

A Meeting of the Meridian City Council was called to order at 6:05 p.m. Tuesday, August 15, 2023, by Mayor Robert Simison.

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

Members Absent: Jessica Perreault.

Also present: Chris Johnson, Bill Nary, Jeff Brown, Joe Bongiorno, Jenny Fields, Laurelei McVey and Dean Willis.

ROLL-CALL ATTENDANCE

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

Simison: All right. Call this meeting to order. For the record it is August 15th, 2023. It's 6:05 p.m. We will begin tonight's regular City Council meeting with roll call attendance.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

(Pledge of Allegiance recited.)

COMMUNITY INVOCATION

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

Drake: Oh, Lord God in Heaven, thank you so much that we can live in this great country of ours and this great state and this wonderful city. We appreciate what we have and thank you for life and liberty and that we can pursue happiness here and -- but I just want to pray for the city in the midst of extreme heat and so I just pray for our first responders and -- and, you know, the things that happen as a result of -- or could happen as a result of a -- of a high heat level and so we just pray, God, that there would be peace here and -- and no devastation like you have seen in other places and protect us from that, God, and also help the citizens here, maybe on those who are in a difficult place where they are affected more by the heat and that they could find a place where they can get some relief. So, our hearts go out to them. And, Lord, I also just lastly, but

not least, pray for everyone in this building and the decisions that are made here, all those who serve our citizens in various ways, whether they are elected or volunteer or, you know, it's their daily job here, God, I just pray that they would just be given a lot of wisdom and they would know the right decisions to make to -- to bless our -- our citizens here in Meridian. So, thank you, God, that we have our government and we have our Mayor and the -- and the Council and just pray that you give them a lot of wisdom here tonight as they make decisions and it's in your name we pray, amen. Thank you.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Simison: Thank you. Up next is the adoption of the agenda.

Hoaglund: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglund.

Hoaglund: There are no changes to our agenda this evening, so I move approval of the agenda as published.

Cavener: Second.

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

MOTION CARRIED: FIVE AYES. ONE ABSENT.

PUBLIC FORUM – Future Meeting Topics

Simison: Mr. Clerk, was there anyone signed up under public forum?

Johnson: Mr. Mayor, yes, we have one. Christopher Paul.

Simison: Good evening. You will be recognized for three minutes.

Paul: Good evening. My name is Christopher Paul and I stand here today -- I just had a few questions on the Compass Pointe Subdivision, which the time has passed to discuss this. Last year it was proposed to put over 50 high density units with minimal parking on a 7.6 acre lot with a creek running through it, reducing buildable acreage. I don't know if you guys remember, this was by Locust Grove and Victory. This room was completely filled up and you guys ultimately rejected it. Fast forward a year. Locust Grove and Victory were shut down for the construction of a roundabout and during that time there was a sign put up saying that there was another meeting during this -- for -- to discuss -- to readdress this, which was taken on June 27th. Unfortunately, the roundabout was still closed at that time and no one knew about it. We -- because we couldn't see the sign. The road was closed. So, I'm just asking -- I know that the plan

has been reduced to 21 homes versus the 57. It's now medium density residential. We -- there is still concerns within the community and I'm just asking what is the next steps, if there is any steps that we could take, just because I feel like the community didn't have a chance to discuss it, just because we flat out didn't know about it. Normal -- that's -- everyone found out about it by driving by and they saw the sign that says, hey, there is a meeting on this land coming soon, but the land -- the road was closed.

Simison: This is -- okay. And typically this is not a back and forth, but I'm going to turn to the legal counsel and see how much we can do now versus if we need to set this for a separate conversation in that regards. So, Mr. Nary.

Nary: So, Mr. Mayor, Members of the Council, Mr. Paul. So, unfortunately, our requirements are -- we have three. We have a -- a public hearing. We have three. We have published them. We have sent out mailed notices to anyone within 300 feet and we also put up a sign. So, there is three ways that we try to provide notice to the public. All of that was done. It is required that it be adjacent to a roadway. We don't know if the road is going to be closed or not and that's the only roadway that touches that property. That's their requirement to put it there, whether or not that you could drive down it or not. So, there is no way for us to control that. The time period to reconsider it has passed. The time period to appeal it has passed. There isn't anything at this point that can be done differently.

Paul: I -- okay. That -- that's fair. I just wanted to mention my frustration. I -- again, the community doesn't go on the Meridian website every week looking to see what's being talked about. We drive down the road, we see it -- I understand it. I'm just voicing my frustration. I feel like this entire room was filled up last time and there were a lot of people against it and I almost -- I'm just questioning if that -- if the road wasn't closed and we knew about it would we still have filled up that room and that -- and I get it. It's -- the time's passed, but I'm just voicing my frustration here, because I feel like we didn't -- we were not properly represented.

