

**Meridian City Council Work Session**

**April 9, 2024.**

A Meeting of the Meridian City Council was called to order at 4:31 p.m. Tuesday, April 9, 2024, by Mayor Robert Simison.

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

Also Present: Chris Johnson, Tina Lomeli, Bill Nary, Steve Siddoway, Crystal Campbell, Shawn Harper, Joe Bongiorno and Dean Willis.

**ROLL-CALL ATTENDANCE**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Liz Strader	<input type="checkbox"/> (vacant)
<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 call this meeting to order. For the record it is April 9, 2024, at 4:31 p.m. We will begin this afternoon's work session with roll call attendance.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Simison: Next item up is adoption of the agenda.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: We have one change to the agenda. We will remove Item 9 from the agenda and with that change I move that we adopt the agenda.

Overton: Second.

Simison: Have a motion and a second to -- 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 agenda is adopted as amended.

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

**CONSENT AGENDA [Action Item]**

1. **Approve Minutes of the March 26, 2024 City Council Work Session**
2. **Approve Minutes of the March 26, 2024 City Council Regular Meeting**

3. **Approve Summary Minutes of the April 1, 2024 City Council Special Joint Meeting**
4. **The Cleaning Authority Water Main Easement (ESMT-2024-0014)**
5. **Session Parkway Pedestrian Pathway Easement (ESMT-2024-0046)**
6. **Spurwing Acres Sanitary Sewer and Water Main Easement (ESMT-2024-0050)**
7. **Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law for Kilgore (H-2023-0063) by Alexi Kilgore, located at 1105 N. Meridian Rd.**
8. **Final Order for Foxcroft Subdivision No. 2 (FP-2023-0031) by Kent Brown Planning Services, located at 3500 W. Pine Ave.**
9. **Final Plat for Millwood Subdivision (FP-2023-0011) by Epic Development Victory, LLC., located at 1975 E. Victory Rd. Vacated**
10. **Second Addendum to Interagency Governmental Agreement for Waiver of Costs and Fees Between the City of Meridian and West Ada School District**

Simison: Next up is the Consent Agenda.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: With that change I move that we approve the Consent Agenda, for the Mayor to sign and Clerk to attest.

Overton: 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 from the Consent Agenda.

**DEPARTMENT / COMMISSION REPORTS [Action Item]**

## 11. Parks and Recreation Commission Annual Update

Simison: So, we will move on to Department/Commission Reports. First up is Item 11, Parks and Recreation Commission Annual Update and Mandi will be presenting.

Roberts: Good afternoon, Mayor, Council Members. So great to be here with you this afternoon and let me tell you I am so proud to be serving on the Parks and Recreation Commission. What a great Parks Department we have. Great staff. It's just my pleasure. I grew up in Meridian and to be here, you know, at this stage of my life and representing Parks and Recreation is just a true delight. So, what I would like to do is I have a presentation -- and thank you to Ms. Shelly Houston for helping me put this presentation together. I want to walk through some of the goals that we have as a Parks and Recreation Commission and give you an update as to some of the things that we are accomplishing as we go along to meet those goals and a lot of it has to do with the great staff and their work. So, first of all -- go to the next slide -- our mission -- am I to be turning my own slides by the way? Okay. Press page down or -- right arrow. Thank you. Okay. Well, here we are. I do not know when this photo was taken, because I wasn't there, but it was fairly recent and this represents some of our -- where we sent additional commissioners to the commission and, then, of course, John and I were not in the picture, but we are still glad that we have diversity of representatives and Elle Hood is our youth representative. Elle. So, it's quite great -- great to have her with us as well. So, just to kind of take a look at some of our goals -- and let me just say our overall mission is to enhance our community's quality of life by providing innovatively designed parks, connected pathways and diverse recreation opportunities for all citizens of Meridian that create lasting memories and, boy, are we doing that, you know, all we have to do is go out to -- to our great parks, places like Discovery Park that's been, you know, opening up in different phases and seeing that we are really setting the pace for the region with what we are doing. Our meetings are held generally the second Wednesday of each month at 5:30 here in City Hall. Our meetings are live streamed and open to the public and, boy, we would love to invite people to attend our meetings. It would be great to have folks come and -- and listen and -- and provide comments. So, each year we set goals as a commission. We have ten goals that we are actively working towards currently and so our first goal is -- and we do prioritize these by the way, so these are in order of priority, but our first goal is to participate in the development of the pathways master plan update and I know that we are planning to embark upon that project soon. It will be a guide for pathway development over the next 20 to 50 years. The city has already done an incredible job of inventorying their system, monitoring improvements needed and completing the gaps and working with those. Recently the city selected Alta Consulting to assist with the project and we are expecting that that project will take approximately one year to complete and we will be working with staff as we complete that work. So, in addition to supporting the master planning effort, just supporting on an ongoing basis the development of a connected pathway system across the city, with a focus on user experience, amenities and improved connectivity. So, over the past year we have seen major progress in our pathway system, including work along the Five Mile Pathway, which is a priority pedestrian route, including the golden spike, a segment of the pathway that connects

