it was very clear when that occurred what the committee wants, where we are headed as a community, what's important to us as a community and so I just want to say thank you to the voters for recognizing that, showing up, making your mark dark and letting us move forward together for the betterment of our community. So, with that thank you. I am excited for the next four years and look forward to the challenges that lay in front of us that we don't even know and addressing the things that we do already know that are going to be there to guide us day in and day out.

ROLL CALL ATTENDANCE

Simison: And with that I will ask the clerk to call the roll.

Johnson: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Councilman Borton.

Borton: Here. Can you hear me?

Johnson: Thank you. Council Woman Strader?

Strader: Here.

Johnson: Councilman Taylor?

Taylor: Here.

Johnson: Councilman Overton?

Overton: Here.

Johnson: Council Woman Little Roberts?

Little Roberts: Here.

Johnson: Councilman Cavener?

Cavener: Here.

Johnson: Mayor Simison?

Simison: Here.

2. Election of New City Council Officers

Simison: Item 3 is election of new City Council officers.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: A couple of quick notes. The job of Council President is often not appreciated for the amount of time and effort and energy that it takes to lead us as a Council. As staff can attest, if you ask the City Council what do you want for dinner, you are going to get seven different answers and -- and the role of Council President is kind of to convene us all and work with us together and so I assume, Mayor, we want to probably do a Council President nomination and vote and, then, a Council Vice-President nomination and vote?

Simison: Sounds like a great plan.

Cavener: Okay. Great. Thanks, Mr. Mayor. So, with that I would like to nominate Council Member Joe Borton to be our Council President. Council Member Borton has previously served as a Council President and I can attest to the time and effort that he puts into being a voice for us as the council, working collaboratively with the Mayor to represent our community. I think he would be a fine Council President.

Simison: Do I have a second?

Overton: Second.

Simison: I have a motion and a second. Excellent. Are there other nominees for Council President? If not, all those in favor signify by saying aye. Opposed nay? The ayes have it unanimously and Joe Borton is our new city Council President.

Borton: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Just thank you. I'm excited for what 2024 has in store with this team. A lot of ideas and plans underway with collaboration. I know we can do some great things this year. I appreciate that this. Thank you.

Simison: Okay. Thank you. Next up?

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Likewise, I think the -- maybe because I was Council Vice-President once, I think it's the most important position on the Council for a couple of reasons. It requires a lot of tenacity and a lot of grace. The Council Vice-President is a teacher in many ways in kind of guiding us and giving us a devil's advocate perspective no matter how easy it is for us to come to a conclusion and so it's my distinct honor and privilege to nominate Liz Strader as our Council Vice-President. I have thoroughly loved working alongside Council Member Strader for these next four years and know she will be an exceptional vice-president and will do a remarkable job about leading our Council.

Borton: Second.

Simison: I have a motion and a second. Are there any further nominations? Hearing none, all in favor signify by saying aye. Opposed nay? The ayes have it and Council Woman Strader is elected Vice-President.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Thank you. It's --

Simison: Council Vice-President Woman Strader.

Strader: Thank you. That is a mouthful. So, we can shorten it to Council Woman Strader. I really appreciate that and I look forward to helping to assist President Borton and learning from him and helping the whole team. Thank you.

FUTURE MEETING TOPICS

Simison: All right. Well, with that anything under future meeting topics? Or do I have a motion to adjourn?

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: I move that we adjourn.

Simison: Motion to adjourn. All in favor signify by saying aye. Opposed nay? We are adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 6:37 P.M.

(AUDIO RECORDING ON FILE OF THESE PROCEEDINGS)

_____/_____/_____
MAYOR ROBERT SIMISON DATE APPROVED

ATTEST:

CHRIS JOHNSON - CITY CLERK