Hoaglund: And Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Well, if I could just respond to that to -- I -- I understand and appreciate that and I think that's something that we may want to consider is to -- to your point -- I mean I live in that area. I drive that. You couldn't even access the property if you wanted to in that regard. So, that may be something we want to consider in the future. It may not help us go back --

Paul: Yeah.

Simison: -- in that regards, but it's definitely I think a valid issue. If you can't access something via the road what's the point of that third thing, so -- and I think that that becomes a question if we are good with -- sorry. We are -- I'm going down -- I have gone too far, but are we good with two out of three in any situation or does it need to be all three that need to be practical in that regard?

Hoaglund: Question for Mr. Nary. I believe this was a new application and the developer was required to hold public meetings within the -- near the subdivision. Is that correct?

Nary: Yes. I think they held two.

Hoaglund: Yes. Because I had one couple that I happened to work with who lives in that subdivision were aware of it and said, hey, that's so great, 21 versus the 57 is wonderful. That -- we can live with that. So, obviously, they were aware that that was going on, so --

Paul: That's the Tuscany Subdivision or --

Hoaglund: Mr. Mayor. It's the one right behind the -- the creek there, so -- yeah. They were -- they were aware, so --

Paul: We were Tuscany. We were -- we were not informed.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Seal: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: I wanted to recognize we are -- we are limited about what we can and can't talk about. I think what you are hearing is at least there is some sympathetic feedback to what you brought to our attention, so maybe, Mr. Mayor, Mr. Hoaglund, Mr. Nary, city attorney, you are setting a future agenda -- at least a discussion about occurring. Is that appropriate? Is that what we think is a best practice for our city? I -- I hate to put -- also put our clerk on the spot. We -- we have a practice -- we are not obligated by law to also post notifications on NextDoor. I don't know if that's something that we did as well, so -- and the only reason why -- and he is saying that we did, the only reason why I bring that up is that I think at least the city -- this Mayor and Council have been very intentional about not just meeting what is required by the law, but to try and -- and minimize the circumstance of what you are feeling like, hey, I didn't feel like that I was properly informed and I think it's our goal is that we try to go over and above what is required, so that our citizens who want to take action and want to be involved have that opportunity to do that and so I appreciate you flagging this. I live in that area as well and I mean the Council -- I think we unanimously approved the application. I was -- appreciated the stark change from what was initially proposed to what is, but that's neither here nor there. Your issue is about not -- how you as a citizen were properly noticed and so I think that's a good conversation for us at a future time and I appreciate you coming and flagging that for us.

Paul: Okay. Thank you. If there is any other changes -- if they ever modify that plan is that notified on the website or -- I just have to keep an eye out for future postings? I don't know if they modify those applications once they are approved like --

Nary: Mr. Mayor, Members of the Council, Mr. Paul. So, depending on what you mean by modification. So, for example, if they were to lower the amount of them -- so, they -- instead of doing 21 units they were doing less than 21. That's a slight modification. Depending on how drastic. Increasing it, yes, they would have to come back to the Council with a change to the development plan. That would be noticed, just like -- like the past with signs, mailed notice, online notice, NextDoor if we have -- if we do that. So, it -- it would come back to the attention of --

Paul: I appreciate it.

Simison: Thank you. Appreciate it. And, Council, appreciate the -- I know we probably overstepped where we would like to go typically in those public comments in that regard, so -- yeah. Okay. Anything else under future meeting topics?

Johnson: Mr. Mayor, that was everything.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Public Hearing for City of Meridian Fiscal Year 2024 Proposed Budget

Simison: Okay. Then with that we will move on to our Action Items this evening. Our first item up is a public hearing for City of Meridian fiscal year 2024 proposed budget. Open this public hearing with staff comments from Jenny.

Fields: Chris is pulling up a PowerPoint. Okay. Good evening, Mr. Mayor, Members of the Council. I'm going to give an overview of our budget process, then, provide a summary of our fiscal year '24 proposed budget and the three major reporting funds, Governmental Fund, Capital Improvement Fund and Enterprise Fund. Then we will stand for any public comments or questions and, then, seek a motion to approve our fiscal year '24 proposed budget. I'm going to give a high level overview of the work that's been done thus far to get us to where we are at. A lot of work goes into developing our proposed budget. It is an eight month long process that we started back in February. In March Finance met with each department, Mayor and Council Liaison, to fine tune the base budget line items. In April and May Mayor and director work together to prioritize budget requests, balancing our revenue projections with expenditure needs. In June the proposed budget is submitted to Council for review. We held two budget workshops in July -- or in June. During these sessions department directors presented their budget requests and address any questions and concerns. Some adjustments and refinements were made to the proposed budget at that time and Council in July tentatively approved our fiscal year '24 budget. We, then, published the budget notice online and in the newspaper in July -- mid July to citizens to provide feedback. That gets us to where we are at today. So, upon closure of tonight's public hearing Council will hopefully take action to approve our fiscal year '24 budget. It is in -- we come back once more with the ordinance and that's how we appropriate our budget. Mayor and departments will, then, start executing on the approved fiscal year '24 budget starting October 1. Okay. Let's talk numbers. Our fiscal year '24 proposed budget is

