

Meridian City Council Work Session

October 24, 2023.

A Meeting of the Meridian City Council was called to order at 4:32 p.m. Tuesday, October 24, 2023, by Mayor Robert Simison.

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

Members Absent: Luke Cavener.

Others Present: Chris Johnson, Tina Lomeli, Bill Nary, Chris McGilvery, and Dean Willis.

ROLL-CALL ATTENDANCE

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Liz Strader	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Joe Borton
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Brad Hoaglun	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	John Overton
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jessica Perreault	<input type="checkbox"/>	Luke Cavener
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mayor Robert E. Simison		

Simison: Council, we will call the meeting to order. For the record it is October 24th, 2023, at 4:32 p.m. We will begin today's City Council work session with roll call attendance.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Simison: Next up is the adoption of the agenda.

Hoaglun: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglun.

Hoaglun: On the agenda we are going to vacate Items No. 6 and No. 13 from today's agenda. So, with those items vacated I move adoption of the agenda as amended.

Overton: Second.

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

MOTION CARRIED: FIVE AYES. ONE ABSENT.

CONSENT AGENDA [Action Item]

- 1. Approve Minutes of the October 17, 2023 City Council Work Session**

- 2. Approve Minutes of the October 17, 2023 City Council Regular Meeting**
- 3. Apex Northwest Subdivision No. 4 Water Main Easement No. 1 (ESMT-2023-0150)**
- 4. In-n-Out Burgers Water Main Easement (ESMT-2023-0151)**
- 5. Findings of Fact; Conclusions of Law for Petsche Rezone (H-2023-0039) by Tammy Petsche, located at 1508 N. Meridian Rd.**
- 7. Approval of Construction Contract to JC Constructors, Inc. for the Aeration Basins 1 – 4 Retrofits and 9 & 10 Upgrades project for the Not-To-Exceed amount of \$25,134,000.00**
- 8. Approval of Construction Contract to Stroth General, LLC. for the Well 9C Pumping Facility project for the Not-To-Exceed amount of \$1,457,222.00**
- 9. Acceptance Agreement for Public Art at Five Mile Creek Pathway Trailhub: "Water Metrics"**
- 10. Resolution No. 23-2421: Final Acceptance of "Water Metrics" Art Installation by Eileen Gay, and Providing an Effective Date**
- 11. Acceptance Agreement for Discovery Park Artwork: "The Hole Ball Game"**
- 12. Resolution No. 23-2422: Final Acceptance of "The Hole Ball Game" Art Installation by UrbanRock Design, and Providing an Effective Date**

Simison: Next up is the Consent Agenda.

Hoaglund: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglund.

Hoaglund: We have removed Item 6 from the Consent Agenda. So, I move approval of the Consent Agenda as amended and for the Mayor to sign and Clerk to attest.

Overton: Second.

Simison: I 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: FIVE AYES. ONE ABSENT.

ITEMS MOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA [Action Item]

Simison: There were no items removed from the Consent Agenda.

DEPARTMENT / COMMISSION REPORTS [Action Item]

13. Light My Fire Check Presentation

Simison: So go on to Department/Commission Reports. Item 13 was vacated.

14. Mayor's Youth Advisory Council (MYAC) Bi-monthly Update

Simison: So, we will move on to Item 14, which is the Mayor's Youth Advisory Council for their bi-monthly update and we will turn this over to Sahand for the introductions.

Rahbar: Mr. Mayor, City Council Members, thank you so much for making the time for us to attend your workshop and share some information about MYAC. It is my pleasure to introduce two of the seniors on our executive council, Isabella Degelman and Valeria Avila-Orozco, who will talk a little bit about what MYAC has been up to since the beginning of the summer and what they are planning to do in the months ahead.

Degelman: Mr. Mayor, City Council Members, thank you so much for having us today. My name is Isabella. I am the current chair of MYAC this year and I am a senior at Renaissance.

Avila-Orozco: Hi. My name is Valeria Avila and I am also a senior at Renaissance and I'm currently the communications coordinator for MYAC.

Degelman: And during our presentation we are just going to give a brief overview of what MYAC has been doing from June through October. So, beginning with government affairs.