Ten Mile and Black Cat Roads and a new pedestrian bridge across Nine Mile Creek that you may have seen that was just delivered and installed not too long ago. So, last month we also celebrated the ribbon cutting of a new pathway segment that connects Mary McPherson Elementary School to the nearby Reflection Ridge Subdivision, not too far from where I live, and really provides students with a safe route to school and eliminates the need for some students to ride the bus, which is really a wonderful need there that -- that's been served. So, if we go to just a few photos of some of these events, including some of the wonderful public art that is part of trailheads, as well as some of the ribbon cutting and activities that I just mentioned. This is the bridge over Nine Mile Creek and this new pathway will connect with several miles of existing pathways to the southeast, resulting in over eight miles of connected pathways along Five Mile Creek, which is the longest pedestrian route in Meridian to date. Okay. Moving on. Goal three is super exciting, again, because so much is happening at the Lakeview Golf Course. So, our commission is supporting the improvements that are in process and future improvements, as well as those that are already happening before our eyes, including the clubhouse and patio improvements and new on-course restrooms that are being installed. So, the remodeling efforts are really going extremely well now, if you folks have been out there lately, but the weather's getting nice, so I'm sure more people will be going out to enjoy these improvements. We have been taking care of painting, carpeting, furnishing. There is a custom -- custom golf bar top. We got to see it in our meeting last week. It's quite extraordinary. I think that will just be drawing the golfers in left and right to see this new bar top and, then, we do plan to hold a ribbon cutting for the remodel in early May. That date will be announced soon, so stay tuned for that. And two new on-course restrooms also will be added this year and we will be adding two planned for next year as well. So, here are just some photos of some of the improvements that are happening out at the golf course, including interior and exterior views. Work on the patio, including shelter area, new furnishings and whatnot. There will also be a new putting mat of artificial turf that runs the entire length of the driving range. So, give that other golf place a little bit of a run, won't we? Because I won't name that place. Go for it. Participant in the partnership with Meridian Arts Commission by adding themed by -- to add theming and identify reinforcing art in our parks along pathways and a focus this year is on Discovery Park, Seasons Park and Chateau Park, which is very exciting. If some of you have been out to Discovery Park you perhaps have seen some of the artwork that's been installed out there, including the benches, which are really interesting designs made out of recycled materials and some of the pieces that are really interactive, you kind of need to walk around to get different views and understand, you know, what -- what the art is all about to really experience it. This is the -- if you haven't been out there to see the new enhancements at Seasons Park with the theme of seasons and different colors throughout the seasons and these kind of translucent panels really light up with sun shining through and it's just so dramatic when you are out there experience -- experiencing them in person in the changing colors and what an enhancement to kind of an older park in our community; right? So, really cool. Chateau Park, which is by where my mom lives, we are talking about installing some artwork there. In the early stages of working through some theme concepts and working with local artist Ken McCall to create some art elements that will be located there. So, again, one of our older parks, but an opportunity to really

recognize our history and what's special about our community through the art that -- the art project that will be installed there. All right. Almost halfway through. So, everyone is super excited about our new community center and I know the process is moving forward. We as a commission will be participating in the design process and programming efforts, working of course with staff and understanding, you know, what our needs are for the community center. The new site that is being reviewed for the community center is adjacent to Settlers Park as shown in this map and it's been tentatively selected as the new Meridian Community Center site. So, the purchase sale agreement goes before City Council and the West Ada School Board soon and there will also be public hearings on this matter. Once this is approved we will move forward into the concept design portion of the project and in addition to a new community center the property will also accommodate additional parking, which is important for this location, and it will be useful for those attending athletics at Sellers Park, which has a lot of demand for parking there on an ongoing basis. So, pretty exciting to be a part of that project as it moves forward. Another specific project is the replacement of the Settlers Park splash pad. Just a little bit of a photograph of construction underway, which will install an all new splash pad at the park. The previous splash pad had been in place for more than 15 years. That's the other thing that I love about Meridian parks is we take such good care of our parks and our facilities. They last a long time, but they don't last forever, so we do have to make replacements and make some changes as you all know. So, thank you for being willing to invest in these improvements that are needed. And, you know, one of the things that -- that we learned from these projects is that trying to find parts, for example -- over time they become obsolete, it's hard to find them, so we just have to replace some of our facilities from time to time, which was the case with -- with the splash pad. All right. So, every year there are a number of different park improvements and enhancements that happen throughout the year and we function as kind of a sounding board for those as the commission, so staff and others will bring those projects to us and we will look at different aspects of those and make comments and provide guidance. So, that's really an important part of our job. There is really a wide variety of those kinds of things that come through, anything from playground replacements, to updated signage and, then, you know, parts and pieces of different parks. Discovery Park has been a big focus as you can imagine. One of our biggest. So, some of the more recent things that we have been involved in include the replacement of the Chateau, Bear Creek and Tully Park playgrounds. The remodel of Home Court space six to create classroom and activity space. Plenty of new cherry trees at Kleiner Park. Of course the development of Discovery Park phase two. The skate park murals at Tully Park. Addition of pickleball courts at Kleiner Park and the donation of additional land from the Hill family to Hillsdale Park. All right. Goal eight is really about collaborating and engaging partners and other task forces and commissions and entities and we do this in a number of different ways, whether it's collaborating in workshops or outreaching in partnership opportunities, you know, we -- we frequently invite certain entities to come in and give us updates. We had a great presentation from the Lions Club rodeo a few months ago, which was super interesting to me to understand that history of the rodeo and -- and how that's evolved over time. We work on community service projects together and so, you know, just to list a few of our frequent collaborators -- oops. Sorry. I will go back. You know, Meridian Youth