233.6 million dollars. The graph to the left are expenditure categories. As you can see personnel is about 35 percent of our total budget and it is the largest expense category. Next we have carry forward that makes up 29 percent of the total budget. Carry forwards are -- these projects that were not finished in our current fiscal year, fiscal year '23, that will be carried over into fiscal year '24. The distribution of the budget amongst the different departments are displayed in the graph to the right. Next I'm going to go -- actually go into our three major reporting funds. Governmental Fund. This is inclusive of our -- we call our General Fund, Impact Fund, and Public Safety Fund. So, the total revenue projected for the Governmental Funds is 100.8 million dollars. The largest revenue source is tax revenue at 47 percent. Next is intergovernmental at 20 percent. Intergovernmental revenues includes state revenue sharing and state -- state liquor revenue. I'm going to give a high level overview of our total expenditures in the Governmental Fund. One hundred eight point nine million dollars. Personnel, again, makes up 62 percent and is the largest expenditure of Governmental Fund. Public Safety makes up the majority of this budget. As you can see on the graph to the right police is 34 percent, fire is 27, followed by parks, admin, and community development. Our next major reporting fund is our Capital Improvement Fund. Total expenditures in this fund is 8.1 million. As you can see a hundred percent of the expenditures are carry forward and projects include just -- projects include fire stations seven and eight and police precinct. Okay. Our last reporting fund is the Enterprise Fund. Total revenue projected for Enterprise Fund is 52.9 million dollars. A majority of the revenue is utility sales and assessment revenue. Enterprise Fund expenditures is 116.6 million dollars. As you can see between new capital funding and carry forward projects 73 percent of Enterprise Fund budget is in capital expenditures. Again, the distribution amongst the different departments is as displayed in your graph on the right. Okay. That's short and sweet. This is going to conclude an overview of our fiscal year '24 proposed budget. Before I hand this over to you, Mayor and Council, for any questions and comments, we are seeking for an approval from Council to approve our fiscal year '24 budget and the next steps is we will come back with an ordinance the next couple of weeks to make it official.

Simison: Thank you, Jenny. Council, any questions for staff? Okay. Thank you very much. This is a public hearing. Mr. Clerk, do we have anyone signed up to provide testimony on this item?

Johnson: Mr. Mayor, we have one. Terre Dennington.

Simison: Good evening. Just state your name and address for the record.

Dennington: Yes. My name is Terre Dennington. I live at 4581 West Big Creek Street in Meridian. 83642. Thank you, Mayor Simison and Council, for letting me speak this evening. My main thing is I just really would like to thank the budget director Jenny Fields. I have gone through the budget and she was very gracious to sit down and answer any questions I had and I also get a lot of responses from you, Mayor, and from other staff people -- did I go silent?

Simison: No. We are good.

Dennington: Sorry. Okay. Other staff people that answer just questions. Steve Siddoway for the Parks and Rec. Just lots of different people that always answer my questions and try to give me good feedback on what -- what I'm doing and what I'm looking at. I also want to thank the city for having -- like the Go With The Flow tour and the public safety academy. I attended both of those. Those are very good for helping me understand the budget, even to go through that to really see what's going on in the process and so I really appreciate the fact that you guys let the public have that access and it's really wonderful. I wish more people would do it, because it really is interesting and really teaches people a lot what the city does. The last thing -- the only last thing I had was I had one question, just because I was driving by and I was just thinking about it. That I saw a cell tower on the wastewater property and I wondered if we derive income from cell towers that are placed on city property and that was really my only question and just to thank you for the process and letting me have access to everything that's there.

Simison: Thank you, Terre. Laurelei, would you like to reply to that question, just since it's --

McVey: Thank you. So, that cell tower is actually just right across the canal. So, it's not actually on our property. So, to answer that question we would not receive any revenue for that.

Simison: Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Terre, for your comments. Council, did you have any questions for Terre before she went and sat down?

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Not a question, just a comment, Ms. Dennington. Thank you for being with us again to provide your feedback on the budget. I really appreciate that you take it seriously and go through it. We pride ourselves on having engaged citizens that do just that with us and it's very much appreciated.

Simison: Is there anybody else who would like to provide testimony on this item at this time? Seeing none, does Finance have any final comments? You don't need to, unless you want to. Okay. All right. Then, Council, what's your pleasure?

Hoaglund: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglund.

Hoaglund: I move that we close the public hearing for the City of Meridian fiscal year 2024 proposed budget.