Avila-Orozco: So, we had Chris Johnson as our first guest speaker and it was an absolute blast, because a lot of our general council MYACers don't know much about what the city clerk does and so we got to learn about his everyday activities that he does as the city clerk and how much he actually does for our city. We also did this at our last MYAC meeting. So, with elections coming up and also in general high school seniors are turning 18 we decided to hand out flyers just informing everyone in the community that if you turn 18 you are able to register to vote and so we handed out these flyers during our meeting and they -- our general council members will be putting these flyers in schools, libraries, club meetings, anywhere they see fit with the permission of the establishment. We have also continued this activity from last year. It's the mind ready Kahoot quizzes from the podcast that the Mayor does with our government officials and we use this as a way to have our general council learn more

about the government of Meridian, because there is so much to learn about the government and these podcasts allow our general council to learn about it and it gives them a fun incentive that we do at every meeting.

Degelman: Okay. And then now moving on to community service. One of the first events that we had to start off our year for MYAC was the Scentsy Rock-a-thon, which is an event that we participated in last year as well. This happened on September 8th. So, MYACers during this event rocked in rocking chairs alongside Eagle Road to help raise money for the Idaho Youth Ranch. So, this consisted of us holding up signs and, then, cheering on people who were coming by. The event in total out of all the people who came was able to raise 260,000 dollars for the Idaho Youth Ranch and MYAC was super grateful to be a part of it. And, then, alongside that we have also done the walk to end Alzheimer's, which is an annual event that we participate in. This happened on September 30th. So, during this event MYACers were tasked with cheering on the participants and, then, also guiding them along the walk path. So, this year the event was a huge success. It had 744 total participants and was able to raise 196,000 dollars for the Alzheimer's Association. And, then, most recently at our general council meeting yesterday we are decorating for a trunk or tree and holiday helpers. So, trunk or treat is something that's happening at Meridian City Hall on Thursday. So, MYAC is having a booth at that, so general council members were tasked with making decorations for our photo booth that we are going to be having and, then, alongside that we are also doing holiday helpers with the association the United Way and during that we are also doing a photo prop with that, so MYACers were helping to build a snowman and such for that.

Avila-Orozco: Now, moving on to our leadership development. So, we have the Treasure Valley Youth Safety Summit. We participated in this event last year again and MYAC -- we were able to help run the event by helping people sign in and we also were able to participate in the event and learning a lot about what issues happen with drunk driving and how you shouldn't text and drive and different things like that. We had a very important speaker there, Natalie Marti, who had a powerful story about her experience with a drunk driver and it truly motivated a lot of people and you could tell that people actually learned a lot from that experience and how they shouldn't be drunk while driving. We also had AIC. This was just for executive council members of MYAC. Five of our members attended and it is an amazing opportunity where we were able to get to know each other better and it helps us communicate and coordinate better as an executive council for MYAC members and during this we were able to do a community service project and also meet with other executive councils from around Idaho and know what they do at their MYACs and what works well and incorporate that into our own meetings.

Degelman: And, then, the next thing we have up is we have some more upcoming events and other events that we have done through MYAC. So, one of our upcoming events, like I mentioned previously we have trunk or treat that's happening on October 26th, this Thursday at Meridian City Hall where we are going to be doing a photo booth. At our next general council meeting on November 6th we are really excited, because we were able to secure Dr. Bub, the superintendent of the West Ada School District, to

come in as a guest speaker during this meeting and talk a little bit about leadership development, one of our main pillars of MYAC. On November 7th we are going to be doing the Holiday Helpers with United Way of Treasure Valley and on the 11th we have Rake Up Meridian, an annual event that MYAC participates in to help those rake up their lawns who are unable to do so. On December 6th we are hoping to do a legislative panel as part of our meeting and, then, also in December we are going to do our annual volunteering at the Idaho Botanical Gardens. And, then, upcoming in the spring we are planning to do a voter registration drive. We also have Mad City Money, an event that we do annually to teach MYACers more about financial responsibility and, then, we also have #dotherightday and, then, senior prom as well, which is an event that we put on every year and something that actually won us an award at the Association of Idaho Cities conference this year. Thank you guys.

Avila-Orozco: Thank you.

Simison: Thank you. Council, any questions or comments? And I know we don't have Councilman Cavener here, who is normally our MYAC individual. So, Councilman Hoaglund, any comments?

Hoaglund: I would -- Mr. Mayor, thank you. I was just kind of curious. It's your senior year and we are going to head into the holidays and next thing you know it's springtime and you guys are getting ready -- looking at other adventures. What -- what has MYAC kind of taught you so far that -- I don't know if it's surprising, but something you have gained from being in a leadership role, first of all, but also just learning more about your community? Is there anything that stands out?

