

A Meeting of the Meridian City Council was called to order at 4:30 p.m., Tuesday, December 8, 2020, by Council President Treg Bernt.

Members Present: Joe Borton, Luke Cavener, Treg Bernt, Jessica Perreault, Brad Hoaglun and Liz Strader.

Members Absent: Robert Simison.

Also present: Adrienne Weatherly, Bill Nary, Steve Siddoway, Audrey Belnap, Vincent Koontz, Jeff Lavey, Joe Bongiorno and Dean Willis.

ROLL-CALL ATTENDANCE

<u> </u> X <u> </u> Liz Strader	<u> </u> X <u> </u> Joe Borton
<u> </u> X <u> </u> Brad Hoaglun	<u> </u> X <u> </u> Treg Bernt
<u> </u> X <u> </u> Jessica Perreault	<u> </u> X <u> </u> Luke Cavener
_____ Mayor Robert E. Simison	

Bernt: Okay. It is 4:30 and I would like to call this City Council work session to order. For the record it is 4:30 and today is December 8, 2020. We will start off with roll call attendance. Madam Clerk.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Bernt: Thank you, Madam Clerk. Adoption of the agenda.

Hoaglun: Mr. President?

Bernt: Yes, sir.

Hoaglun: Unless Council has -- wants to keep the Executive Session, Item 15, on -- I don't think we have anything that needs to be discussed at this Executive Session, so before I do that, speak now or forever hold your peace.

Bernt: Council, any -- any objections to striking the Executive Session off the agenda?

Perreault: No.

Hoaglun: Okay. Mr. Mayor, I move we adopt the agenda with -- without Item No. 15, the Executive Session, seeing that there is no need, and -- and the rest as presented.

Cavener: Second the motion, Mr. -- Council President.

Bernt: I have a motion to accept the adoption of the agenda with -- with changing item

15. Any -- okay. With that we will -- all those in favor signify by saying aye. Any nays?
Motion -- motion passes.

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

CONSENT AGENDA [Action Item]

- 1. Approve Minutes of the November 24, 2020 City Council Work Session**
- 2. Approve Minutes of the November 24, 2020 City Council Regular Meeting**
- 3. TMX MOB Sanitary Sewer Easement No. 1**
- 4. TMX MOB Water Main Easement No. 1**
- 5. Final Plat for Hensley Station No. 2 (FP-2020-0011) by Kent Brown Planning Services, Located at 462 N. Black Cat Rd.**
- 6. Final Order for Sky Mesa Highlands No. 1 (FP-2020-0007) by J-U-B Engineers, Inc., Located at the Northwest Corner of S. Eagle Rd. and E. Lake Hazel Rd.**
- 7. Final Order for Fairbourne Subdivision No. 3 (H-2020-0008) by Fairbourne Development, LLC, Located at the North of W. Chinden Blvd. and West of N. Black Cat Rd.**
- 8. Approval of Grantee Agreements for the Meridian Small Business Grant Program**
- 9. Emergency Responders Health Center Professional Services Agreement Renewal**
- 10. First Amendment to Subrecipient Agreement Between City of Meridian and Ada County Housing Authority for Program Year 2019 Community Development Block Grant Funds**
- 11. Resolution No. 20-2246: A Resolution Authorizing the Ninth Continuance of a Local Disaster Emergency Declaration and its Terms for an Additional Thirty (30) Days; Authorizing the Continued Immediate Expenditure of Public Money to Safeguard Life, Health and Property; and Providing an Effective Date**

Bernt: All right. So, moving on to the Consent Agenda.

Hoaglund: Mr. President?

Bernt: Yes, sir.

Hoaglund: I move approval of the Consent Agenda and for the Mayor to sign and Clerk to attest.

Cavener: Second the motion.

Bernt: There is a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. All those in favor signify by saying aye. Any nays? Motion passes.

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

ITEMS MOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA

Bernt: There are no items to be moved from the Consent Agenda.

DEPARTMENT / COMMISSION REPORTS [Action Item]

12. Parks and Recreation Department: Results of Public Art Survey

Bernt: So, we will move to Department and Commission Reports, starting with Item 12, Parks and Recreation Department results of the -- of the -- of the public art survey and this will be presented by Steve Siddoway and Audrey Belnap. Take it away.