Cavener: Second.

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

MOTION CARRIED: FIVE AYES. ONE ABSENT.

Hoaglund: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglund.

Hoaglund: I move that we approve the City of Meridian fiscal year 2024 proposed budget in the amount of 233,617,299 dollars.

Cavener: Second.

Simison: Have a motion and a second to approve the budget for FY-2004 in the amount of 233,617,299. Is there discussion on the motion?

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Real quick. Jenny, you compressed a lot of time and energy and effort into a very short presentation. So, thank you to you, our staff -- not just in our Finance Department, but citywide, Mayor, Council Liaisons in bringing this all together. It's not -- I guess every year I struggle with our -- with our budget and every year I am looking at it from a different angle and I appreciate the feedback from our Mayor and my fellow Council Members and our staff and Terre touched on something about being engaged and involved and wishing more people were involved in. This is like the one City Council meeting that I want -- like I want every seat full and I want to hear from our community and we don't get that and I don't think that's because they don't know or they don't care, it's they really think that they trust our employees and we as Council to make the best decision. So, this is the first budget for me in a long time that I really think is incredibly well thought out, addresses the needs of our -- of our community. I always struggle with the property tax increase, but when you look at every conversation we have is we are dealing with the impacts of inflation, the cost of goods and delivering services and certainly that's contemplated and, Mr. Mayor, you could have easily brought a budget with a full three percent ask and you didn't do that and I commend you for doing that this year and look forward maybe in future years to come that same philosophy being brought back to Council. But I just -- I also want to just reiterate this budget has an appropriate investment for an important resource and that's our employees and I appreciate you, Mayor, being a vocal advocate for our employees and bringing a budget that reinforces the value that they bring to us as well. So, happy to make the second and I'm very very supportive of this budget this year.

Simison: I am speechless. I'm sure Todd and I had a bet at one point in time, so I think I won. Or I'm going to choose the win one way or the other on that or I will collect at a future date. But is there further discussion from Council on the motion? All right. Then Clerk will call the roll.

Roll Call: Hoaglund, yea; Borton, yea; Cavener, yea; Perreault, absent; Strader, yea; Overton, yea.

Simison: All ayes. Motion carries.

MOTION CARRIED: FIVE AYES. ONE ABSENT.

2. Public Hearing to Reserve All Foregone Revenue Associated with Fiscal Year 2024 Budget

Simison: And appreciate all the work on that portion of the fiscal year 2004 budget. Congratulations to all the directors and staff who worked on that, so -- with that we are not done with the '24 budget, so I don't know if we are going to get them on this one, but we will go to the public hearing to -- open the public hearing to reserve all foregone revenue associated with fiscal year 2024 budget and we will turn this back over to Ms. Fields.

Fields: I want to echo the thank yous and I want to thank -- this is entirely a team effort. Team -- teamwork makes it all possible. So, big thank you to Mayor, Council, and our dedicated staff. I also want to give a special shout out to Brad Purser, our former budget manager. I am sure he is tuning in all the way from Arkansas.

Seal: That's a bet I would take that I think I would win.

Fields: Okay. So, our next item is we are seeking a motion to reserve all of our foregone revenue associated with our fiscal year '24 budget. This amount is a little higher than what was presented in July. The increase was about 228,000 dollars. We will received the final data from Ada county August 1 and this is the most up-to-date calculation. So, I turn that back over to you for any questions, comments.

Simison: Council, any questions for staff on this item? Okay. Thank you. Mr. Clerk, do we have anyone signed up to provide testimony on this item?

Johnson: Mr. Mayor, we did not.

Simison: Okay. Is there anybody present or online who would like to provide testimony on this item? Seeing no one coming forward I think staff is good with no additional comments. Then do I have a motion?

Hoaglund: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglund.

Hoaglund: I move that we close the public hearing on the foregone revenue associated with the fiscal year 2024.

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?

Strader: Nay.

Simison: Would you -- the ayes have it. Would you like to have the public hearing reopened?

Strader: No, Mr. Mayor.

Simison: Okay. Then the public hearing is closed.

MOTION CARRIED: FOUR AYES. ONE NAY. ONE ABSENT.

Hoaglund: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglund. I may have discussion after this motion, which is just fine, but I move that we approve to reserve all foregone revenue associated with fiscal year 2024 in the amount of 863,332 dollars.

Overton: Second.

Simison: Have a motion and a second to reserve all foregone revenue associated with the FY-24 budget in the amount of 863,332 dollars. Is there discussion?