Avila-Orozco: Yeah. So, I have been with MYAC since my sophomore year and I think MYAC has taught me so much how to communicate with people. It not only -- like you have to get out of your shell to meet new MYAC members, but also learning and meeting with the Mayor when he is there at meetings and even just talking to Sahand -- you get to talk to adults that you think are in power and it teaches you how to learn -- it teaches -- MYAC teaches you how to speak to those individuals and also like gain the confidence to speak to them.

Degelman: Yeah. I agree. I definitely think it's helped improve my communication and being a leader. Presenting in front of City Council is something that I never would have thought of doing my sophomore year. So, it's a really good experience and I think MYAC has also provided me with the opportunity to get involved with my community. I think being a teenager it's definitely difficult to get involved with your community as you are often limited by your age, but I think MYAC has definitely given me a way to do so and offered me a platform to be able to do that.

Hoaglund: Thank you. Appreciate that.

Overton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Overton.

Overton: Thank you for everything you do. In fact, everyone on MYAC. I think you realize by now that when you do all these different events and fundraisers that if it wasn't for folks like you many of these things would never happen. So, not just to thank you to you, but everybody who helps you make this work and that's what's good about our community, whether it's an Alzheimer's walk, whether it's rocking rocking chairs -- folks like you are what makes those happen and makes them successful. I didn't hear in your list of things coming up -- and maybe it's because they are past. Do you still work with the Meridian Anti-Drug Coalition? MADC.

Degelman: Yes, we do. So, the Meridian Anti-Drug Coalition was at our Treasure Valley Youth Safety Summit that we did, so we have them there and, then, in the last year we actually participated with them, too. They provided some money for MYAC to like put on an event to inform students about the Meridian Anti-Drug Coalition.

Overton: Great. Thank you.

Simison: Well, thank you very much. Appreciate it. And I know -- we have got an unfortunate situation coming up with a lot of Monday conflicts with holidays and whatnot, so we are really trying to work through that through the semester. I know it can be a challenge. But I know you guys will find a way to get everything organized and move everyone forward and get them all off. Thank you.

Degelman: Thank you.

15. Emergency Housing Assistance Grant Update from Jesse Tree

Simison: Okay. Next item up is emergency housing assistance grant update from Jesse Tree and -- anybody online? And Ali is not online or in the audience. I don't know if we want to take a few minute break to see -- if they plan on giving -- coming or showing up. Mr. Borton?

Borton: Yeah. I think they were. Maybe just a quick break.

Simison: All right. Let's take an up to ten minute recess and maybe keep your -- we will keep our cameras on in case we can come back sooner. Thanks.

(Recess: 4:45 p.m. to 4:57 p.m.)

Simison: All right. Council, we will go ahead and come back from recess and we will continue on with Item 15, which is the emergency -- emergency housing assistance grant update from Jesse Tree and I will invite Ali and Evan up to the podium.

Rabe: Mayor and Council, my name is Ali Rabe. I'm the executive director at Jesse Tree.

Stewart: My name is Evan Stewart, the program director at Jesse Tree.

Rabe: And I just want to apologize for us being late. We saw ourselves being last on the agenda, so -- also took us an hour to get here from Boise. So, apologize for that. But thank you for making the time to have us present here. You all made a really significant investment into keeping people housed in the City of Meridian and we think it's important for us to report back on how that went and what we accomplished with the funding that you provided our agency. We did provide a handout and I will e-mail that to Danielle after this for distribution, but the first page is just highlighting some of the accomplishments that we reached with -- with the funding. The second page is the number of applications for emergency rental assistance we were receiving from renters in Meridian who are being evicted by month and the last page is the amount of financial assistance we are providing to residents in the City of Meridian by month as well. What we are going to talk about today is just what we applied for with the grant. What we accomplished with the grant. We will share a couple of client stories and, then, just talk to you about what we are seeing in Meridian right now. So, as many of you know Jesse Tree is an eviction prevention agency that provides one-time emergency rental assistance and supportive services to renters who are being evicted. We have been around for 25 years and more recently have definitely been more active and growing to meet the growing need for services just with rent having increased by 40 percent here locally over the last few years. In light of the issues around eviction and a lot of renters, you know, facing -- facing issues on being unable to pay their rent, the City of Meridian released the emergency housing assistance RFP last fall. Jesse Tree received -- applied for and received that funding for 250,000 dollars. In our grant we projected to serve 120 families from Meridian who were being evicted with emergency rental assistance and all the funding we put -- we applied for is committed for use with emergency rent, while we were committed to using separate funding to provide case management services and support services. As we mentioned in our application, emergency rental assistance at the time of application was a great need. As COVID era funds for rental assistance were set to expire we were at risk of reducing our services for renters in Meridian by 75 percent from about 40 -- from, you know, ten to much less than that and the grant funding allowed us to sustain the level of services we provided to renters residing in Meridian from last year through this year. So, I'm going to let Evan talk about what we accomplished with the grant.

