



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING • MINUTES

City Hall Council Chambers, 33 East Broadway Avenue, Meridian, Idaho
Wednesday, December 8, 2021 • 5:30 p.m.

The Meridian Parks & Recreation Commission is a volunteer citizens' group that is created and empowered to advise the City on issues relating to park facilities and recreation programs of the City. Their mission is to gather input from staff and other qualified personnel on issues relating to the creation and design of public parks and open spaces; to listen to public input; and to provide advice and recommendations on parks and recreation related matters to the Mayor and City Council.

Roll-Call Attendance

Commission President Jo Greer called the meeting to order at approximately 5:34 p.m. MPR Administrative Assistant II Rachel Myers took roll-call attendance as follows:

<u>X</u> Jo Greer, President	<u>X</u> Camden Hyde
<u>X</u> Keith Bevan, Vice President	<u>Q</u> John Nesmith
<u>X</u> Dom Gelsomino	<u>X</u> Mandi Roberts
<u>X</u> Jennifer Bobo	<u>Q</u> Jessica Perrault, City Council Ex-Officio

Others present were: MPR Department staff—Director Steve Siddoway, Parks Superintendent Mike Barton, Recreation Manager Garrett White, Pathways Project Manager Kim Warren, Marketing Coordinator Shelly Houston, and City Arborist Matthew Perkins; Deputy City Attorney Emily Kane; and former MPR Commissioner Creg Steele.

Adoption of the Agenda

Commission President Jo Greer entertained a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Dom Gelsomino moved to adopt the agenda. Commissioner Camden Hyde seconded. All were in favor of the motion.

Approval of the Minutes

1. November 10, 2021 Regular Meeting – Jo Greer

Commission President Jo Greer entertained a motion to adopt the minutes as presented. Commissioner Dom Gelsomino moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Camden Hyde seconded. All were in favor of the motion.

Announcements

2. Upcoming Events – Shelly Houston

MPR Marketing Coordinator Shelly Houston provided an Upcoming Events flyer and highlighted the events noted, which is attached to these meeting minutes. She also handed out copies of the 2022 Winter/Spring Activity Guide, which can be accessed on the City's website.

3. Christmas Presentation – Steve Siddoway

MPR Director Steve Siddoway thanked the Commissioners for their service. Each Commissioner received a small gift and Christmas card in appreciation. Merry Christmas! The group then gathered for a photo.

Old Business ~ NONE

New Business

4. MPR Department Forestry Update – Matthew Perkins

MPR City Arborist Matt Perkins provided an Urban Forestry 2021 At a Glance update, as well as a brief look ahead to the projects he will work on in 2022. Copies of his PowerPoint slides are attached to these meeting minutes.

Commission Feedback:

- **Jo Greer** – She asked Matt to explain what a Tree City USA in more detail. *It is a designation to show that our community cares about and recognizes the value of trees, as a member of the National Arbor Day Foundation. The City of Meridian has been a Tree City USA for 19 years in a row.*
- **Keith Bevan** -He thanked Matt for all he does as an arborist and appreciates having the trees in our system.
He asked Matt to explain more about Code Enforcement inspections. *Matt gets calls about Code Enforcement issues; i.e., if someone had a nuisance tree that may be hazardous and hanging over, etc.*

5. MPR Department Master Plan Update – Steve Siddoway

MPR Director Steve Siddoway reported Art Thatcher with GreenPlay reached out and conducted some leadership interviews with all the MPR Commissioners, Mayor and City Council—thank you!

- 1) Public Involvement Week – The week of November 15, 2021 the Department held a series of focus groups and stakeholder interviews. There were 8 different focus groups – teens, seniors, City departments, and in general with participants representing ACHD, West Ada School District, ITD, Meridian Library, WARD, irrigation districts, Cole Valley Christian School, MDC, Meridian Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Business Association, MPAL, Boise Area Pickleball Association, City of Eagle, Ada County Waterways, and many others.
There were approximately 39 focus group attendees who provided feedback. That week culminated in an open public forum at Meridian City Hall. The meeting was recorded of the findings from that week in all the focus group interviews and is available online.
- 2) Survey = There are two versions of the survey:
 - ✓ A statistically valid random sample survey that was a mailer to randomly selected households throughout the community. This survey went out the week of November 22 and is still open.