Baseball and softball. Meridian P-A-L. Meridian PAL. The Main Street Market. Ada county parks and waterways. Co-op -- Co-op Gardeners, Republic Services, Idaho Fish and Game, West Ada School District and many others are involved and linked with us as a commission and as a staff. All right. Let's talk about the pool. Pretty exciting as well to see how the city has really done so well with assuming the responsibility for operations of the pool. I used to swim there when I was a kid and it's today still a very lively great place for -- for our community to enjoy swimming and swimming lessons throughout the summer and so a number of different improvements have been made to make sure that the pool is really in tip top condition and it's being provided in a safe and efficient manner as a facility for our community. You know, some of the improvements that I'm sure you have noticed out there include new fabric shade structures, new lifeguard chairs. A diving board was replaced and we are anticipating summer opening Monday, June 3rd, in case folks want to know about that and the hiring of lifeguards, which is always a big deal every year trying to find enough lifeguards. That's going really well. We anticipate being able to offer some weekend open swim hours this year in addition to the weekday open swim and swimming lessons. So, wonderful news on that regard. Oh, did I go too fast? Maybe I did. Sorry. All right. Last -- last, but not least, we are really committed to improving our communication and engagement. As we look out to the community we want more people to know about us and to be involved and to share comments with us. So, we are going to be having more of a -- of a face on social media, Instagram and other venues and we just want to improve and broaden our communications to engage the community and disseminate information. So, with an Instagram account for Meridian Parks and Recreation and for Discovery bike and skate park that is -- those are some recent activities that have really helped us kind of create more of an online presence and hopefully garner a bit more attention out there in the community. And, then we are also developing a monthly e-newsletter that highlights relevant news, information, upcoming classes, activities and events and that will be e-mailed to everyone that is in our Rec One database. So, I just want to close by covering some accolades and awards that we really need to mention and recognize our folks for. So, in February 2022 at the City of Meridian's annual all golf meeting recreation coordinator Jenna Fletcher was presented with one of the city's prestigious Care Champion Awards. So, we really want to congratulate Jenna. Mayor Robert Simison was also honored -- also honored. Excuse me. Seasonal staff members Darrell Freter pictured and Sterling Hadley, not pictured, with Meridian Way coins for their role in assisting a resident who needed help with their child during a visit to Settlers Park. Seasonal staff member Andrew Carlson was also awarded a Meridian Way coin by Mayor Simison for voluntarily assisting a citizen who was struggling to load some heavy bags of concrete into the back of his truck. So, we -- we thank our citizens for that and it is one of the things that we love about Meridian is just our community and how helpful we are to each other. So, we really want to recognize that. Let's see. If this was for the last -- last set of talking points. But we will move on. So, very recently we had a team go up to the Idaho Recreation and Parks Association Awards, which is IRPA. This photograph is actually from last year's awards, which we won some awards last year, but this year hot off the press, thank you, Shelly, we have breaking news. We were awarded outstanding innovative program for some of the play equipment that we replaced. We actually repurposed that across the country. I'm sure you guys heard

about that. Across the world. And being able to provide that equipment, which was still in good working order to third world countries for their use was a great honor for us and it also resulted in our city being awarded the Outstanding Innovative Program Award. We also were awarded -- and this just happened last week, right, Steve? Yeah. I think so. We also were awarded the Discovery Park phase two project as an outstanding park or facility award and, boy, is it; right? It really is. And, then, last, but not least, our own parks Director Steve Siddoway was awarded -- this is very prestigious -- the Dr. Leon Green Fellowship Award, which is -- and Steve didn't want me to say this, but I'm going to say it anyway -- it's the highest and most prestigious individual honor award given by IRPA to recognize vigorous activity in the parks and recreation field. So, I would like to give a round of applause for everyone, including Steve. So, I think that covers all of the points I was going to make tonight and I just want to thank you all so much and I'm available to stand for questions. We will try to answer them. I might have to call on Director Siddoway to help, but --

Simison: Yeah. Thank you. Council, any questions? And I think that was a little bit more of a department report than necessarily a commission report all the way around, so, yes, you can phone a friend.

Roberts: Thank you.

Little Roberts: Mr. Mayor?

Overton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Little Roberts.

Little Roberts: Mr. Mayor. Mandi, thanks so much for your presentation. It was wonderful. I am such a huge fan of our whole system. It's amazing. I'm just having finished four lessons at Home Court in pickleball, are we catching up with the demand for pickleball courts would be my question?

Roberts: Yes. And that is a phone a friend answer that might be needed. I know from some of the presentations that staff has given us they are really trying. They are working on that, so -- yeah.

Siddoway: Thank you, Mr. Mayor and Council Woman Roberts. The -- I don't know if there is any true catching up. The demand is -- is exponential, but we continue to add pickleball courts. I just had an interview just yesterday with a reporter doing a story on pickleball and the demand for it in the community, so you will probably see that coming out in the Idaho Press with their summer activity guide, but just in the last couple of years we have added four new courts at Kleiner Park and, then, in October we opened six new courts that are dedicated in Discovery Park, as well as two that were -- are dual striped on the tennis courts. We can play a net or bring -- or four more bring-your-own-net style pickleball courts. In addition we are about to resurface the pickleball courts in Settlers Park and, then, there is a renovation project scheduled for this spring-summer

in Reta Huskey Park for those pickleball courts, which have developed a large crack in them and need some -- some renovation. So, we continue to add. I don't think I would say that it -- that we have met demand. The net demand continues to climb, but it's very popular and Home Court continues to see just an amazing amount of use indoors as well, so --

Overton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Overton.

Overton: Mandi, thank you for that report. Last year I had the opportunity to be the liaison for Parks and one of the things I learned really quickly is what a great job you and the rest of the commission do with your support, your dedication, your service, helping our Parks Department. It's a -- it's a proud moment in our city when we can have not just a commission, but an entire department of Parks personnel that can take such pride in our city and be so proud of having probably the best parks in the entire state of Idaho. But we only have that because we have such dedicated personnel that want to keep working on that and keeping our parks looking so nice and, yes, phase two of Discovery Park is pretty amazing. I hope we get every award possible for that park. Thank you.

Roberts: Thank you.

Simison: Council, any additional questions, comments?

