

A Meeting of the Meridian City Council was called to order at 4:30 p.m., Tuesday, January 16, 2023, by Mayor Robert Simison.

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

ROLL-CALL ATTENDANCE

☒ Liz Strader	☒ Joe Borton
☒ Anne Little Roberts	☒ John Overton
☒ Doug Taylor	☒ Luke Cavener
☒ Mayor Robert E. Simison	

Simison: Council, for the record it is Tuesday, January 16th, 2024, and 4:30 p.m. We will begin this afternoon's work session with roll call attendance.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Simison: Next item up is the Pledge of Allegiance, which will be led by Andrew Vanderveen. If you would like to come forward and lead us in the pledge.

(Pledge of Allegiance recited.)

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Thank you, Andrew, for being here today. I had a chance to meet with Andrew before the meeting. Nice young man. Very inquisitive and insightful about Meridian and our parks and, Andrew, I just want to say this is probably the best Pledge of Allegiance that we have done all year. So, thank you for joining us today and doing a great job. We sure appreciate it.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Simison: Andrew, we thank you for being here and with that we will move on to the adoption of the agenda.

Borton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Borton.

Borton: Move we adopt the agenda as presented.

Strader: Second.

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

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

CONSENT AGENDA [Action Item]

- 1. Approve Minutes of the January 2, 2024 City Council Special Meeting**
- 2. Approve Minutes of the January 2, 2024 City Council Regular Meeting**
- 3. Cole Valley Christian Schools Inc. Water Main Easement (ESMT-2023-0185)**
- 4. Final Plat for Matador Estates (FP-2023-0024) by Marty Camberlango, Quantum Ltd., Inc., located at 1235 E. McMillan Rd.**
- 5. Final Order for Centerville Subdivision No. 2 (FP-2023-0022) by Kent Brown Planning Services, located near the southeast corner of E. Amity Rd. and S. Hillsdale Ave.**
- 6. License Agreement with Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District to allow the City of Meridian to cross the Hunter Lateral along E. Idaho Ave.**
- 7. Interagency Agreement between the City of Meridian and Ada County Highway District for Roadway Improvement to be included with the Water and Sewer Main Replacement, E. Idaho Ave., N. Meridian Rd. to NE 6th St. (City Project #10567)**
- 8. Farm Lease Between the City of Meridian and Louie Asumendi for farming of 40 acres of City owned land adjacent to the Wastewater Resource Recovery Facility for 2024.**
- 9. Resolution 24-2431: A Resolution Approving a Farm Lease Agreement between the City of Meridian and Loui Asumendi concerning approximately forty (40) acres of real property located on N. Ten Mile R., North of W. Ustick Rd., in Ada County, Idaho; Authorizing the Mayor and the City Clerk to execute and attest said Farm Lease on behalf of the City of Meridian; and providing an effective date**

10. Resolution No. 24-2430: A Resolution of the Mayor and the City Council of the City of Meridian Approving City Council President's Appointments of City Council Members/City Staff Members to Serve as Interagency Boards, Committees, and Initiatives Representatives, and Providing an Effective Date

Simison: Next up is the Consent Agenda.

Borton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Borton.

Borton: No changes. So, I move that we approve the Consent Agenda as published. For the Mayor to sign and Clerk to attest.

Strader: 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. Impact Fee Assessment Deferral Agreement between the City of Meridian, Ada County Highway District, and JTR Holdings, LLC for property at 105 E. Carlton Ave.

Simison: So, we will go on to Department/Commission Reports. First item up is Item 11, Impact Assessment Deferral Agreement and I will turn this over to Mr. Nary.

Nary: Thank you, Mr. Mayor, Members of the Council --

Simison: One second, Mr. Nary. Councilman Borton.

Borton: Just making a quick record of recusing from any consideration or discussion to this topic. Have an interest in the property.

Simison: Thank you.

Nary: Mr. Mayor, Members of Council, for the public's benefit the city collects impact fees for Ada County Highway District at the building's permitted stage of all developments. That's an agreement that has been ongoing with the highway district for many many years and, occasionally, we run into situations, based on the request normally from the developer of the property, to defer the payment of the impact fees to a later point in time, rather than at the building permit stage, but maybe to a later point based on economic reasons for varieties of reasons and negotiate that with the city and with ACHD to collect it at the certificate of occupancy stage. That's what we have done here with this particular property. ACHD is, obviously, the driver of that. They are in agreement of the deferral. City is fine with collecting it at a later point in time. Again, we do control both the permitting side, as well as the occupancy side. So, on this particular occasion on -- again, we don't do it very often. We probably in the last -- I think since 2019 we may have done it once. So, it's not something that's done a ton. But it is an off-beat, so because of that we want to make sure was on the agenda for the Council to approve it separately.

Simison: Thank you, Mr. Nary. Council, any questions for Mr. Nary?