Siddoway: Thank you, Mr. President. I just want to make a quick introduction. Audrey's on here and it kind of struck me as I was thinking about this that I think there are many Council Members who have not yet had the opportunity to meet Audrey. I think you have probably heard of her during the -- one of the commission update presentations that have happened during the year, but I believe this is her first opportunity to actually present to you. So, Audrey will have been with us one year coming up in January. It's been quite a year for her, but I just want to say that from my perspective what a delight she has been to work with this year. She has truly jumped in with both feet. She has taken not only the Arts Commission, but also the Historic Preservation Commission, as well as working with Mayor's Youth Advisory Council on to her plate and I'm -- I'm grateful for the way that she has owned those responsibilities and moved forward with great energy. So, with that and my gratitude I will turn it over to Audrey, who I think has a -- some -- some great information to share based on a recent survey this summer regarding public art in -- in Meridian. So, turn it over to Audrey.

Belnap: That's right. Thanks, Steve. That's nice of you to say those nice things. I'm going to share my screen really quickly. So, let me make sure that you all can see what I can see. Okay. So -- yes. So, the Arts Commission has been working really hard on developing their public art program and we are right on the brink of -- of creating a public art plan and so I'm excited to give you kind of an update on where we are at. Like Steve said, the majority of this presentation will be based on question -- the results of a questionnaire that we released earlier this spring. A lot of the information that I will tell

you today is on the findings of Meredith McKinley, who was our public art consultant through -- via partnership that we have been working with this year. She did a deep dive into our public art program's history. Again, the responses from the questionnaire that we released earlier this year she interviewed about a dozen City Hall employees and community leaders and she workshopped with the Arts Commission and she gave us this final report based on our strengths and weaknesses of our public art plan and -- of our public art program and all of those -- that information can be deduced into three priorities that our public art plan will be based on. So, these three priorities are strengthening Meridian's identity, developing Meridian as a creative city, and creating active and attractive public spaces. So, in our upcoming public art plan we are going to really focus on these three priorities and see how we can develop the public art in Meridian. So, we are just going to briefly go over these three priorities. First is strengthening Meridian's identity. In our public art questionnaire from earlier this year we asked what is the impact that public art should have in Meridian and these are our top two responses. Public art to be memorable and iconic. Think of something that you would want to take a selfie with. That's the best way. And public art that should enhance the identity of Meridian. These are themes that really came through through the whole of our questionnaire and, actually, the respondents from -- to our questionnaire were really concerned with -- or invested in -- in preserving the identity of Meridian and when I say preserving, it's because we continue to ask questions in our questionnaire about how the public would describe Meridian's identity, how does the public see the identity of Meridian, and our top response -- according to the public the top response was very history based, especially in our agricultural roots, mostly fields and dairies. Second to that is associated -- is our association with the natural environment and our small town feel. So, according to the public, Meridian's identity is -- is very based on where we came from, our history, and they want to preserve that and they see public art as a way to -- to preserve that identity. The result of that is also shown when we asked the public through our questionnaire is what's your favorite public art piece that's already in Meridian and the two that you see here on this slide Far and Away by Sector Seventeen and Native Grasses by C.J. Rench are two of the top three most selected public art pieces. Most favorited, I guess you could say, public art pieces in our questionnaire and as you can see they reflect Meridian's history or what the public sees as Meridian's identity according to our questionnaire and when we even asked them why did you choose the art that you chose as your favorite, the public has said it's because it's history based. So, even they recognize that outright. So, clearly this is something that's important to the public and we can use public art as a tool to reinforce this and to establish this, which we are really excited about in our public art plan. The second priority is developing Meridian as a creative city are basically keeping things local and when we say keeping things local, we mean two things. First, is helping artists become public artists. So, a lot of public art is large scale and not all artists have the skills or the means to produce large scale art and so the Arts Commission is interested in finding ways to help these artists as they continue to develop those skills. The second way of keeping things local is simply by hiring local artists and we have already seen success in this through our traffic box series. The majority of our traffic box series artists are local and the few that aren't local are regional. So, you know, very close to home and we can see or measure the success of this by our questionnaire when we, again, asked the respondents what's your favorite Meridian art -- public art piece. The top answer was