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Mandi, appreciate your report. Moreover, I really appreciate your enthusiasm. I love when our commissioners come very enthusiastic about the role that they serve and it's infectious, it gets me excited about some of the things you are talking about. So, I'm always curious -- you know, you present the goals of kind of the Commission and the departments are helpful. What's -- what's your vision? What's the commission's vision for Meridian's Parks and Recreation long term? Like when you close your eyes -- and you are someone who has spent a lot of time in our community, I'm just curious what does the future look like from your perspective and what should we be thinking about as a city council?

Roberts: Yeah. Thank you for asking that very important question. I think one of the things that stands out to us is just the need to better connect with our community, which is why we have the communication goals that we do, is just to make sure that, you know, people are out there and enjoying our parks, they are enjoying our pathways. It's part of their daily lives and we want them to know how committed we are to keeping that level of service for them going and what a great staff we have and a little bit of how much effort and investment it takes to really make that happen and so just really

building awareness with the community about those activities and what's needed on an ongoing basis is really important and if you were to ask me, you know, what do we need to do kind of like on the ground for improvements as we move forward, I mean we are doing a great job -- I think one of the things I will be kind of watching is just with the growth that we are experiencing, particularly in our downtown area and public areas that maybe can't rely as much on private sector parks and recreation, what are some of the things that we can do downtown to kind of serve those needs as we grow, so --

Cavener: Mr. Mayor, one additional one if I may.

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Kind of dovetails with that and thank you for -- for acknowledging and recognizing our Parks staff. I wasn't aware of -- of Mr. Siddoway's national recognition. That's really incredible and a testament to Steve's passion and enthusiasm for our community. When you talk about downtown it's something that I'm always keenly interested in and -- and last week the Council discussed some changes to the kind of proposed Rail with Trail segment that runs along here around downtown and pathways certainly is your number one priority. From a -- from a council perspective help us see how important that Rail with Trail segment is in the commission's eyes to our overall pathway network.

Roberts: Yeah. We do see that that's an important piece, especially for access downtown to connect people from one place to another. Some of our streets downtown are not necessarily -- they don't rise to the top of being pedestrian and bicycle friendly. You know, they are really dedicated to a lot of movement of traffic, which they need to be to get people, you know, through town. But in terms of people -- especially now that we have more people living downtown and more people working and that's going to increase with some of the projects that are being built -- we need to improve mobility for pedestrians and bicyclists and so whatever we can do through pathways and the Rail to Trail conversion and other activities, even on-street -- you know, I have worked for some communities, for example, that have identified green streets or ped bike streets that are kind of, okay, we have these other big corridors that are for the cars and they are carrying a lot traffic. These are the corridors that we want to make sure really enhance for pedestrians and bicyclists. So, let's make sure we are doing what we can to improve access along those streets, whether it's enhancing the crossings, making sure we have dedicated bike lanes or sharrows or trails or brake pads, things like that. So, you know, I think as we grow and more people are in downtown, whether they are living, working or even visiting here, we owe it to them to really improve the connectivity in -- in a safe manner. So, yeah.

Cavener: Thank you. I appreciate that.

Simison: Council, any additional questions or comments? All right.

Roberts: Thank you so much.

## 12. Ada County Sheriff's Office Update

Simison: Appreciate it. Up next is Item 12, which will be Ada County Sheriff's Office update, presented by Sheriff Clifford.

Clifford: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Mayor and Council, appreciate you letting me have some time today. I'm doing kind of my biannual report, if you will, just to -- every couple of years you get new council members, sometimes new mayors, and so it's nice to come back every couple of years to say here is what the sheriff does in your community. I was paging through here and there are quite a few things that we do with Meridian police specifically and I did not design it that way, it just naturally will come out like that. So, we will get started. The Ada County Sheriff's Office is the largest law enforcement agency in the state of Idaho. We have about 150 employees. Of those employees about 400 of them are commissioned and are spread out through three different -- three or four different bureaus and I will go over all those bureaus. Our mission statement is to make Ada county a safe place for you to live, work and play. The bureaus are split up into five different -- different bureaus, so -- because we do a lot of different functions that police departments do not. Statutorily we are required to do certain things and we provide a lot of programs for the community that just are not really in the purview of a police department. So, we are divided up into police services, jail services, court, administrative and communication. As you see on the map kind of the area of Ada county. We are responsible for over 1,100 square miles of land and about 2,100 square miles of road. You could see Meridian's the purple on the left there. Everything that's white is unincorporated. So, all of the call load will come to the sheriff's office in that white area and, then, of course, we contract with the cities of Star, Eagle and Kuna for police services. I will go into police services really quickly. This is the -- the things you see outside your window, on the news usually, kind of the face of the agency, if you will. All the things that the Meridian Police Department does with patrol and canine. We have a metro SWAT, so we team up with Garden City, Meridian police and us and have our own SWAT team that covers all those areas -- every area except Boise. Some of the other places where we overlap -- overlap are our drone program. We have a pretty robust drone program, as does Meridian, so we find ourselves on a lot of calls for service together where we can, you know, throw drones up and battery dies on one agency's drone, they bring it and they send the next one up while they are changing out. We just -- we work together on a lot of those tactical operations. Some of the things you don't see in the police departments -- Meridian patrol, we do that in the summer. We are contracted with the Army Corps of Engineers who take care of Lucky Peak corridor up there. We also have an off-road team, so UTVs and some dual support bikes -- a handful of dual support bikes so we can do search and rescue or other calls for service up in the foothills or out in the desert. Administrative Services Bureau. This is kind of all the inner workings of the sheriff's office. It's a lot of different things. We manage property and evidence for the Boise Police Department and, of course, for the Sheriff's Office. Statutorily we are required to issue driver's licenses and concealed weapons. We, of course, added that second driver's license location not that long ago here in Meridian. It is going very well. It's a very nice facility and it's -- it's really improved a lot of operations for the citizens of Meridian. Our fleet manages over 300 vehicles or some