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Just because I'm curious, is the deferral -- if the city were to change impact fees from the time that the deferral was approved until occupancy and the impact fee would be said to be paid changes, is this locked in at the date of deferral or what's the day that it would be due?

Nary: Mr. Mayor, Council Member Cavener, so they are calculated now at what they would be today. We are just deferring the collection of it to later.

Cavener: Thank you.

Simison: Additional questions or do I have a motion?

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Move that we approve Item 11, the Impact Fee Deferral Agreement between the City of Meridian, the Ada County Highway District, and JTR Holdings for the property at 105 East Carlton Avenue.

Cavener: Second.

Simison: Have a motion and a second to approve Item 11. Is there any discussion? If not all in favor signify by saying aye. Opposed nay? Recusing noted. Not responded to.

MOTION CARRIED: FIVE AYES. ONE RECUSE.

12. Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Amendment in the amount of \$35,000.00 for purchase of an additional Unmanned Aircraft System (Drone)

Simison: With that we will move on to Item 12, which is for fiscal year 2024 Budget Amendment in the amount of 35,000 for purchase of an initial unmanned aircraft system.

Ludwig: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. With that said my name is Kyle Ludwig. I'm a lieutenant with the police department and I am the commander assigned to the UAVs or drone program currently. I'm here to request a budget amendment not to exceed 35,000 dollars for the purpose of purchasing a new large frame drone. Following the double homicide incident in town we realized that there was a safety gap presented while we were searching for the suspect trying to monitor the scene and conduct yard-to-yard safety searches during that time frame. We exhausted the equipment we currently have on hand, thus we had officers on search teams going into areas that were unable to be cleared or unable to apply overwatch to and bring them into an unknown situation, which is rather precarious for the officers and puts them in danger. Additionally, once we located the fleeing suspect we were unable to adequately track him, losing him at times as he was continuing to evade law enforcement, which inherently puts the public more at risk as well. We feel that this one-time expense will give the police department an additional large frame option. This allows us to fly in more inclement weather, colder temperatures, hotter temperatures than our current fleet does and will grant us the ability to provide constant coverage for our officers while conducting these high risk operations. I will -- thank you and I will stand for any questions from the Council.

Simison: Council, any questions?

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Just a quick question. I'm supportive of the budget amendment, but one of the things I have learned is when we bring new equipment on it's not just about now, it's about a replacement cycle of the set equipment. So, can you help kind of the Council understand -- and maybe there is a larger conversation when we go into budgets about what is the replacement cycle for UAVs. Do we look at them the same as computers or motor vehicles or something in between? Just help me kind of understand what the lifetime ownership of this particular product is going to be for the department, barring any circumstances that would make it unusable.

Ludwig: The lifetime or the expectancy of those pieces of equipment -- we actually just did two replacements this last budget cycle and added an additional piece of equipment to the fleet. The replacement -- we purchased our last large frame drone in 2021 that is still completely operational, but with the separation of the city into the northwest site station and the central station the idea would be is that we could have adequate coverage with both drones covering both of those areas of the community. The replacement cycle is really contingent on software updates, technology changes, which are, obviously, hard for us to predict, but we are continuing to operate with the 2021 drone with adequate software updates and we have made -- we made some modifications to cameras and upgrades there. But the actual equipment is still fully operational. So, it's hard for me to hypothesize. I would say somewhere between five and seven years we are looking at a potential replacement and a lot of that's contingent on what technology has changed, not necessarily to breakdown of the equipment.

Cavener: And Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: I think -- you know, I'm the -- the PD liaison now and so I think that may be something that we can work with finance and team to come up with what is an expected replacement schedule for UAVs, recognize they are still somewhat new, but to give I think future council some understanding when you purchase a new piece of equipment, baring it crashes or a suspect trying to do something to it, we will get X amount of years out of it, so we can really understand what the -- the lifetime of that expense will be.

Ludwig: And we are trying to actually -- once I took over the program, Councilman, actively tried to place those in the CFP, so we can kind of fork out -- so we are not getting inundated with replacing the entire fleet at --

Cavener: Correct.

Ludwig: -- one time, but let's try to do this strategically and that's been my plan when I took over the program.

Cavener: Great. I love hearing that. Look forward to working with you. Thank you.

Overton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Overton.

Overton: Lieutenant Ludwig, just to -- just for clarification purposes when we are looking at a large frame UAV, we are not trying to replace personnel, we are not trying to reduce the number of personnel needed, I believe we are trying to make it so when we use them in large scale op, we use them and deploy them for more efficient staff.

Ludwig: Yes. It's much easier for us as -- taking an incident where we have an outstanding violent suspect, if we get a drone up into the air we can start identifying potential hotspot regions through thermal imaging that would identify where a potential suspect is. You can quickly -- or other locations, because there is no hotspot readings there or it can identify small enough where it's going to get an animal or something of that nature where you can bypass those locations and go to where those real heat signatures are and, you know, when we are trying to apprehend a suspect, a heat signature that's concealed or hidden in a deep corner or something of that nature, we can provide that information to the officers on the ground, let them know, hey, there is a potential threat location and the deep northwest corner of this next yard and they can approach that in a much more efficient and safe manner. So, yes, it gives us the opportunity to quickly deploy officers and be much more efficient.