traffic box -- traffic boxes, followed by the Far and Away mural and the Native Grasses sculpture that you saw on our previous slide. These are the top three and traffic boxes were the top one. So, the public really likes our traffic box series and they indicated it's because they are supporting local artists. So, we absolutely want to keep doing that and we are going to find new ways to do that. One of the ways we have already considered is -- is building and developing the Initial Point Gallery in City Hall. The majority of those artists that are in -- in Initial Point Gallery are local and so if we tried to develop or build that we believe we would have the support of the public, which is good to know, especially as we create our public art plan. The third priority for our public art plan is creating active and attractive. We learned again from our public art questionnaire when we asked where do you take visitors to show them what Meridian is all about. The top response was parks, followed by The Village and, then, downtown. All three of these spaces are places where people can -- can be together, where they can recreate and relax and enjoy the community. All three of these spaces are active and attractive public spaces and public art can help build -- or public art can be a tool to make and keep these distinctive attractive environments that people want to use and inhabit. That's definitely a purpose of public art and in the questionnaire we even saw the public recognize that. When we asked what are areas of Meridian that are the best opportunities for public art, 75 percent of our respondents said parks and 67 percent marked -- also marked downtown. So, the citizens of Meridian recognized that a purpose of public art is to contribute and energize and diversify public spaces and so that was really good and exciting for us to see. Our follow-up question to where we put public art is what kind of public art do people want to see and the top two responses that we got to that question is the public wants to see functional art, which is art that has a dual purpose and interactive art, which is art that is enhanced by the participation of the viewer. Some examples of that are -- can be seen here. In our questionnaire we asked -- we gave them a list of 22 public art pieces from across the country and we asked them to mark their favorite. These are the top five most frequently selected as their favorite public art piece and three out of five are interactive and functional. The gazebo in Seattle. The Main Street seating in Utah. And the Westmoreland Park in Oregon. And when we asked them why did you select the public art pieces from this list that you did, the top response was because it was functional, useful, utilitarian and so that gives us really good direction in our public art efforts, what we put out as public art. What we commission. Now, not all of our public art is probably going to be functional and interactive, but we know that this is something the public really likes and wants to see and that will definitely influence our decisions. So, with these three priorities what -- what's next? The Arts Commission will take these three priorities and organize them into goals and strategies in our new public art plan and this public art plan will really give us direction in the long term. We are thinking a five year public art plan and, then, maybe even a ten year public art plan. That will give us direction and some unity in our efforts. We anticipate this will be completed hopefully in the next couple of months, March 2021. So, that's what we are currently working for -- working on and we are really excited about that. That's all I have. So, does anyone have any questions?

Bernt: Thank you, Audrey. Any questions for Audrey? Or Steve.

Perreault: Council President?

Bernt: Jessica Perreault.

Perreault: I don't have any questions, but I just wanted to say thank you to Audrey. I think this is fantastic, too, you know, to really get an idea of what our residents want and I guess I -- I don't typically think of art as sort of a utilitarian thing, so it's really neat to see how both can be integrated and the examples that you gave were beautiful. So, I have loved what Meridian has done so far in the last few years and I hope that we continue along this path, because I think it's made -- I just have enjoyed seeing everything so much and it's -- it's made a better city for us. So, thank you.

Belnap: Thank you. Thank you. We are excited.

Cavener: Mr. President?

Bernt: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Thank you, Mr. President. Audrey, appreciate the presentation. Curious. The information that was provided to Council I think was just a copy of your PowerPoint. Do you have a final copy of the survey results and, if so, are you planning to release that to the public or giving a copy to Council? I always like going into the -- the detail. I sometimes tend to get into the weeds and I'm always interested in what the public thinks about stuff, especially something that's important as public art.

Belnap: Yes. Absolutely. So, I have the straight public art questionnaire and their responses, but I also have the final report from Meredith, who really synthesized and interpreted the responses and I can certainly share that with the Council.

Cavener: That would be great. Thank you. Great presentation. Nice to meet you virtually.

Belnap: Yes. Nice to meet you also.

Strader: Council President?

Bernt: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Thank you very much, Audrey. It's a pleasure meeting you and I think the thing I was most excited about hearing in your presentation was enhancing that sense of place and I guess I -- maybe one idea would be to chat with the Community Development Department and Planning Department, just because they have been talking a lot about neighborhood identities and creating like a sense of place for each -- Meridian's a big place, so creating that sense of place for each neighborhood. I was driving through Boise and I noticed some of their neighborhoods have like pretty unique signage and that they are doing some unique things for certain neighborhoods. Just a thought. But it seems like that's coming up a lot. This was very informative. Thank you.

Belnap: Yes. Thank you. Absolutely. We -- Meredith and I interviewed Caleb Hood from the Planning Department and so we anticipate partnering with them and I think that will be -- that will go really well and also a parks identity project is under consideration in -- in the Parks Department of creating an identity for each of our parks. So, it's on our -- it's on the horizon and we are -- we are excited to see how it turns out.

Strader: Thank you.

Bernt: Audrey, I -- one of the things that you mentioned was -- and Council Woman Strader talked about it as well is finding that identity and -- and Meridian certainly has, you know, rich history -- long, long history and so one of the ways in which I think preserving that history is through art, because art lasts forever and so in being on the Parks Commission a long time ago and they started talking about park identity, I think that's a great way to accomplish that. So, thank you so much. I appreciate you and thank you, Steve Siddoway -- Director Siddoway. Good to see you this evening as well.

Borton: Mr. President?

Bernt: Mr. Borton.