- ✓ Soon the same survey will be open to the general public (but with a separate URL for tracking separately). This is the plan.
- 3) Community Center – There are a couple of questions in the survey about the new community center. The MPR Department is awaiting feedback on the uses and types of spaces citizens would like to see in a new facility. Over the next two weeks at the staff level, the Department will hold with the GreenPlay team a kickoff brainstorming/concept planning effort for the community center, based on what they know today. The public process for this will kick off in January 2022.
- 4) GRASP Analysis – This is a GIS-based inventory of all of the MPR Department’s parks, facilities, and amenities that not only looks at what and where they are, but their condition. During the public involvement week in November, GreenPlay’s GIS team came to town and went through all of the City’s parks and inventoried them, including amenities within them for a ranking process. The first draft of the analysis has been delivered to MPR staff members who are reviewing it and get it back to them by the end of next week. This is a big process and is underway.
- 5) Website – If anyone would like to review the results from the public involvement week and view Art Thatcher’s recorded presentation, visit this link: www.meridiancity.org/parks/masterplan. This website will continue to be updated with more and new information as it continues to come out through this process.

Commission Feedback:

- **Mandi Roberts** – Will the GIS team take that inventory and look at a Citywide population-based analysis in GIS where they can look at areas that might be growing as more people are coming in for a higher demand? *Yes, they do a wonderful job with their level of service analysis and consider barriers, arterials, the freeway, etc. They do a spatial level of service and look at pathway connections and walkability. The Department will receive a robust set of findings in the spring.*
- **Dom Gelsomino** – As they get into the master plan and the new year in planning Discovery Park, Phase 2, he has a candidate for a new community garden, which he will pass along to Mike Barton. *The Department is looking for the next big community garden champion/leader.*

6. 2022 MPR Commission Leadership Elections – Jo Greer

MPRC President Jo Greer reported each year elections are held in December; one for President and the other for Vice President. The current Vice President—Keith Bevan—declined the automatic nomination for President and instead would like to rerun for re-election for a second term as Vice President, which Keith confirmed. There were no other nominations for Vice President. Commissioner Jo Greer was willing to serve another term as President, so she nominated herself. There were no other nominations for President.

President Jo Greer entertained a motion to elect Jo Greer for President and Keith Bevan for Vice President in 2022. Commission President Dom Gelsomino moved to elect Jo Greer for President and Keith Bevan for Vice President. Commissioner Jennifer Bobo second the motion. All were in favor of the motion.

Congratulations to Jo Greer as the President and Keith Bevan as Vice President. The Commission leadership is effective January 1, 2022.

7. Brainstorm & Identify 2022 All-Commission Goals – Steve Siddoway

The Commission reviewed the current 2021 MPR All-Commission Goals. In an effort to streamline the process and as a starting point for discussion, draft goals for 2022 were brought forward for consideration and reviewed. MPR Director Steve Siddoway facilitated discussion. There was one deletion to the proposed draft goals. Each Commissioner was asked to list the order of importance of these 12 goals. Rachel Myers tallied their priority levels. Please see the following results:

**MERIDIAN PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
2022 ALL-COMMISSION GOALS**

Commission Priority	Score = higher priority	Jo Greer	Keith Bevan	John Nesmith	Dom Gelsomino	Jennifer Bobo	Camden Hyde	Mandi Roberts	2022 Goals
1	10	1	2		2	2	1	2	1 Support the construction of Discovery Park Phase 2.
2	14	8	1		1	1	2	1	2 Support development of a connected pathway system across the City of Meridian, with a focus on developing projects for future construction.
3	28	2	6		8	6	3	3	3 Participate in the design and programming of a new Community Center.
4	32	3	7		7	4	4	7	4 Support the development of the Comprehensive Park System Master Plan Update.
5	39	9	11		5	3	5	6	5 Participate in the partnership with the Meridian Arts Commission to add theming and identify reinforcing art in Meridian parks and along pathways.
6	45	5	3		9	11	6	11	6 Support future improvements at Lakeview Golf Course.
7	46	11	12		3	7	8	5	7 Pursue improved tools and opportunities to engage citizens and stakeholders.
8	46	6	9		10	5	12	4	8 Host and participate in a strategic workshop with the Urban Land Institute regarding pathway improvements.
9	49	4	5		12	9	11	8	9 Provide feedback on the design for new playgrounds at Chateau Park and Bear Creek Park.
10	50	7	4		11	12	7	9	10 Discuss and provide input on efforts to assess and take over operations of the Meridian Pool.
11	53	12	10		4	8	9	10	11 Engage other task forces, commissions, entities, and agencies through workshops and other outreach for partnership opportunities.
12	56	10	8		6	10	10	12	12 Continue to foster greater Commission involvement/presence in community events whenever appropriate.

Commissioner Dom Gelsomino moved to adopt these 12 goals in this particular order as the Commission's top priorities for 2022. Commissioner Keith Bevan seconded. All were in favor of the motion.

Workshop ~ NONE

Staff Reports

8. MPR Staff

Parks Superintendent Mike Barton reported on the following:

- Discovery Park, Phase 2 – Council approved the contract to break ground anytime. They are getting all the final agreements in place with ACHD regarding right-of-way and the Williams Pipeline agreements, as well as bonds and insurance, making project boards, and discussing logistics on where to put construction items and staging.
- Lakeview Golf Course – MPR staff members have plans for the irrigation system renovation at almost 100%. They will look at one final review soon which will then go out to bid. The process will then begin with evaluating bids. In addition, they have been evaluating the fees for the last month or so, due to the cost of inflation. MPR staff will present some suggested fee increases to the Golf Course Focus Group and then to City

Council. Mike has been gathering a lot of background information and factfinding in preparation.

Recreation Manager Garrett White reported on the following:

- Arts & Culture – He has been busy conducting Arts & Culture Coordinator interviews and reviewing applications. He hopes to have Audrey Belnap’s replacement on board on January 3, 2022 (her last day is January 7,2022).
- Concessions – He continues working with the Purchasing Department in putting out RFPs for parks on Monday, December 13. The Department has three snow cone sites open—Storey Park, Tully Park, and Bear Creek Park. The Settlers Park concessions building is up for an RFP, as well as Discovery Park.
- Pool – He has been doing pool inspections and learning the operations. He has been working with Legal on a potential draft reimbursement agreement with WARD.
- Coordinators – They have been busy with activities for Christmas in Meridian, sports leagues, and volunteer tasks.

Pathways Project Manager Kim Warren reported on the following:

- Pathway Infill Projects – The Creason Pathway and the two Linder Road projects will be submitted to ACHD this week. Locust Grove is on the heels of this. A couple of the other various projects have taken a back burner but are still a priority and on the list. They will push more on the Five Mile Pathway segment between Ten Mile Road and Black Cat and then the Meridian Road and Victory segment.
- Five Mile Pathway Striping – Just this week was some striping of the Five Mile Pathway, which is the main pathway in Meridian, for the purpose of calling attention to it and as a means of wayfinding. This is a contiguous route through the city that people may not be aware of.
- ULI Partnership - Council approved the panel contract yesterday, which was on the consent agenda. MPR staff have been meeting internally to chip away at the tasks the ULI needs from the MPR Department, as they are planning to come out in May 2022. Next up is to be more specific about defining a study area where they can apply the questions MPR staff has specifically asked them about.
- Plan Review – She has been reviewing a lot of plans.

Adjourn

Commission President Jo Greer entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Dom Gelsomino moved to adjourn. Commissioner Keith Bevan seconded. The vote was unanimous and in favor of the motion.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 7:06 p.m.