Stewart: Yeah. So, over a ten month period Jesse Tree administered 250,000 dollars to 95 client households. The number of -- number of households served was 25 less than committed in our grant application, mostly due to our organization encountering more tenants with larger sums of rent owed than anticipated. On average each household was provided with 2,631 dollars in emergency rental assistance funding. Every household served was under the 80 percent area median income, which is roughly 4,754 monthly income for a household of two. However, the -- however, the majority of households served were under the 30 percent area median income, which is 1,783 dollars of monthly income for a household of two. Jesse Tree -- basically the way we work is we operate like an emergency room in a hospital. So, we triage cases based on the level of need and urgency. The tenants served were all in urgent

situations and at high risk of eviction and homelessness if they were not to receive any services at all. Every household was in the legal eviction process primarily for nonpayment of rent. That's the trend that we are seeing for the reason why people are at risk of losing their housing. So, they all received a three day notice from their landlord or we assisted them directly in eviction court to prevent that going on their record. Each tenant household gets assigned to an experienced Jesse Tree case manager. All of our case managers are trained in social work, conflict resolution, budgeting. So, every household that receives case management -- case management services gets budget -- budgeting help. So, we look pretty deeply into their -- what their current spending habits are. Good advice into their projected months moving forward in terms of reducing some of those expenses for other bills that they have or just best practices to try to help prioritize, you know, their need over anything else in terms of housing. Yeah. We also get people -- all the case managers are trained in all the different resources in the community. So, we get people connected to different resources and we tailor housing -- housing stability plans for, you know, short-term, long-term goals towards gaining more housing sustainability moving forward. Jesse Tree does serve additional Meridian clients with private and other grant funding as well. So, some of that funding is through the Meridian CDBG program, but also the campaign to end family homelessness here in Ada county, which is run through more of a public-private partnership seeking to end family homelessness in Ada county and that's in collaboration with Our Path Home and a majority of private funding comes from individual donors within our community. Overall -- so, our organization did support 179 households with case management services. All those families and households were at risk of being evicted in Meridian this year. Of the 179 households that were served Jesse Tree was able to help 62 of those households self-resolve without any direct financial assistance from Jesse Tree and that's really where a lot of that case management comes into practice and of the 179 households 117 did receive direct financial assistance from Jesse Tree, which gets paid to the landlord. It's strictly for rental assistance to prevent an eviction or from people losing their rentals and, of course, 95 of those out of the 117 were supported through the ARPA project through the emergency housing assistance project from -- from the -- from Meridian and on average we are assisting about 15 households each month from the City of Meridian. Oh, sure. So, I can go ahead and share our first client story. So, we have two of them. This household was directly assisted through the Meridian emergency housing assistance through the ARPA project. So, I will go ahead and read off the story. James is a Meridian client whom we have worked with through our community health program at Jesse Tree. When James' partner unexpectedly moved out of their apartment this summer he was left with the full rent to cover. Jesse Tree was able to provide emergency rental assistance to keep James housed during this difficult transition. His case manager recognized that he was uninsured and assisted in navigating community resources and also assisted -- assisted James with applying for Medicaid. Shortly after this James suffered an injury, which led to two hernias. James is resilient, but because of the physical nature of his work and his jobs he was not given a -- he was -- his hours were cut as a result of the injury. James has been working with our staff to gain access to Medicaid, but he has been delayed due to his employer not completing the work verification form that's required for Medicaid. Our staff member who is working with

James reached out to contacts at Health and Welfare to troubleshoot this issue, so that he can gain insurance coverage and receive the medical care needed to recover from his injury and return to work. Our staff members also provided concrete resources to help with food, gas, and hygiene items and also provided direct referrals to agencies, such as El-Ada to help with any sort of utility assistance and also the West Ada School District, because James does have a -- is a single parent. Jesse Trees' case manager has provided support and help his client maintain his housing and his hope through a challenging time.