Borton: Just a quick comment to plant the seed for a spring discussion, but we have a MACs ordinance from some time ago that it -- it was originally established, you know, it's 50 cents per resident capped at 50,000 dollars, which is a big first commitment that the city made some time ago -- not too long ago, quite frankly, but to -- to try and launch the arts in our growing community. I think it would be worthy -- when you have got horsepower like -- like Audrey behind the arts program in Meridian and what the Arts Commission is doing now there is -- not only is there immense demand in our growing community, there is an amazing opportunity that might not have really existed ten years ago to allow the arts to flourish in our neighborhoods, in our parks, supporting our businesses -- we are doing things now that we never would have thought of ten years ago, that it would be worthy of a discussion this spring if the Council wants to lift that 50,000 dollar cap on the MACs ordinance, it, quite frankly, doesn't change the dollar figure a whole heck of a lot. If it's 50 cents for our residents, 50,000 might go to 61,000, quite frankly, but to allow the funding for our commitment to the arts to grow incrementally as our community grows, because certainly the demand is growing and I think that would be worthy of a topic discussion this spring as the budget gets developed. Talk some pros and cons. Audrey, you can provide some great feedback and help us with that and understand a lot of the benefits that can come with that at least for us to consider.

Bernt: That's a great idea. Thanks for bringing it up, Councilman Borton. Next item -- thank you, Audrey. Appreciate it. Thank you.

Belnap: Thank you.

Borton: Thanks, Audrey. Thanks, Steve.

Bernt: Next item. Current strategic plan closeout report by Vincent. Is Vincent online? There he is. Hi, Vincent. We can't hear you, buddy. Vincent, we can't hear you, bud. Can you hear us? Someone let Vincent now that we can't hear him. Is there something we can do on our end?

Cavener: Mr. President?

Bernt: Mr. Cavener.

Cavener: Now that Mr. Koontz is trying to figure out his technical limitations, if we want to either take a brief recess or move on to the next item, then, circle back to him. Because I know the pressure of trying to present via Zoom and not having -- and having a technical issue get in the way, that can be somewhat stressful. I don't want Vincent to be worried about anything and -- just a couple of suggestions.

14. City Council Discussion: Proposed Updates to Idaho Code Section 50-707A, Regarding Election of Council

Bernt: Let's give him one last shot here. Vincent, can you hear us? We can't hear you, buddy. I think Councilman Cavener had a great idea. I think that we are going to skip Mr. Koontz and let him figure out his technical difficulties and we will pass the baton over to Mr. Nary and we will start the discussion regard to proposed updates to Idaho Section Code in regard to districting for city council elections. So, take it away, Bill.

Nary: Thank you, Mr. President, Members of the Council. What is on your discussion for tonight is a districting ordinance that would line up with the state amendments that are being considered for the current -- amendment to the current ordinance. So, a year ago the state legislature -- if I can share my screen. There we go. So, the state legislature a year ago decided that cities of 100,000 needed to district for representation of their citizens, rather than doing it at large or by seat as is the current practice. There had always been the ability to district, but there was no city in Idaho at the time that were districting. All of them were using the same format of either being selected by seat or by -- or by at large. So, a movement through the House and the Senate got a lot of traction, there was an interest to doing that, so they passed the law. The problem was that at the point in time it only applied to the city of Boise. We anticipated that after the current census in 2020 it would apply to Meridian and potentially Nampa as well. I don't know where the other cities lie and whether or not they would be close to a hundred thousand. My -- my guess is probably not. Many for a lot -- for quite a while. But there were some bugs in the -- in the system. They didn't have a very clear direction in the code on how to create the districts. In other places, including the state of Idaho, when they redistrict after census -- census each ten -- every ten years, they form a committee of some citizenry to create it. It varies all over the country in how they do it. They have a variation on the percentage of population variance you can have between districts. If you make the number too small it's very challenging to get there. If you make the number too large it tends to lead to what's commonly referred to as gerrymandering, where they try to move the districts to suit one group or another. So, there wasn't a clear established way to do