(AUDIO & VIDEO ON FILE OF THESE PROCEEDINGS)

APPROVED:

JO GREER, PRESIDENT

____/____/____
DATE

KEITH BEVAN, VICE PRESIDENT

/rem

Attachments:

- 1) Flyer: Upcoming Events (1 page)
- 2) PowerPoint: MPR Department Forestry Update (4 pages)



Art Exhibit in Meridian City Hall's Initial Point Gallery

December 3—February 3, Weekdays 8:00 am - 5:00 (excluding major holidays), Free Admission
This diverse art exhibit features works by 19 different Idaho artists, each of whom have participated in the Idaho Commission on the Art's My Artrepreneur Program to learn more about the business of art. Learn more about Initial Point Gallery here: meridiancity.org/mac/macmenu/initial-point

Christmas in Meridian Activities Find details at: christmasinmeridian.org

Santa's Mailbox

Children who place a letter to Santa with a legible return address in Santa's Mailbox on the front lawn of Meridian City Hall by December 19 will receive a personalized response in the mail before Christmas.

Shop Meridian, Shop Local

People who make purchases at participating businesses and upload their receipts to a special app through December 22 can enter prize drawings through the Meridian Chamber. Prizes include a stay at Shore Lodge in McCall and an electric bike. Learn more at: meridianchamber.org/shopmeridian/

Salvation Army Angel Tree

Choose a toy request tag from the Salvation Army Angel Tree in Meridian City Hall's lobby and purchase that gift to donate. The deadline to drop donations of new unwrapped toys at City Hall is December 9th at 5:00 pm.

Shop Meridian Downtown Night

Enjoy a night of shopping and holiday festivities on Thursday, December 9, from 5:00 –9:00 pm, in Downtown Meridian. Pop-up vendors, live entertainment, food & drink specials, late retail hours!

Winterland-in-the-Bag

Our popular drive-thru holiday craft bag hand-out for kids is Saturday, December 11, at 10:00 outside the Meridian Community Center. Free. First come, first served, while supplies last.

Meridian Ornament Drop

On December 11 & 12, hide or find handmade ornaments in downtown Meridian. Download the printable tag to attach here: https://meridiancity.org/mac/macmenu/annual_ornament_drop

Zoom with Santa

While appointments last, families with small children can sign up for a virtual Zoom with Santa visit. You must pre-register for a specific appointment at: christmasinmeridian.org/santa.

Downtown Decorating Contest

Take a stroll through downtown Meridian to admire the Christmas decorations then vote for your favorite by December 19. Find a map and the link to vote at: meridiandowntown.org/Christmas.

Christmas Lights Map

Post or find Meridian's best Christmas lists on this interactive map at: christmasinmeridian.org

Visit Meridian's Community Calendar at: www.meridiancity.org/calendar

Meridian City Urban Forestry 2021 at a glance

Pruning

- Fuller Park (second half)
 - Downtown Trees
- Split Corridor/North Curve
 - Tully Park
 - Kleiner Park 3/3
 - Heroes Park
 - Police and Fire
 - City Hall
- Various other sites in house & contract

Removals/Replants

- Multiple trees were removed due to death, decline, or failure as a result of storm damage, unfavorable growing conditions, poor quality nursery stock, or in the case at Heroes a new Parking Lot Expansion
- Many of the trees that have been removed have been or will be replanted/replaced.
- An inventory of new/future planting locations has been updated in Tree Plotter.

Misc. other Projects

- Large tree planting in Storey Bark Park
- All trees at Lakeview Golf Course were added to inventory and an IPM plan was implemented effectively to control identified pest issues. Trees that were found to be hazardous or in severe decline were removed
- Tree Mitigation inspections & plan reviews for new developments
 - Christmas Tree planning
 - Public Service Requests
- Arbor Day Celebratory Tree Planting at Arboretum
 - In House Service Requests
 - Code Enforcement Inspections
 - Urban Forest Management Plan*
 - Tree City USA



Tree City USA Standards

4 standards must be met to be recognized

- A Tree Board or Department must be established ✓
 - Adopted Tree care Ordinance ✓
- A Community Forestry Program with Annual Budget of at least \$2 per Capita ✓
 - An Arbor Day Observance & Proclamation ✓

Growth Award Categories



Old Categories :