Rabe: And I'm just going to share one more and, then, kind of talk about what we are seeing in Meridian moving forward currently in this market. So, Jill is another -- another single parent. We serve a lot of single parent households. But she parents a 17 year old son. She owns her RV, but was renting a space in an RV park here in Meridian. While living in her RV was not her ideal housing situation, she was grateful to have it to fall back on when her previous housing situation fell through due to ongoing rent increases that surpassed her income. She -- Jill has a permanent disability and her only source of income was SSDI, giving her about 300 dollars to live off after paying for rent. So, Jill was also recently widowed, part of what led her to living in the RV. She lost her husband during the pandemic due to health issues and covering bills after her husband's death, moving and increasing cost of living caused her to fall behind in her lot rent where she was living with -- in her RV. We were able to catch her up on the past due rent and utility balance that was paid, so she could catch up on her other bills, which included school expenses for her son, paying for groceries, paying for other, you know, essential expenses that she was facing. So, just a couple of stories of many. We also provided photos of a couple of our clients and a handout that we provided and another client there that we served in eviction court. So, just want to put a face to the funding. You know, we say 95 families, but you think about what those families were going through and the ripple effects that our, you know, support had for them to be able to stay in their homes -- not only for them, but for their children being able to have a stable place and not end up on the street or elsewhere. It's -- it just means a lot to each person -- each family that we serve. So, moving forward this funding was a really great resource. We just continue to be concerned about what it will look like moving forward and we -- while we have other private resources and we do try to fundraise as much as possible, as I mentioned, we are -- we are serving about 15 families just using private funding and other funding each month from Meridian and about up to a hundred families total in the Treasure Valley. We don't have the capacity to sustain the level of need that we are seeing. We do continue to see increased need as mentioned through the pandemic and there was, you know, a drastic rent increase in our area. There were federal housing funds available that were passed through the pandemic and, you know, while we saw that rent increase, which was kind of a safety net for a lot of folks, but recently, you know, with our funds timing out last year and now more recently some additional funds timing out with the Boise City, Ada County Housing Authority, we do see increased need here in Meridian and across -- across Ada county. So, currently we are seeing about 70 applications each month from residents in the City of Meridian. All those applications -- each month 70 folks are in the legal eviction process. So, they have received a three day notice from their landlord or they are in eviction court. In

2022 when we last spoke with you and even earlier this year the number of applications we were seeing was closer to 20 to 40 applications each month. Even close -- just a couple of months ago we were seeing more like 50 applications, so you can see that in your handout. So, that -- that more 70 number has been consistent for two months since we are seeing the effects of the federal funding from the housing authority timing out, kind of the effect of that on -- on folks. We are also seeing about 50 eviction hearings in Ada county each week. Majority of those are happening to Boise residents, but we are seeing a good number of Meridian residents there in court as well. Previously while now we are seeing 50 hearings a week consistently in Ada county, even just a few months ago that number was closer to 20 to 30 pretty consistently. So -- so, we are seeing increased need especially over the last couple of months and we will be happy to continue to update Council on what we see through the end of the year. So, just wanted to mention that. We are going to continue to, you know, try to raise as much -- as much funding as we can and partner with Our Path Home and -- and other funders across the valley to serve as many -- as many residents as we can here. Certainly this funding was great and allowed us to do a lot more than we would have been able to and so thank you for allowing us to do that and I think it shows real foresight for the city to invest in an intervention like eviction prevention just, you know, as we are seeing across the country. Eviction is -- is a real problem and oftentimes homelessness is a direct result of that, especially because when you get an eviction you have that permanently on your record, it makes it really difficult to -- to find new housing permanently and so think that this was a really good investment. On average, as I mentioned, it costs us just over 2,000 dollars to keep a family in their home and we know from our partnership it costs 15,000 dollars to get someone out of homelessness after they have fallen into that situation and so it's a good financial investment that you all made, you know, think saving the city funding and, obviously, keeping a lot of your residents in housed situations through a difficult time over the last year, so -- so thank you for that and your partnership. We really appreciate it and happy to answer any questions that you have.

Simison: Thank you. Council, any questions?

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Thanks for being here. A couple questions. I was curious if you have seen any hotspots where there were multiple evictions in one apartment complex. The reason I ask is we had some situations in Boise where people were told to like move out with like three days advance notice and, you know, the landowner in that case said that they had to make repairs and people were really left scrambling and I just also was noticing that you are spending by month looks kind of seasonal or looks like it spiked a lot in July and August. So, that was the reason for the question.