it. The -- there wasn't any clear direction, but the only thing that was clear is you have to do it immediately. So, starting this current -- next calendar year for -- city elections are on odd years. One of the things they did not take into account was the fact that cities, unlike state legislature, elect their council members based on staggered terms. So, there was no clarity on -- of the people that were either currently elected who were not up for election in that -- in that election cycle, what happens to their seats and how do we district when you have got people that are already duly elected and qualified electors that are elected for a term that now doesn't line up with -- with the districts. So, we had some conversations in the spring with the city of Boise, who was very concerned about trying to accomplish this. We had some conversations with the Attorney General's Office and Senator Winder and the county clerk. One of the challenges with doing this is, again, the top -- the -- the national census is supposed to be released on April 15. Early in the COVID time, in March, April, May, June, there was a potential of a delay, because there was a delay in the census and concern that it wasn't going to be completed timely and, therefore, it couldn't get released timely and one of the things the law requires is that you have to establish the districts 120 days prior to the election, which is basically the beginning of July. So, trying to get census data to line up and the secondary problem is that after the census is done, when you read the state code in regards to the entire state -- because they are on even year elections, what happens is in -- the completion of the census occurs in the year ending in zero. The release data -- it comes out in the year ending in one and, then, the state districts -- the whole state and, then, after that's completed and the lawsuits that tend to come with those and the discussions that sometimes go to court over the how it was done, then, the counties divide each county up by districts and create the precincts where people vote. That, then, doesn't happen until '22. So, then, in the 2022 election that's when the first cycle comes for the census population and the census districts to be created and that's how the state does it and they had not anticipated what would happen to try to do that early. So, in our conversation Senator Winder was very understanding. We worked really hard -- a majority of the work that was done here was written by the Attorney General's Office with -- in conjunction with Senator Winder to try to make sure it made sense. We wanted to maintain some level of local control on how the process would work, that we would have -- because one concern in our discussion was without guidance you are more -- you are more likely to get sued, because you are going to do it differently than somebody else, there is nothing in the code that tells you how to do it and so you are going to potentially have people that don't think you did it correctly. So, we wanted to at least make it clear you could do it -- each city could do it differently based on the city's needs or the city's desires and how every city is unique in their geography and their topography and in their demographics. So, we felt that was important and Senator Winder agreed. So, in this draft legislation that you have in your packet you will see some of the changes that allows for some variation between population, which is very helpful in trying to divide these up. It allows for committees to be able to be drawn at a local level by the cities themselves to decide how the districts are going to be created. It allows for sitting council members to serve the remainder of their term. So, whenever you start this, whether it's in the year ending in one or the year ending in three, the current council members who have the additional two more years to serve can remain, regardless of the district they live in. Now, that may affect them the next election cycle if they don't live in the district that they would like to represent. If

somebody else that does live there is already seated that would affect them, but it would give them a two year window and that was a fairly common national practice to do, to either allow the incumbents to remain or allow the new ones to be able to move -- the incumbents not remain and that was what we felt was the safest for everyone. And, then, what Boise wanted the most was that the law would not become effective until 2022, therefore, not affecting the city cycles in '23 and '25, instead of '21 and '23. Questions? There is a lot of information in a very short time. Are there any questions from anyone?

Bernt: Council, any questions for Mr. Nary?

Borton: Yeah. Mr. President?

Bernt: Mr. Borton.

Borton: Hey, Bill, is -- it looks like this work is trying to create a solution through state code that will be applied at least to, you know, the Boise, Nampa, Meridian, as opposed to just Meridian trying to create a Meridian solution; is that a fair summary?

Nary: Could you repeat that, Mr. Borton. I'm sorry.

Borton: Yeah. It looks like we are trying to create, you know, a solution -- a code change that would be applicable, if adopted, trying to create a solution for all the cities that would be subject to this new code, as opposed to just Meridian creating a solution that we think works for us and if Boise and Nampa wouldn't like it that's okay, we are doing -- we are trying -- we are considering something that would be Meridian specific.

Nary: So -- yes. So -- so, what I was showing you originally was the state code changes that we are proposing -- or we have worked with Senator Winder to essentially create some structure in the state code for cities and, then, giving cities the individual ability to do something of what they think is important. So, the draft ordinance -- and I have got that up on the screen now that you have in your packets is exactly that, Mr. Borton, it is -- it is an attempt to create a process for Meridian on how we think the creation of districts could occur. It could be done in '21. The only caveat -- and I didn't get a chance to share this with the Mayor. I just found this out yesterday. The county clerk said that the census data he believes would be done and completed by the time we would need to create the districts, by late spring. He is still anticipating they would be released by April, that there won't be a delay, that we will have -- we will have the ability to look at the city's population, which will likely be over 100,000. We will be able to use that data. The problem that he raised is that the -- again, the districts -- or the precincts will not be created until '22. So, his only caution was that if the City of Meridian wants to do this in 2021, he had no objection to it, he just wanted everyone to understand that the data for the population would be current, but the data for the precincts would not be current. So, that was the only concern he raised that there is no possible way for the precincts to be done in time for the 2021 city elections. I can walk through briefly the process that we created in the code to be able to -- to do this. Again, we created six districts. We had established seats. Basically the seats would remain the same numbers. The numbers now correspond to