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Yeah. I apologize. I -- I misheard the closing of the public hearing as a motion. I previously made extensive comments about my rationale for voting no on this and will not be voting for it tonight.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: No need to belabor on this. We talked about this a few weeks ago. I just think it's also, again, a testament to past councils and our Finance staff of working hard

to develop strong budgets that we are fortunate to have this opportunity to have the discussion about if we should or if we shouldn't. There are other cities across the state that just automatically take the three percent, don't have the discussion about foregone and continue to grow government and so I at least appreciate we have the opportunity to have this conversation. Much like I felt a few weeks ago, I don't think that this revenue is needed at this time. We have substantial reserves. Good trust from our taxpayers and I don't think that it's needed for us to preserve this money at this time.

Simison: Thank you. Council, any further discussion?

Hoaglund: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglund.

Hoaglund: Yeah. I appreciate the comments and approach to the -- to that and it's just one of those things that people can look at it and have a difference there and how we -- how we handle that and -- and I view it as not something that we will take in the future, but it's there just in case we need it. We just don't know what the future holds. It's one of those situations where we try to budget and do the best job as possible and keep it -- put taxes as low as possible, but if there is a change that we do have that option and it just reserves that -- that ability to do so, if it's needed. Kind of like an insurance policy.

Simison: Thank you. Any other comments? I guess not. Clerk will call the roll.

Roll Call: Hoaglund, yea; Borton, yea; Cavener, nay; Perreault, yea; Strader, nay; Overton, yea.

Simison: Three ayes. Two nays. And the item is agreed to.

MOTION CARRIED: THREE AYES. TWO NAYS. ONE ABSENT.

3. Public Hearing for City of Meridian Fiscal Year 2023 Amended Budget

Simison: Next item up is Item 3, a public hearing for City of Meridian fiscal year 2023 amended budget. We will open this public hearing with comments from Jenny.

Fields: It's been a while. Okay. Our agenda tonight for our public hearing for fiscal year '23 amended budget is -- I'm going to go over the three major reporting funds again and, then, stand for any questions. I will go through the changes of the upcoming slides. Just know that these are amendments that have been presented to you by departments in the past ten months. So, this is more of a formal process that we notify our citizens in state of our final fiscal year '23 budget numbers. So, this will be a year in review. Our final amended budget for fiscal year '23 is 217.4 million dollars. This is down 1.06 percent from the original budget that was announced around this time last year. There were a total of 20 budget amendments that were approved and we -- our final budget amount is again down 1.06 or about 2.3 million dollars. I'm going to go over

each of the major reporting funds. In our Governmental Fund -- Governmental Funds actually went up 4.16 or 4.9 million dollars. Personnel and operating went up 19 percent. Capital went up 16.6. While carry forwards went down 24.7 percent. Here are some details and highlights that went on in our Governmental Fund. There were a total of 18 amendments that were approved. The top amendments include a few of our grants, like ARPA, CDBG and some ITD grants, totaling about 14.4 million dollars. Our other big ticketed budget amendments for citywide phone system replacements, police Motorola radio conversion and the adjustment of our carry forward. We adjusted our carry forward down 9.9 million dollars. And some of the carry forward adjustments include our Fire Station 7, Discovery Park, Lakeview Golf Course improvements. These are projects that were finished and we no longer needed the budget to be carried. Our Capital Improvement Fund had zero budget amendments. These are all carry forward adjustments related to fire station. Enterprise Fund is the last major reporting fund. The final amended budget is down 6.89 percent, which is 5.98 million dollars from the original budget. Enterprise Fund had two total budget amendments that were approved. Water and wastewater chemicals, SCADA system security upgrades and, then, we also had a 6.8 million dollar carry forward adjustment in this fund as well. So, that concludes the overview of our fiscal year '23 amended budget.

Simison: Thank you, Jenny. Council, any questions for staff? Okay. Thank you. Mr. Clerk, is there anyone signed up on this item?

Johnson: Mr. Mayor, there were no sign-ups.

Simison: Okay. Is there anybody present who would like to provide testimony on the FY-23 budget? Seeing none, do I have a motion to close the public hearing?

Hoaglund: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglund.

Hoaglund: I move that we close the public hearing for City of Meridian fiscal year 2023 amended budget.

Cavener: Second.

Simison: Have a motion and a second. 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: FIVE AYES. ONE ABSENT.

Hoaglund: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglund.

Hoaglund: I move that we approve the City of Meridian fiscal year 2023 amended -- amended budget in the amount of 217,401,857 dollars.

Cavener: Second.

Simison: Have a motion and a second to approve the FY-23 amended budget in the amount of 217,401,857 dollars. Is there any discussion?

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Just a comment to echo the thanks to all the teams in the city who helped with the different budgets and finalizing this year's budget, especially the Finance team, but I wanted to specifically give a shout out to Jenny, because I think you stepped up in a big way and leading us through the process this year and that you did a great job. Thank you.

Hoaglund: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglund.

Hoaglund: To echo those comments, very appropriate and thank you, Jenny, but also to the whole team. I mean when you look at last year's budget and it's not exact science and you are within 1.06 percent of what we put -- put together with all the departments and the directors and the whole team and that's a pretty -- pretty amazing. That's quite - quite the effort. So, kudos to everyone.