type of -- we call them assets. Some of those are trailers and the UTVs and all those types of things. But we have an in-house mechanic right on site at Barrister that can service all of those things. Makes it very efficient. My finance department -- I very much appreciate them, since as you know we are all in the throes of budget process. Our budget last year was 115 million. So, it's a lot of moving parts of a large agency and counting every penny. So, they do a really great job and they love budgets. So, I like having them around. And, then, of course, we have data analytics where we can create the crime maps for -- we see Meridian and Ada county. Garden City asked me why they weren't on there and we are adding them now that they have gone over to the ITS system that was created by Meridian. Now that they will be on there we will be able to also get their statistics up there as well. We also have in the admin bureau at our community engagement team. So, a lot of things that also Meridian police does with, you know, safety fairs and National Night Out. Of course you are all familiar with that. We do that as well. Both agencies have canine units that do a lot of demonstrations in schools and at different functions and, of course, we are busy out in the public with our different city contracts as they have their different festivals and normal city functions that -- that you don't see in unincorporated Ada county very often and, then, we do a lot of crime prevention on social media as well through that team. It's something that I have been starting to bring up, because people don't really understand it's out there a lot of times, but this -- this America's Promise youth plate is specific to the sheriffs of Idaho. So, all -- the 25 dollars from your initial registration of this plate and 15 dollars for -- of your renewal goes specifically to the Ada County Sheriff's Youth Foundation. So, here in Ada county. So every sheriff has one of these setup for the plates that are issued in their county. We use the money to put back into programs, like Big Brothers, Big Sisters. I sit on that board director, as does the Mayor. We sit on the board of directors there and we are able to give back and help them support programs. The Boys and Girls Club. The Y. It's kind of spread out towards specific youth, whether it's mentorship or at risk youth. So, throw that out there, because people see those plates, but they don't realize that that's what that specifically does when you register under those plates.

Simison: Matt, while you are -- sheriff, while you are right there, maybe we want to talk about the Bigs in Blue.

Clifford: Absolutely. I would love to talk about the Bigs in Blue. Bigs in Blue program is a program through Big Brothers, Big Sisters. It's a national program and we participate in it here where we try and match bigs and littles specifically to law enforcement. Now, law enforcement officers are very busy generally, but we are able to find a good handful of them that can be mentors to these kids that are in the program and really, you know, kind of help them through parts of their lives that might be missing at home or can help them get -- get them out of that situation of being an at risk youth. So, it's -- it's really great. The Bigs that we have at the sheriff's office really find it rewarding and, of course, if you are one of the littles that participate, having a cop be your Big Brother or Big Sister is -- is a really cool thing to them. So, it's -- it's a really great program. Thank you, sir, for reManding me of that. Something we started a couple of years ago was -- you see it around everywhere was no shave November. We had never been allowed to do this with previous administrations. So, we decided that we would give it a go. It

started because I walked into our victim services -- into a conference room where our victim services were having a bake sale and I said what is the bake sale for and they said it's for our victim fund, because we can't fund that with our county taxpayer money and I said, okay, well, you are having a bake -- why -- how much money is in there and they said, well, there is no money in there, that's why we are having a bake sale and we could do better than that. So, we jumped on no shave November and we -- you know, if you are a commissioned deputy you could grow a beard. Our -- our professional staff can already grow beards. And, of course, females aren't growing beards that I know of, so we said they could buy into it and do -- wear jeans one day a week. So, with jeans and beards were able to raise over 11,000 dollars this year. So, who would have thought that that's what would inspire money to inspire people, but jeans and beards are a big deal apparently. Let's see. One of these -- another -- nope. That's messed up. Sorry about that. That didn't match. So, our emergency communications bureau -- it's going to be our dispatch center. We run the largest dispatch center in the state of Idaho. We dispatch for all police, fire and EMS. They took -- they took about 504,000 calls for service last year. I shouldn't say calls for service. Those are calls in and out of the dispatch -- dispatch center. It's funny when you talk to certain people and they say, well, how many of those are really real calls? It doesn't matter. The dispatcher has to pick up the phone, they have to answer the call or call someone back, whether they are asking at what temperature to bake bread or they have an emergency on the other line. It takes up time from a dispatcher who has to do their job when other calls keep coming in. This is one of my -- been one of my focuses. Last year's budget, if you -- if you saw any of that we are -- we are deficient in the amount of dispatchers that we actually have in this dispatch center by about 20. We are fully staffed right now, but we are still deficient 20 positions. So, I will probably be harassing the commissioners again this year about getting more dispatchers. But they were able to give me a couple last year, so I appreciate that. One of the big things we did through the legislature, with the help of Idaho Chiefs of Police and Idaho Sheriffs Association, we were able to classify dispatchers as first responders in Idaho. A lot of states do not classify them as first responders and we were also able to develop them into the PERSI retirement system under first responders. So, they go through a lot of mental anguish that actually causes them physical issues because of working in a dispatch center and -- and experiencing trauma that literally they can only hear. We don't think about, you know, what that does to them and so we -- we were able to bring them in and finalize that this year with the legislature. So, it was really really great. Court Services Bureau is the bureau that does a lot of things. We -- if you were here when I came in and talked about the jail bond last year and talked a lot about what this bureau does with all of our programs that help us identify people that we can supervise outside the jail, instead of inside the jail, and also identify those that need to stay inside the jail. So, that's going to be my misdemeanor probation. It's the largest misdemeanor probation we have in Idaho. Our pretrial services and alternative sentencing, we usually supervise somewhere between 2,000 and 2,300 people outside the walls of the jail where the jail usually has about a thousand people inside. So, if we weren't overseeing those folks they would almost likely be inside of our jail, which we cannot accommodate. Also our transport unit is in that bureau. They did over 1,200 transports outside of Ada county last year. They are also responsible for traveling outside of the state of Idaho to retrieve fugitives that have