Taylor: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Taylor.

Taylor: Thank you. Lieutenant Ludwig, I appreciate you bringing this. I have a quick question. Could you -- I'm a new guy. Could you, please, just real briefly explain what you currently have for assets here and -- and I understand kind of the difference as you have described it what we have, could you just kind of describe the current assets and the limitations that they have.

Ludwig: Yeah. So -- let me reference some notes if you don't mind. We currently have on hand a M30 -- an M300, which was the original large frame drone that we purchased. We just recently purchased this fiscal year an M30, which is -- it's considered a large scale platform, but it does have some limitations as compared to the M300 or the M350, which is the item that we are attempting to -- to get this amendment so we can purchase. The biggest difference is battery runtime and flight time. Some of the batteries have limitations when they can't charge when it's extremely cold. So, it takes longer for them to charge when they are deployed in the outdoors, sometimes upwards would have to be 41 degrees or warmer for us to actually get a charge onto them. The biggest difference between the large frames really is flight time. So, the ones that we have just recently purchased -- purchased this last year, the Mavic platform, the max flight time or hover time, which ideally is what we are trying to do is hover up above, so we can provide overwatch, is about 30 to 35 minutes. Typically speaking we are going to rely on the lower end of that. The manufacturer's spec is 33 minutes and that's given no wind in the laboratory setting. These new drones in the large frame drones can support flight time of up to 50 minutes, which, obviously, that's a pretty big difference in time frame. We were talking about damages for returning the drone battery change and, then, getting it back deployed and that's really where we have seen that. Whereas if we have an extra large frame drone, as we are putting one up we can get one in position and with their anti-collision software we can actually have one operator flying two platforms, send one up and, then, bring the one that's down, now we had that 55 minute time frame to charge it up, so we can continue to the process. The problem with the Mavic platforms is that they can't operate at very cold

temperatures. So, as soon as it gets below 14 degrees they are not operational, which so given any circumstance in the last couple of days we would not be able to utilize those programs -- those platforms and, then, they can't operate in any sort of precipitation or high winds. Also, especially during the wintertime, in the winter months, are going to limit the opportunity for us to utilize that platforms to large frames, the M300 that we currently have and the one that we are requesting the amendment for, those consumption and rain, snow, winds in excess of -- oh, -- well, 12 mile an hour winds, where the other ones are ten and a half mile an hour's -- is their wind resistance speed. They can fly out further by an additional 1.5 kilometers and, then, again, flight time is really the big thing with the battery changes. They come with battery warmers in cases they deploy, so the batteries are constantly staying warm and up to temperature.

Simison: So, any additional questions?

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: If there is no other questions, I move we approve the fiscal year 2024 budget amendment in the amount of 35,000 dollars for purchase of an additional UAV -- unmanned aircraft system.

Strader: Second.

Simison: Have a motion and a second to approve Item 12. Is there any further discussion?

Taylor: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Taylor.

Taylor: Just if I could, a quick comment. So, I had the -- I don't know if you call it opportunity or privilege, but this incident that you are describing, I watched it from my second story window of my house. So, when you mentioned 30 to 35 minutes and 50 minutes, that's a significant deal and I'm -- and I'm watching the drones working and I watched the officers and what was pretty amazing about the whole thing is my kids were asleep, you know, it ended, you know, I could see it. The kids didn't know it happened. The neighbors didn't know it happened. It was operated. It was quiet. And I saw the drones doing the work and I'm convinced that that's led to other people not being harmed in the situation and so I'm very supportive of it and I do think this is an incredible asset to add to that, that in terms of officer safety, but also community safety. So, I think it's a great addition and I -- you might think 30 to 35 minutes up to 50 minutes doesn't seem like a lot, but I can just say in that current situation that was -- would have been a significant difference and so --

Ludwig: Especially when we are trying to apprehend somebody.

Taylor: Yeah. And to consider there may be circumstances outside of our control, like whether that could inhibit what we have. So, I think this is a really smart addition. I'm fully supportive of it.

Simison: Thank you. Council, any additional comments? All right. Clerk will call the roll.

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

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

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

Ludwig: Thank you very much. I appreciate your support. Thank you.

Simison: Thank you, Kyle. Nice to see you here. With that we are at the end of our meeting. Do I have a motion?

Borton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Borton.

Borton: 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: ALL AYES.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 4:46 P.M.

(AUDIO RECORDING ON FILE OF THESE PROCEEDINGS)

_____ MAYOR ROBERT SIMISON	_____ DATE APPROVED
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ATTEST:

CHRIS JOHNSON - CITY CLERK