Simison: Appreciate that. I know everyone will appreciate those comments from everybody. So, with that, unless there is further comments, ask the Clerk to call the roll

Roll Call: Hoaglund, yea; Borton, yea; Cavener, yea; Perreault, absent; Strader, yea; Overton, yea.

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

MOTION CARRIED: FIVE AYES. ONE ABSENT.

4. Public Hearing for Proposed Water and Sewer Fee Increases

Simison: Jenny, you are excused from the public hearings for the rest of the night. But with that we will move on to our next public hearing, proposed water and sewer fee increases, and I will turn this over to Director Laurelei McVey.

McVey: All right. Thanks, Mayor and Council. We were before you a few weeks ago and gave you the presentation. So, in short we are asking for a three percent increase

to both the water base and -- or water-sewer base and use. Just a reminder this is about -- the average impact to a citizen is about \$1.91 per month. We did notice this in the newspaper for two weeks and we also put it in the bill tagline that went out on everybody's utility bill and received no input at the department level. So, with that no further information or presentation this evening.

Simison: Thank you. Council, do you have questions for staff? Okay. Thank you very much. This is a public hearing. Do we have anyone signed up on this item, Mr. Clerk?

Johnson: Mr. Mayor, we did not.

Simison: Okay. Is there anybody present who would like to provide testimony on this item? Seeing no one coming forward do I have a motion?

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: I yield to Council Member Strader.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: I move that we close the public hearing.

Cavener: 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: FIVE AYES. ONE ABSENT.

5. Resolution 23-2403: A Resolution Adopting New Fees of the Meridian Public Works Department; Authorizing the Meridian Public Works Department to Collect Such Fees, and Providing an Effective Date

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: I move that we approve Resolution 23-2403 adopting new fees for the Meridian Public Works Department, authorizing them to collect the fees and providing an effective date.

Cavener: Second.

Simison: I have a motion and a second. Do I have discussion on the motion?

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Just to reiterate that, you know, in the inflationary environment that we are in and with the cost of everything going up, chemicals, equipment, labor, I think that the Public Works Department's doing a really good job trying to limit these fee increases as much as possible and I'm appreciative of that and I know that we all are.

Simison: All right. With that Clerk will call the roll.

Roll Call: Hoaglund, yea; Borton, yea; Cavener, yea; Perreault, absent; Strader, yea; Overton, yea.

Simison: All ayes. Motion carries and the item is agreed to. Thank you very much.

MOTION CARRIED: FIVE AYES. ONE ABSENT.

6. Public Hearing for Proposed Updates to Mayor and City Council Compensation

Simison: Next item up is Item 6, a public hearing for proposed updates to Mayor and City Council compensation. Mr. Nary, do you have anything more you would like to add?

Nary: No, Mr. Mayor. This is our third reading of the ordinance and so -- we have not received any public comments since last week.

Simison: Okay. Is there anybody in the -- the public hearing is open. Is there anybody who would like to provide public testimony on this item? Seeing no one coming forward, do I have a motion to close the public hearing?

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Move we close the public hearing on proposed updates to Mayor and City Council compensation.

Strader: 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: FIVE AYES. ONE ABSENT.

ORDINANCES [Action Item]

7. Third Reading of Ordinance 23-2024: An Ordinance Amending Title 1, Chapter 7, Section 9 of the Meridian City Code, Regarding City Councilmembers' Compensation; Providing a Savings Clause; and Providing an Effective Date

Simison: So, with that we will move on to our ordinances this evening. First item up is Item 7. Ask the clerk to read this ordinance by title.

Johnson: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. This is Ordinance 23-2024 an ordinance amending Title 1, Chapter 7, Section 9 of the Meridian City Code, regarding city councilmembers' compensation; providing a savings clause; and providing an effective date.

Simison: Thank you. Council, you have heard this ordinance read by title. Is there anybody that would like it read in its entirety? If not do I have a motion?

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: I guess we are all like looking at each other here and no one wants to be the one to make the motion. Refresh my memory, please, someone as to the final date that we need to adopt the ordinance. Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: We have had a lot of input I think from our committee that reviews this. It's unfortunate that we don't have more public comment. I think in part it is a positive sign about the compensation proposals. I think at the end of the day for me, having reviewed it, I think it's important for us to keep it competitive no matter who is in the seat, especially with inflation and that's -- that's kind of how I reviewed this was in major part keeping up with inflation. I would be curious if other Council Members have different feedback.

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: I -- I appreciate Council Member Strader's comments. I think this is always a unique conversation that we --

Simison: Just from a process standpoint do we need to make a motion or are we okay to just talk before we do -- I just want to -- we haven't never really done this on an ordinance.