districts, rather than just simply seats. That -- it would be a committee. It would -- we did create an ability to do it in 2021 and that's here on your screen, to be able to have it there and which ones it would relate to. It would relate to the seats that were up for election in 2021, which are seats two, four, and six and that seats one, three, and five would remain in their seats regardless of where they lived, whether they lived in the districts that become two, four, and six after -- in '23 the other seats would, then, be eligible. You would have to live in those districts to be able to vote -- or be able to run for that seat in 2023. The basic qualifications we wanted to clarify a little bit in the code that we wanted to match up the current language in state code regarding residency, so that's what's in there for qualifications in residency. We wanted to make it clear, again, that people have to live in Meridian to be on the city council. Vacancies would have to be replaced by people within the district and the district -- again, the districting committee -- we have had a lot of discussion on how to create that and whether that's a joint decision between Mayor and Council, whether we would treat that like we do other commissions, that the Mayor would appoint and the Council would -- would approve those appointments. The -- one of the things that's -- from a legal perspective we were wanting to be cautious about was having too much political drive on how the districts were created. We wanted to be sure it was -- is as objectively separated from the political process as we could and -- and, again, it's not perfect, that's -- I'm realistic, I do recognize that there are some issues that may crop up, but we are trying to have an independent commission that would have the authority to create this. Ultimately the City Council would have to approve the map they created. So, the City Council does have the final word on what was done, how it was done, that it was done objectively and that it was done reasonably. They, basically, are supposed to craft this based on science, GIS, expert -- expert assistance. There are many people in the country that do this exact thing for a living. So, there are ways to get this done on a very objective scale. They certainly can consider -- at some point you complete the process and you have created the districts and, then, you have to put a number on the district. The numbers -- perhaps a better way of saying it, the numbers don't have to be sequential, they don't have to be clockwise. I mean the districts can be whatever the number that the committee wants it to be. So, they can consider all factors in regards the elected officials that exist at the time, but they are not obligated to do that. Ultimately, we were looking for people that lived in the city and our intention was -- at least for the first -- first committee, that the district would be made up of -- or the district committee would be made up of six people, that those people would live in various geographic areas of the city, but -- and, again, we didn't put this in the ordinance, but that's certainly a fair discussion point. After the district committee -- after the districting is created for the future, it may make sense to change the code -- or I -- or put that in the code going forward that after this was created in '21 or '23 or whenever we do this, that for the future districting committees when they have to do this every census, each member of the committee has to live in one of those districts and you have to have it evenly distributed among the six districts. So, that's -- that's the option that we haven't identified in the code currently, but we could certainly add that if that's desired and, basically, everything else is very functionary of public meetings, public notice, public has an opportunity to weigh in to give their opinions on how the districts are formed and, then, again, ultimately, the Council has to approve the final product in a public meeting after public input. So, I think that's most of the process that you have in front of you. But, again, if you have any questions. I think

one of the questions we have had is does the City Council want to consider this in 2021. Again, it takes two election cycles to get to a final completely districted City Council, because of the way it's done currently. So, if you -- if you choose to do this in '21, again, you still have '23 as well. It doesn't prohibit you from doing it more than once every ten years, but it's not very logical to do it more than once every ten years. But in this particular instance, because of that little glitch of the precincts versus the population numbers, the potential is is you could do it in '21 and, then, slightly adjust it in '23 depending on your precincts. I don't know -- I'm not -- I'm not versed enough to know if the precincts change significantly, once the population has been established, that we won't be able to do it without very -- or minor change. The other change would be that if you decide the committee system didn't work very well, you would have the ability to tweak that and fix that before you wait until 2031. So, again, a lot of information --

Perreault: Mr. President?

Nary: -- I can stop sharing for the moment if you have any questions.

Bernt: Council Woman Perreault, did I hear you?

Perreault: Yes. I apologize, Bill. I -- I wasn't sure if you were finished or not. So, I do have a couple of questions. I read over this a few times yesterday and just saw a lot of potential for it to become very political and so I wanted to ask some clarifying questions. The first is -- is there any possibility that the committee that decides the districts could not be decided by any elected official, whether the mayor or council? I would -- I would like to really have any current elected officials removed from the decision making on who is on that committee. That would make me feel more comfortable. I know that makes it difficult as to how to -- you know, who decides who is going to be on that committee, but I just -- I would feel a lot more comfortable not having one or both of the departments that are elected make those decisions. So, that's the first question. The second question is is could you go over some more how the public will have an opportunity to be involved. I really would like them to be involved in how this works and I think that no matter who decides who is going to be on this committee, that, you know, there could potentially be opportunity to sort of shape that committee to one advantage or another of any particular group, which is what I would want to try to avoid. If that question makes sense. So, those were my really biggest concerns. Now, let me preface that by saying that if this is too early to have those questions answered, because we are going to wait and redraft this ordinance after some changes are made at the state level, then, feel free not to answer those questions.