Rabe: Yeah. Off the top of our head we can't think of any mass evictions that happened in Meridian. Really saw quite a diversity of landlords that we were working

with out here and definitely a diversity of -- in the type of situations we were seeing. We could provide you with the names of the landlords potentially that we paid if that's something you would be interested in, so --

Stewart: We do have a -- we do have data that we collect on different companies that take people to eviction court. We definitely see some routinely take them, you know, weekly and we get -- we do collect all that data. I do have a -- there is a few that I can kind of think of, but I would first like to maybe check the data first. I don't want to go on the record and say anything, but -- but we do collect that data, that information.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Yeah. It was more of an area of concern. If you saw like something specific. If that was widespread. It doesn't sound like that's the case. You kind of mentioned a couple of these cases that were examples, like James and Jill, and I appreciate a lot about what your organization is trying to do is help somebody get back on their feet so they can support themselves and not become a burden on the taxpayers. Can you just kind of walk us through -- like what does a housing sustainability plan look like for one of these examples? How -- as you mentioned helping them with budgeting, helping them kind of get on their feet, but how do you sort of help them going forward to support themselves?

Stewart: Yeah. So, our case managers do take quite a bit of time working with clients. It's kind of a group effort -- team effort between the household and the case manager, but routinely the -- you know, we collect information, we want to know kind of what the situation is, what are their -- their goals, what are their -- you know, their interests, what are things that can be done to help a client pursue those goals, but also trying to increase, you know, their income, so we come up with a lot of different best practices in terms of, you know, what people can do in a pinch to, you know, increase some of their income. Steps on how to ask your employer for, you know, a raise or asking for more hours, overtime, you know, which is -- not everybody knows how to do that. It's kind of a -- people are usually a little afraid to do that. But we do try to give some of the best advice in terms of that. Mostly we get some training from people from the banking world where they have taught a lot of our case managers some of these different things, how to really identify sort of like your needs versus your wants in terms of budgeting skills and how to do that. So, we always go over basically the last -- the most previous or current month's budget, so we can ask for like bank statements, we can go through that. The goal is to project moving forward what sort of expenses can be reduced to kind of put somebody in the black -- you know, in the black so that they, you know, have some -- some income moving forward where they can cover their utilities, their -- their rent, you know, and -- but also to prioritize, you know -- you know, goals for children that they might have. But really it's -- it's adding, you know, as many different resources that are tailored towards this person's goal. There is a lot of different agencies that can provide different services outside of our scope of work in terms of child care, in terms of different

counseling. We work with clients who have never seen a doctor before. Maybe it's been numerous years. So, we can help navigate that landscape. We do have a community health worker on staff, too, who works with people a little bit more long term for some of those healthcare goals. We mostly, you know, also can send direct referrals as well. But really we are asked -- our case managers are asking people really what their short-term goals are, what their -- what's their long-term goals. We work on different steps and, then, do follow-ups to check in on how people are doing, because our goal is for people not to return anytime soon. We do try to -- we do stick to that, you know, one time assistance at least in terms of financial assistance, but case management that can go, you know, a little bit further than the financial assistance piece, because, you know, the eviction process moves really fast and so that's something that we try to alleviate or help the client overcome, but our goal is to, you know, try to at least help with some of the more supportive services and our -- our goal has always been to really improve the quality of that, because right now there is really no other agencies that can provide any sort of, you know, short-term or long-term rental assistance or subsidies. We are kind of it now in the community, which we help people in both Ada and Canyon county. You know, our volume has gone up so much with a lot of these other programs not really available. So, really, our goal is just to really hone in on our case management quality skills and supportive services, because, you know, we don't have enough financial assets to pay everybody's rent.

Rabe: I just want to say -- add if I may the -- the goal, you know, with the emergency rental assistance really helps us get them through that immediate eviction, but, then, the case management is really tailored at making sure that they don't fall into that situation again. And I want to answer your other question about the increased spending July, August super quick. That's when the Boise City-Ada County Housing Authority funding ran out, so we started to see increased applications around that time from residents in Meridian. Also just increased need. We do see in the summertime with families having more issues, challenges with childcare with school being out, so --

Simison: Council Woman Strader, do you have another follow up?