Nary: You can do it either way.

Simison: Okay. That's fine. Mr. Cavener.

Cavener: I was happy to make a motion as well if that would help move things along. Council Member Strader is spot on, you know, that we -- we rely a whole lot on a recommendation of a committee who tries to look at this objectively and certainly I believe whatever action we take tonight will be reported in newspapers and blogs and online and, then, people will, of course, have comments and feedback and we wished that they would find a way to channel that and harness it and get it to us before the decision point tonight. Every two years that we have this before us I struggle with -- is -- my role on the City Council is it a job or is it public service? It's really both. And so that is for me where I'm always at -- at a conflict point is that I don't want serving on the city council to be a career. I want it to be something that we do because we all care about Meridian. If you have ever been on a council -- I have probably said this every two years. The -- the mom that volunteers as a PAL soccer coach serves her community and doesn't get paid. The gentlemen who volunteers at the Meridian Food Bank doesn't get paid. The tutor at the Boys and Girls Club doesn't get paid. They do it because they care about Meridian and they care about keeping this a great community and so we all do that whether we be paid or not and I -- I want to commend Council Member Borton for his recommendation of maybe having the committee look at after three terms of service compensation goes away. I love that idea. Because I -- I believe that this is more service than a job, I'm reluctant to agree with the recommendation from the committee this year. I think that our compensation is appropriate. It's fair. We are also as members of City Council are afforded an amazing benefit that our city employees get in health insurance and vision insurance and dental insurance and my preference has always been that we keep compensation low to encourage people for stepping up who want to serve. So, I'm not in favor of the recommendation of the -- of the committee tonight.

Overton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Overton.

Overton: Without copying a lot of what Councilman Cavener just said, kind of the new kid on the block and first year and I have -- I came to this strictly for that public service aspect. In fact, I remember telling the Finance director -- he has left the room now, but it was probably almost 30 days before I actually found out what this job actually paid and I had to sit down with HR, because that had nothing to do with becoming a member

of the City Council to me. It was everything about serving this community and taking the passion that I had for all those years and now bringing it back and bringing it forth with the city. Since I have sat here this year I have watched us do a compensation package for general employees. I have watched us look at the PAM model and bring six more officers forward for police and watching us work on a compensation package for our Fire Department and I just don't think that we need to be addressing our pay increase right now as city council members. I would also not be in favor of it at this time.

Hoaglund: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglund.

Hoaglund: Yeah. These are -- I think the two gentlemen who just spoke, you know, I think summed it up well. We don't do it for the money. At the same time how do we make sure -- as I have commented before it's kind of like spousal compensation for the time that we are away and missing things and trying to plan and celebrate birthdays on not their birthday, because it's Council night, so you are doing that. So, I think, Mr. Mayor, I -- I would move that we not approve Ordinance No. 23-2024 regarding City Council compensation as recommended by the committee.

Cavener: Second.

Borton: Second.

Simison: Have a motion and a second. Is there further discussion? If not, Clerk will call the roll.

Roll Call: Hoaglund, yea; Borton, yea; Cavener, yea; Perreault, absent; Strader, nay; Overton, yea.

Simison: Four ayes. One no. Motion to not approve passes.

MOTION CARRIED: FOUR AYES. ONE NAY. ONE ABSENT.

Nary: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Mr. Nary.

Nary: Mr. Mayor, Members of the Council, what I will do, because the statute requires if you are going to increase it today was the last day. But I will have to bring you back an ordinance to maintain it, because it's spelled out by years in the ordinance. So, you will see -- probably not next week, probably at the next meeting, the first meeting in September, an ordinance just establishing the same rates of pay for the next two years.

8. Third Reading of Ordinance No. 23-2026: An Ordinance Amending Title 1, Chapter 6, Section 5 of the Meridian City Code Regarding Mayor's Compensation; Providing a Savings Clause; and Providing an Effective Date

Simison: Next item up is Item 8, which is the third reading of Ordinance No. 23-2026. Ask the Clerk to read this ordinance by title.

Johnson: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. This is an ordinance amending Title 1, Chapter 6, Section 5 of the Meridian City Code regarding Mayor's compensation, providing a savings clause and providing an effective date.

Simison: Okay. Council, you have heard this ordinance read by title. Is there anybody that would like it read in its entirety? Seeing none, what's your pleasure?

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Well, if we don't make a motion now maybe a quick conversation after. Is that appropriate? Mr. Mayor, I move we approve Ordinance No. 23-2026, an ordinance amending Title 1, Chapter 6, Section 5, of the Meridian City Code regarding the Mayor's compensation, finding a savings clause and providing an effective date.

Overton: Second.

Simison: Have a motion and a second. Is there discussion?