Nary: Mr. President, Members of the Council, I mean those are -- those are fair questions and, again, these are really discussion points. The Mayor's -- the Mayor's desire tonight really was to talk about the process, which is really kind of what you are asking. I recognize -- my advice to you as the city attorney is the less politics that are involved in the decision making is a better, more defensible position. Right? The word gerrymandering came about because politics involved, redrawing district lines, it became very obvious people did it to favor one group or another or person or another and the

more you can avoid that, the more defensible your position can be when it's based on science and based on math and based on maps and demographics. Idaho is not unique. Again, this is done all over the country every ten years in lots of places and in California our -- our intern we had last summer had done some work on districting in law school. In California they actually passed a state law a few years ago requiring every single city district, regardless of size. So, imagine a number of cities in California as a major undertaking for every single city to do that that wasn't already districted. So, the larger cities were, but most smaller cities were not, so -- so, there is a lot of data out there and a lot of information on how to do this right and, again, we weighed back and forth. Where does the committee come from? Is the committee made up of staff? Is the committee made up of appointees by the mayor, appointees by the council, appointees by somebody else. We felt the fairest -- and that's why it was drafted that way -- was, again, the mayor theoretically -- and I certainly believe that with our current mayor, but I believe the mayor should always be considered to be as neutral as possible, because the mayor doesn't have a dog in the fight. The mayor isn't districted. The mayor gets elected by the entire city regardless. So, where the districts are in theory it should make less difference to the mayor than it might to a council member. So, we thought following our normal way we have committees and commissions, the mayor appoints the people, the council still has to approve them as committee members. So, the concerns you raised, Council Member Perreault, like this person is very political, this person is very engaged in the political process more than you feel comfortable with, is an opportunity to voice that concern. So, there is a way to have that public conversation about that. Your second point about public's involvement in the process, definitely we felt the most important thing would be transparency. These committee -- these meetings would have to be noticed. There has to be a minimum of one public hearing prior to bring it forward for approval. I would anticipate the first time we do this having more than one public hearing. I would think you are going to have -- the only caveat you have -- again, if you -- if you do it in '21 your time window is smaller, because you are -- you are going to get final numbers of -- of the census in approximately May. If everything works well and everything's worked so well in 2020 I don't know what '21 is going to be like, but you have to finalize the districts by July regardless. So, the window of time is very limited. Again, you can pick your committee ahead of time, you could pick all of that stuff, you could decide on your process. All of that can be decided before May, but the numbers themselves won't be available. Now, again, the numbers exists today to some degree; right? You have some preliminary data -- maybe not census data, but COMPASS data is fairly robust and fairly accurate and fairly helpful on population and locations and things like that. It doesn't have the same detail as the census, but it is pretty detailed. So, you are not going in completely blind. You may have to adjust. Again, if you wait until 2020 to allow -- again, you don't have to do anything until '23, which means you could have potentially a little more time for a committee to work to get through it and -- and figure out process and have public meetings if necessary. I just don't know. I mean the state does it in about four months, give or take, for the entire state. So, for an entire city is a two month window unreasonable? I don't know. I hope I answered your questions.

Perreault: Mr. President, I have a few follow-up questions.

Bernt: Council Woman Perreault.

Perreault: Thank you, Bill. I appreciate that. Just to follow up for clarification, I would like you to comment on the section of the ordinance that talks about the -- the -- the -- at the public hearings that the chair would be -- it would be at the chair's will if the public was permitted to speak or not. That was my interpretation. I don't -- that makes me uncomfortable. And, then, secondly, could you clarify just for understanding, are the districts going to be divided based on the number of registered voters in each district or based on the population or a combination of both?

Nary: So, after --

Perreault: Obviously, the number of registered voters changes frequently.

Nary: Correct. So, the districts are required to be based on population. So, that's what the state code requires. So, it's not based on registered voters. It's based on -- the size of the district is based on the population. To answer your other question, so our intent of that wasn't -- wasn't to prohibit public testimony, but you have working meetings that are public that you are working through data and science and methodology and all of that. In every single public meeting to have public testimony makes the one or one and a half hour working meeting into a four hour meeting that could get off the rails pretty quickly. So, our intent was is you are going to -- you are going to announce that ahead of time. Are we taking testimony? Yes or no. You have to take testimony at least at one meeting before it comes back to the City Council. It varies clearly. It's the same law -- I mean this is the same rationale in the state code regarding the comprehensive plan. According to the state code the planning and zoning commission has to hold one comprehensive plan public hearing and nothing more and the city council also only has to hold one. As you well know, we have lots of hearings, we didn't have just one. So, I think the process will -- will work that self -- that part of it out. Because, again, if the City Council felt at the end of the process that it wasn't open, it wasn't transparent, it wasn't allowed input, they are not likely to approve that recommended -- recommended plan. So, I think there is a backstop there. But I mean I don't -- I mean we could certainly add two or three or whatever is necessary. I just know that there will be meetings that as we are trying to work through the information and trying to, then, have public input about that from lay people about things like that, it's really complicated. You have to want to more -- not necessarily completed process, but you definitely want a little bit better process before you start getting people to weigh in on it.