been caught elsewhere. So, we go everywhere from Alaska to Florida to Texas to go retrieve inmates and bring them back -- and bring them in front of the court. My civil -- civil team is also in that Court Services Bureau. Statutorily the sheriff is required to perform certain civil functions and -- like evictions and service of court documents. Last year in person we served almost 8,200 court documents -- court documents. Also our training just kind of got lumped into that bureau as well, so we run our own academies for detention, dispatch and patrol and we run those all through the Court Services Bureau, so we have a team of trainers and a facility where that all takes place. So, jail services -- again if you were here when I talked about the bond I talked a lot about jail services. We are not going to talk about the bond today. But the jail is like a -- it's like a small town. There are more people that live and work in there than a town I came from in Idaho and -- for real and -- but some of the things that they do in there are pretty amazing, but we have a big health services unit in there, which is able to care for a thousand inmates whatever medical needs they have. We do a lot of medical transports to the hospital and back and special transports to special -- specialty care. But we can handle quite a few things. We can't do surgery and -- and those types of things, so -- but we can handle most of your normal ailments that -- that are going on with inmates. Our laundry facility does -- I think it's like 2,500 loads of laundry a month. A sewing program where female inmates can go and kind of learn a trade and have something to do. They also participate with a program called the Lioness program where they make quilts and donate them to at risk children and, then, we have our special response team, which is, basically, a jail SWAT -- I call it indoor SWAT. It's basically like a jail SWAT team. So, specialized deputies that can go in and handle specific instances anywhere in the jail. Another thing that we are doing in the jail that we implemented last year was our ServSafe certification. We are trying to at least provide some skills to people that -- if they are going to be in there for a longer period of time it's not that easy to do, because we have a very transient population. We are not meant to hold inmates that are serving time, so they are -- they are awaiting their trials most of the time, but we can't -- we do have some long standing inmates that we can get through the ServSafe certification. Inmates run the kitchen. So, we -- once they get that certification they can go out in the public and just go right into a kitchen and start working, instead of having to go get the certification. So, they are kind of one up on someone that doesn't have that and we have had about 15 people graduate from that so far. That's my shameless plug right here. So, I put this picture up here because, like everywhere else, we are really looking for talented females to work at our agency. This picture -- we have a jail sergeant, patrol deputy, a nurse, a property and evidence tech. I mean we have so many positions, but I really really am looking for female deputies that -- that we can have working in the jail in the courthouse or on patrol. Just one of those things where I -- I truly believe they are out there and there are probably more people -- more -- more females that don't know that they can do the job, so our recruiting is pretty heavy towards females to say, hey, by the way, you are qualified and you can do this job, don't -- don't let somebody tell you can't, so -- they are out there. We are looking for them. And I just -- I would throw that up there in case somebody wants that -- that will take you to our career page.

Simison: Thank you, Sheriff Clifford. One thing you didn't touch on is in addition to allowing facial hair you have also allowed top hats.

Clifford: Top hats? Is that --

Simison: Cowboy hats. Top hats. Whatever you want to call them.

Clifford: Yeah. That is something that kind of evolved through a bunch of talk of a -- you know, be kind of cool if we did that. We are a western sheriff's office and, then, they -- they were allowed to wear them at the Eagle rodeo and they went over very well and, then, I said I would allow them at the Star Fourth of July parade and stood out in the sun about three days before that parade and have fair skin, skin cancer runs in my family, and I just stood out there frying and decided I'm going to go buy my first cowboy hat where it's going to make it happen. So we did.

Simison: Excellent. Council, any questions or comments?

Overton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Overton.

Overton: Sheriff, great presentation. I appreciate it and I want to tell you how much I appreciate the long-standing relationship you have had with Meridian police. I remember when 20 -- over 20 years ago we did not have a great relationship between the two agencies and it was critical then and it's critical now that we have the tight relationship through all the different aspects of what you do. You know, we forget some days as Meridian city grows and the county grows, unfortunately, your population in jail grows. It's kind of a relationship that sometimes gets overlooked and we appreciate everything you do to work with our department and try to keep our community safe and one last thing -- I hope this means I will see you again at the pancake feed at Dairy Days again this year.

Clifford: Absolutely. Absolutely.

Overton: Thank you, sir.

Clifford: Mayor, Council I -- I do appreciate the -- I appreciate the relationship as well. It's always existed kind of at the line level. The trick is getting it to exist at that agency head level and we certainly have really great relationships, the chiefs and the sheriff and the prosecutor and we -- it's -- it's been really great over the last couple of years to see a lot of friendships grow and a lot of working together. I always say that, you know, the thing I say -- and the chief's probably heard me say it a million times, you are going to wake up tomorrow and Meridian is going to be across the street from the city of Nampa and that's -- that's probably going to be the truth someday and we have to prepare as law enforcement heads how are we going to work together when we are all growing together. You know, there is not -- not that many farm fields separating the

cities anymore and so you are just right next door to your agent -- your next door agency and it's been great partnership with Meridian. It has been fantastic.

Overton: Thank you.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Thank you, sheriff. I just want to compliment you. I appreciate the work that you are doing, particularly your efforts to reclassify the dispatchers as first responders. I think that was really important and very thoughtful. Understanding this isn't a jail bond discussion, but, you know, do you have interim plans to keep moving forward? Obviously, not the ideal set of resources, but how are you kind of planning to move forward in the meantime?