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: I look at this one a little bit different. Certainly we would expect that any person who wants the job of Mayor would care about our community and will also have a heart for service, but the work of -- of leading the second largest city in the state is more than a full time job with competing demands and so this is the case that I am in full support of the recommendation of the committee and I think it's appropriate given increasing duties are Mayor is responsible for in an ever growing city.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Yeah. Just a comment here and I view the items similarly. I think it's important for our city to attract the best talent and I think part of doing that is casting a wide net and making it accessible for everybody. So, I view that as important for members of the

City Council. I want to make it so that any citizen has the ability to serve on our Council. Maybe they have to give up, you know, a second job to do that. So, I'm trying to think about, you know, getting the best people in the seat. That includes the Mayor's role as well. And so I think it's appropriate to make sure that we are keeping up, especially because no increase would actually result in a decrease in real wages in this inflationary environment.

Hoaglund: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglund.

Hoaglund: Yeah. I agree with -- with the motion. This is a full-time job. It is something that if you want good people who are working full time and they are in a director role or the VP of a company or another organization to leave a job that pays much less than it does in the private sector is -- is a big ask and trying to -- this is definitely not what it would be if you are doing the same thing in the private sector in this position, but at the same time I think this increase does help and gives people an opportunity to look at and decide whether or not they want to run if that's their desire to serve as mayor or our community. So, appreciate the thought process on that and seeing that it is an important role. They manage the day to day affairs and oversee the staff. So, I'm certainly in favor of -- of this ordinance and increasing the compensation for that office in the -- in the coming year. Two years.

Simison: Might even be enough for Ralph to consider running. There you go. Any further comments? All right. Ask the Clerk to call the roll.

Roll Call: Hoaglund, yea; Borton, yea; Cavener, yea; Perreault, absent; Strader, yea; Overton, yea.

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

MOTION CARRIED: FIVE AYES. ONE ABSENT.

- 9. Ordinance 23-2028: An ordinance (Artisan Victory Market – H-2022-0066) annexing the southwest quarter of the southwest quarter of Section 21, Township 3 North, Range 1 East, Boise Meridian, Ada County, Idaho, more particularly described in Exhibit “A”; rezoning 14.473 acres of such real property from RUT (Rural Urban Transition) to R-15 (Medium High-Density Residential) zoning district; directing city staff to alter all applicable use and area maps as well as the official zoning maps and all official maps depicting the boundaries and the zoning districts of the City of Meridian in accordance with this ordinance; providing that copies of this ordinance shall be filed with the Ada County Assessor, the Ada County Treasurer, the Ada County Recorder, and the Idaho State Tax Commission, as required by law; repealing conflicting ordinances; and providing an effective**

date

Simison: Next item is No. 9, Ordinance No. 23-2028. Ask the Clerk to read this Ordinance by title.

Johnson: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. It's an ordinance related to Artisan Victory Market, H-2022-0066, annexing the southwest quarter of the southwest quarter of Section 21, Township 3 North, Range 1 East, Boise meridian, Ada county, Idaho, more particularly described in Exhibit "A"; rezoning 14.473 acres of such real property from RUT to R-15 zoning district; directing city staff to alter all applicable use and area maps, as well as the official zoning maps and all official maps depicting the boundaries and the zoning districts of the City of Meridian in accordance with this ordinance; providing that copies of this ordinance shall be filed with the Ada County Assessor, the Ada County Treasurer, the Ada County Recorder, and the Idaho State Tax Commission, as required by law; repealing conflicting ordinances; and providing an effective date.

Simison: Thank you. Council, you have heard this ordinance read by title. Is there anybody that would like to read in its entirety? If not, do I have a motion?

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Move we approve ordinance 23-2028 as presented.

Borton: Second.

Simison: Have a motion and a second to approve Ordinance No. 23. Is there any discussion? If not, Clerk will call the roll.

Roll Call: Hoaglund, yea; Borton, yea; Cavener, yea; Perreault, absent; Strader, yea; Overton, yea.

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

MOTION CARRIED: FIVE AYES. ONE ABSENT.

Simison: Council, anything else under in the future meeting topics than what we have already discussed? Or do I have a motion?

Hoaglund: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglund.

Hoaglund: Move that we go into Executive Session per Idaho Code 74-206A(1)(a).

Cavener: Second.

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

Roll Call: Hoaglund, yea; Borton, yea; Cavener, yea; Perreault, absent; Strader, yea; Overton, yea.

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

MOTION CARRIED: FIVE AYES. ONE ABSENT.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: (6:59 p.m. to 7:35 p.m.)

(Hoaglund motion/Strader second to come out of Executive Session.)

(Hoaglund motion to adjourn)

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:35 P.M.

(AUDIO RECORDING ON FILE OF THESE PROCEEDINGS)

_____ MAYOR ROBERT SIMISON	_____ DATE APPROVED
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ATTEST:

CHRIS JOHNSON - CITY CLERK