Strader: Oh, just -- yeah. Just a comment. I appreciate that context. I mean I think it's really -- I like your process and how you are trying to support somebody who might have multiple things going on to help them get on their feet again. That financial education component is so important. You know, it's a huge blind spot. Has been for years. I appreciate that now our schools are going to be providing financial education going forward, because, you know, people have something happen to them and, then, they can get overwhelmed and if they don't have that understanding of how to budget it can just be really difficult for them. So, I like that you are helping give people the skills to get out of the mess that they are in. So, I appreciate you kind of providing these examples, because I think it helps paint a picture of where the resources are going.

Seal: Council Woman Perreault.

Perreault: Thank you. Good to see you both. Really appreciate you sharing all of this information -- all the stats with us. It's -- it's heartbreaking conversations to have and I'm so grateful that -- that you have counselors that folks can call, because, you know, when there is nowhere for people to turn and housing being a very basic need, folks tend to maybe not make the best choices in those circumstances, because it's frightening and it truly is an emergency. So, I appreciate that you don't leave them with just paying for a couple months rent and -- and not help them move forward. But I just have a couple of quick questions about the numbers that you shared. First -- my first question is is there a specific --- another and -- or certainly maybe demographic and if you are allowed to share that. I don't know if there is privacy restrictions on that and, then, also how many folks are making repeat requests? I think I heard you say that they only are allowed to utilize the benefits one time, but I'm curious if you see a lot of folks coming back within, you know, maybe a one to two year period.

Stewart: Sure. I can answer that. So, the demographics that we are seeing I think matches national trends in terms of homelessness prevention and eviction prevention. Mostly we are seeing single parents, single female head of household parents, people who also self-report having a disabling condition is pretty -- pretty common for us and people who are on the more fixed income. People who are at that 30 percent area median income and below as well, it's -- I think matches a lot of national trends that are out there, too. In terms of repeat people, we definitely see people calling more just because there is not a lot of other agencies out there that can provide the level of services that Jesse Tree can. Our volumes skyrocketed to -- we are getting over 3,000 calls a month. We are seeing more applications being submitted as well. But, yeah, I mean we will see people -- maybe we have helped them a year ago -- reapply the next year. But, yeah, we are definitely seeing people reaching out for additional services as well.

Rabe: And I will just add that though we don't always provide repeat clients with financial assistance, we do try to provide them with supportive services to kind of help them navigate the situation. We also do share data with the homeless shelters here locally and Our Path Home connect -- which collects data on everyone who is experiencing homelessness in Ada county and we know that of the thousands of clients we have served since 2018 only five percent of them have gone to the shelters. So, even though some people do call back for resources, problem solving, sometimes financial assistance, a lot of those folks are not actually ending up in our -- in our homeless system, which is -- which is promising, so --

Simison: Okay. Thank you. Council, any additional questions? Or comments?

Borton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Borton.

Borton: I will just briefly comment. I love it. I'm so happy for this in hearing this data. I knew you guys would knock it out of the park. The holistic approach that you presented

in your -- in your RFP response, you have done just that and I think a lot of the success you are reporting to us is due to that. It's not just rental assistance. This self-resolution statistic is fantastic. There is just so many success stories. We do a lot of things with the city on a -- on a macro level, but this really hits at the micro and the individual families and you make such a lasting change. I'm just proud of you both and your whole organization. Jesse Tree killed it. I love it. So, I'm just -- just happy. I don't have any questions. I just love to hear the great results and you have made a lifelong distance -- lifelong difference in a lot of Meridian families and we talked about this idea and I was kind of pushy about it, focusing on trying to keep some Meridian families in Meridian, giving them a chance to be successful and stay in our community and you have done that and as elected leaders in the city I think that's a big part of our focus and you -- you have helped them so much. So, I'm just proud of you both and to Jesse Tree and thank you for the great work and great report.

Simison: All right. Well, thank you very much. Appreciate it.

Rabe: Thank you all.

Stewart: Thank you.

Simison: Okay. With that we are at the end of our meeting. Do I have a motion to adjourn?

Hoaglund: Mr. Mayor, I move we adjourn.

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

MOTION CARRIED: FIVE AYES. ONE ABSENT.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 5:27 P.M.

(AUDIO RECORDING ON FILE OF THESE PROCEEDINGS)

MAYOR ROBERT SIMISON

DATE APPROVED

ATTEST:

CHRIS JOHNSON - CITY CLERK