Clifford: Mayor and Council, great question. I didn't mean I didn't want to talk about the jail bond, it's just I wasn't presenting on it. However, I can answer that question for sure. You know, in the beginning -- at the beginning of this year I was very adamant of, hey, we should just run this, run this, run this right away. Some of the data didn't kind of match up with that being a great idea until we could get a better information campaign out there, so I have been in discussions with the commissioners. It's all been on the record, so not worried about talking about it -- where they have the 20 million dollars in hand that they have always had and the bond was to supplement that to get the whole project done. Well, now we are having discussions of, well, we have the 20 million, we better do something. We can't just sit around and wait for the next bond election even. So, we have to do something. Phasing it in is probably what's -- what's going to happen. The commissioners haven't voted on that yet, but I have given them all the information they need to make a decision. The problem with that is it takes a lot longer and it costs a lot more money. So like I said, well, I wish I just had the whole pot of money, but it's just a wish. So, I think if we take that 20 million and we start putting in some of that infrastructure, so that we can fund the rest of it, either next time or at a later date, it's ready to go. So, we are looking at hopefully starting on our kitchen as soon as possible and doing all the civil work to put plumbing and electrical into that big swath of land that we own that's blank. So, that's -- that's the plan. Again, the commissioners haven't voted on it, but that's the information that I have given them. Thank you for the question.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: I think that's a fantastic response and I -- I know we all appreciated the foresight of the commissioners in continuing to save over the years to have those resources available. It may not be what would have been ideal, but I really appreciate your can do attitude about it and just tackling those issues head on the best that you

can with the resources that you are given and certainly want to support you in that. So, I just appreciate that. Thank you.

Clifford: Thank you very much. Appreciate it.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Sheriff Clifford, always nice to have any here. Appreciate it. And I just want to reinforce I think on the Council Member Overton talked on, which I really appreciate, which is that Median residents are county residents and I think you and your department have really embraced that and I want to know it's seen on my side of the table and it's really appreciated. I like it when you come do these presentations, because it requires me to look and really recognize there is a lot of what you do that I'm never in a situation where I see play out, you know, face to face and you and your staff are faced with on a daily basis and appreciate that you have a passion and desire to serve and we are lucky to have you. I also know that because of that often lots of problems everyone looks to you for solutions, which is challenging, recognizing that I have got a problem that I'm looking to see if maybe you have got an idea to solve and that's the subject of animal control. I know that you are continuing to do more with limited resources and that's another conversation at the commission level, but has your department -- have you explored animal control and if that's something that the sheriff's department could eventually handle or address for the -- for the county, as opposed to this kind of part and piece mentality that each local jurisdiction has to take on?

Clifford: Mayor and Council, great question. The short answer is we have not explored that recently. When I was the chief of police in Eagle was when we really did explore it, because Eagle was looking at the contract with IHS and decided, hey, maybe we can do this cheaper. So, one of the sergeants and I sat on a big committee of really great people that had different kinds of interests. We had these crazy cat ladies and I will say that because they called themselves that, the crazy cat ladies and the dog lovers and the guy who volunteers at IHS -- it was a really really diverse group. It was great. And we all kind of went in -- into it with kind of that can do attitude and we came out of it saying this is a really tough thing to do on your own. It -- because it does -- it's not just enforcement, it requires facilities, it requires vet care. Some people love their dogs more than they love their kids and, you know, you put a dog in a kennel with the wrong dog and it gets hurt and now, you know, you have angry citizens. So, in the end when we reported back to the city of Eagle we reported back that it would probably be a good idea to stick with the contract, just because we didn't have the resources and the facilities to handle that. It really is -- it goes beyond are we willing -- willing to go be dog catchers and animal control people, it's -- we are, but we just don't have the resources for facilities and vet care and all of that and, then, having to deal with euthanasia maybe, all those -- all those hot topic items were it's kind of -- some is unknown, but other parts of the state that a sheriff's office does animal control, talking to them, to be

frank none of them like doing it, but -- so, that's kind of where we have not revisited that in three years.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Who that? Councilman Cavener?

Cavener: Sheriff, I appreciate that. And I think it's a big lift and it's a big lift for any jurisdiction and I don't probably disagree with any sheriff. In Meridian we used to do it internally and we have turned it over to the Humane Society and maybe Humane Society has been there because nobody else has been able to step up and I think that -- my ask would be is if there is an opportunity for the cities to come together and work with the county and help support that -- again, not here is our problem, county you figure out how to solve it, but back to my good colleague's comments about a collaborative can do attitude, I think that we are a city that would like to at least be at the table if those conversations ever emerge.

Clifford: Absolutely. I appreciate that. Talk to your chief. I'm willing to have a discussion about anything. So, if that comes up and maybe that is the future we can talk about that.

Taylor: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Taylor.

Taylor: Just for a quick comment -- and, Sheriff Clifford, thanks for the presentation. Appreciate it. Just want to highlight something. A few months ago we had a really unfortunate situation in Meridian. It played out in front of my home, so I was able to absorb it from my second story window and observed Ada county, our own police force and Boise PD and it was very impressive to watch everyone work together. It was a pretty serious situation, didn't end super well for some, but it was -- it gave me a high level of confidence just in the way that you work together, since you mentioned that with our own police department and -- and others and so I think for our public to see that kind of teamwork in the community I think really increases our level of confidence and our feeling safe and so just want to compliment you and we have our leadership team from the police department here as well just to compliment them on -- on how well you have worked together and I think what it speaks to is a lot of planning and effort behind the scenes on both parts to make sure that that happens. So, just wanted to -- to say that, so thank you.