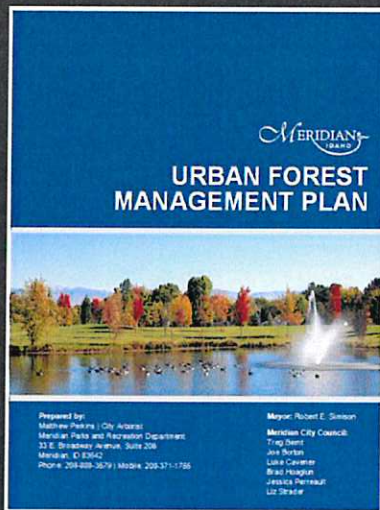
- Category A: Education & Public Relations
- Category B: Partnerships
- Category C: Planning & Management
- Category D: Tree Planting & Maintenance

New Growth Award Activity Categories

- ◆ Category A: Building the Team (budgets, staff, training)
- ◆ Category B: Measuring Trees & Forests (tree Canopy, tree inventory, urban forest)
- ◆ Category C: Planning the Work (policies & plans)
- ◆ Category D: Performing the Work (planting & maintaining trees, risk management, recycling & re-use, protection, natural areas)
- ◆ Category E: Community Framework (collaboration, volunteers, outreach, awareness, & education)

Completed activities for the year must total 10 or more points to qualify for a Growth Award

Urban Forest Management Plan



CURRENT STATE OF MERIDIAN'S URBAN FOREST TREE INFRASTRUCTURE

Treasure Valley Canopy Assessment

In 2013, with funding provided by the USDA, Forest Service and the State & Private Forestry (S&PF) Western Competitive Resource Allocation Program, the Idaho Department of Lands in conjunction with Ada County Highway District, Boise State University, Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS), Idaho Power, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, the Southwest Idaho Resource, Conservation and Development Council conducted a survey/inventory of the canopy cover throughout the entire Treasure Valley.

The data was collected using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) combined with field-based measurements. This assessment identified not only the current urban forest canopy of the Treasure Valley, and the types of land cover to establish a benchmark, but they were also able to identify where the most ideal, practical, and cost-efficient locations and/or opportunities to expand the urban forest canopy existed.

Based on the Treasure Valley Urban Tree Canopy (UTC) Assessment (full report can be found at: <http://www.treecanopy.net/resources>) completed in 2013, the City of Meridian has a seven percent urban tree canopy.

Create a goal with strategies directly related to increasing tree canopy, species, and age diversity.

What's Next for 2022?

Pruning

- ◆ Settlers Park
- ◆ Champion Park
- ◆ Chateau Park
- ◆ Homecourt
- ◆ Bear Creek Park
- ◆ Various other sites

Other upcoming projects

- ◆ Update Tree City USA Signs
- ◆ Urban Forest Management Plan
- ◆ Arboretum Improvements
- ◆ Tree Planting
- ◆ Community Education – (canopy watch)
- ◆ <https://www.canopywatch.com/home/public-tree-climbs/>
- ◆ Discovery Phase II (tree planting?)

[canopywatch.com](https://www.canopywatch.com)

NEW!



Touch the Sky Public Tree Climb

Ages: 10+
Instructor: David Anderson
Location: Settlers Park
Min/Max: 2/6

This guided tree climb uses specialized ropes, harnesses, and other equipment to provide safe and comfortable climbing into the top of a majestic, old oak tree. Participants will ascend ropes into the tree canopy where they can ring bells and walk on limbs. This course is organized and supervised by Canopy Watch International, a non-profit organization with 25 years experience dedicated to climbing for personal and scientific discovery. All climbing and safety equipment are provided, and we use specialized techniques that are harmless to the tree. The tree climb will take place at Settlers Park at the big oak tree on the corner of Ustick & Meridian.

- April 23 | Sat | 10:00–11:00 am | \$30
- April 23 | Sat | 11:00 am–12:00 pm | \$30
- April 23 | Sat | 12:00–1:00 pm | \$30
- April 23 | Sat | 1:00–2:00 pm | \$30
- April 23 | Sat | 2:00–3:00 pm | \$30
- April 23 | Sat | 3:00–4:00 pm | \$30

Thank you!