Clifford: Thank you. And, Mayor and Council, that -- you are right, a lot of planning and effort kind of goes into that; right? We are pretty blessed in this entire valley to have agencies that are willing to work together. There are other places in the country and even some places in this state that are very territorial and silo -- silo each other off. It's usually pretty detrimental to your agency and it's not very efficient for your -- for your community. So, we really do have -- in this valley really do have that, hey, this is all a

partnership. Nobody cares what color your shirt is or what shape your badge is when they call 911. They just don't. And so let's all work together and get out there and do public service.

Simison: Council, any additional questions or comments?

Little Roberts: No. But, Mr. Mayor, I can't help --

Simison: Council Woman Little Roberts.

Little Roberts: -- but to add my thank you. It's -- I have been on ride-alongs where both agencies have worked together and it's just been absolutely seamless, so -- so thank you for you and all that your team does. And, of course, thank you to our officers. They are the best.

Simison: All right. Thank you very much, Sheriff Clifford. See you soon.

Clifford: Thank you so much, sir. You guys have a great night.

**13. Public Hearing continued from March 26, 2024 for Community Input on Meridian's Community Development Block Grant Program Action Plan**

Simison: Thank you. Next item up is Item 13, which a public hearing continued from March 26th, 2024, for the community input and Meridian's Community Development Block Grant program. Turn this over to Crystal for any additional comments.

Campbell: Thank you, Mr. Mayor, Members of the Council. I wanted to give you guys a brief update on the feedback we did receive. I will make it super quick, but -- well, as quick as possible. So, we did provide some public outreach. You can read through it. But e-mail, social media, we tried to touch all the bases that we could and ask our partners to share it and we did a few in-person interactions as well. Our public comment period was open from March 15th to April 7th and we accepted feedback however people wanted to, including an online survey. We did receive 50 responses from residents through the survey and in that survey 50 percent of respondents said that they or someone that they knew did actually need to access some of these services. This chart shows how easy it was to access those services, as well as the services that were accessed. Childcare assistance was definitely the forerunner for that and emergency rental assistance was second. We also asked about barriers to accessing those resources and the main one was eligibility requirements, but, unfortunately, we can't really do anything about that. It's the bare minimum that is required by HUD, which is 80 percent or less of the area median income and they must be a Meridian resident and, then, other than that it was dates and times available and paperwork. People did suggest some partnerships and it's categorized into three different areas. The first one is current contacts and those are the ones that were already reaching out to and asking them to submit an application for funding and that

was mental health, childcare and Jesse Tree for emergency rental assistance. And, then, additional outreach suggestions for this time around people were asking about public transportation and potentially credit repair and, then, there was also an ineligible activity for clothing for teens, so it's just not something that we could fund through this. We had a couple of in-person interactions two of those are public hearings and one of those is tonight and also last week we were out in the community two different times. Once was in the lobby of City Hall and, then, we also had a booth at the Do The Right event and with that we had an activity where people could vote on the services that they thought were most important and this is a little bit different than the other voting -- or on the survey and the survey was people actually needing those and this is just the perception of what's needed in the community. So, we did receive 83 individuals participating and they each got four coins and so it was a total of 332 votes and intimate partner violence that was 25 percent of the votes and, then, childcare and emergency rent were each 24 percent, but -- didn't quite add up. So, there is something wrong there, but it was definitely -- the intimate partner violence followed by childcare and emergency rent. Our timeline for the rest of the action plan, it's due to HUD no later than August 16th. So, the application is opened through the end of this month and in May, then, we will work with our scoring committee to review the application, select projects and develop our action plan. It will be developed and, then, June 11th through July 14th it will be open for public comment and I will be back here for a public hearing and I hope to have it approved by all of you and submitted to HUD by the end of July. And with that I will stand for questions.

Simison: Thank you, Crystal. Council, any questions?

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Not a question, just a comment. It feels like you are getting a lot of public engagement, which is very encouraging, and I think your different approaches to try to get that feedback is really working. So, I just wanted to compliment you on how you are trying to engage the community on this.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Action tonight is just to close the public hearing?

Campbell: Correct.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Is there anybody present who would like to provide testimony on this open public hearing? Seeing nobody.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Appreciate all the presumptive on my end to not see the usual suspects that want to testify this evening, but I appreciate that opportunity and, boy, to Council Member Strader's point, this wonky stuff is hard to engage the public on and, Chris, I do -- I really want to commend you. Last week we had the event for Council Member Borton and with the art gallery you were out with the jars and the coins, I just thought it was a very low barrier approach to get people to engage and just encourage you to keep doing stuff like that and finding that right nexus of inviting feedback and critical feedback and I appreciate that you share with us. So, Mr. Mayor, I move we closed the public hearing on Item 13.

Overton: Second.

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

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION per Idaho Code 74-206(1)(d): To consider records that are exempt from disclosure as provided in chapter 1, title 74, Idaho Code.**

Simison: Next item up is Executive Session. Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Mr. Mayor, I move that we go into Executive Session per Idaho Code 74-206(1)(d).

Cavener: Second.

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

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

Simison: All ayes. Motion carries and we will go into Executive Session.

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: (5:35 p.m. to 6:08 p.m.)

Simison: Council, do I have a motion?

Strader: Mr. Mayor, I move that we adjourn the meeting.

Simison: Move to come out of Executive Session?

Strader: So moved.

Simison: Got a second?

Overton: Second.

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

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

Simison: Now do I have another motion?

Strader: Mr. Mayor, I move that we adjourn the meeting.

Simison: Motion to adjourn. All in favor signify by saying aye. Opposed nay. The ayes have it and we are adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 6:08 P.M.

(AUDIO RECORDING ON FILE OF THESE PROCEEDINGS)

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

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

ATTEST:

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