Bernt: Ms. Perreault, anymore questions?

Perreault: No. Thank you. I appreciate -- I appreciate you allowing me to ask so many detailed questions. Thank you.

Bernt: All good. Thank you.

Hoaglun: Mr. President, I had a question for Bill.

Bernt: Mr. Hoaglund.

Hoaglund: Bill, I know COMPASS does a good job about tracking our numbers and they are usually pretty good about the estimates of our growth and whatnot, but do they really get down to the precinct level to make determinations of those numbers?

Nary: So, Mr. President, Members of the Council, Council Member Hoaglund, I mean I -- I don't believe so. I don't believe -- because that's not their focus. So, I don't think they do. That's why I'm saying you would at least have a fairly good idea -- you can have a fairly good idea today what our population is. I mean they -- they already have our estimate at 118 or 119 thousand people. So, they already have a fairly good idea. So, what I just wanted to -- my only intention of that comment was we don't have to wait until May 1st to know what our population is. We could find out our population tomorrow and we could find out where they generally are based on the data that they have -- to the -- to the precinct level, yes, clearly not. They are estimates; right? So, we know that. But, again, as -- as you start winnowing down data you are going to find the lines tend to not move greatly; right? You have section line roads. You have main roads like the freeway, the major highways. You have some of the waterways and topography -- you know, we don't have -- we don't have quite the same level of hillside and foothills and those kinds of -- and major rivers and things like that, but we definitely have some that already divide where precincts go and precincts don't split between ditches normally and they are not usually -- the sections may split across the freeway, but they clearly define, you know, this section all the way to the freeway, this section from the freeway south. So, a lot of the work is -- is done and will be slightly -- could be slightly tweaked and that may be where the committee comes in if we do this next year.

Hoaglund: Mr. President, just to comment on that. My -- my only concern and -- and, really, this is kind of -- more of a decision for those that are in the even number of seats, because that will be the ones up next year. You know, for those of us in the odd number of seats it's -- it will -- it will happen and we will have those numbers, it's just a question of will a precinct or two change -- we can look at the -- get a fairly decent number for each area and say, okay, here is the boundaries, but, then, in two years the precinct levels are set and there might be some minor adjustments of a precinct here or there that has to move. I don't know if it's that as big of a deal for people to -- for two years have this council person and, then, you are switching to another district or -- or that, but that's just something to consider if -- if we do it for '21 and, then, have to make some modifications going into '23.

Cavener: Mr. President? Oh, sorry. Go ahead, Mr. Hoaglund.

Hoaglund: Oh, I -- Mr. President, if I might just add, I had the pleasure -- and I use that term loosely -- in 2000 when the redistricting commission for the state of Idaho was created, representing a partisan party for our efforts on -- on redistricting and Council Woman Perreault's comments about making sure it's not, you know, political and having us out of the process, the difficult thing for us is we are nonpartisan. There they created a commission of three Republicans and three Democrats, knowing full well it is going to

be partisan, so make it an even number and, then, they can -- have to -- they have to come to a consensus and figure it out. So, we don't have that -- that -- that luxury being nonpartisan, recognizing that, hey, you know, how do you make this work. So, you know, I think Mr. Nary might have a decent solution just having the mayor, who is elected citywide, I mean that's -- that's an option and we could also look at other -- other entities on how they do it and see what -- see what solutions they come up with.

Bernt: I would almost say that it's a luxury that we have that we are not partisan, to be completely honest with you. So, it's one of the beautiful things about local government is we don't get into the minutiae of left and right and blue and red and donkey and elephant, it -- actually it's quite refreshing, so -- I definitely have some thoughts about this. I will pass the baton over to Mr. Cavener, though, and let him go next.

Cavener: Thanks, Council President. Just a -- kind of dovetailing off of Council Member Hoaglun's questions for Mr. Nary, if he has any insight about what our cities to the east and cities to the west are doing in terms of planning to -- how to determine a commission to select districts and what their approach is going to be.

Nary: Sure. Mr. President, Members of the Council, Council Member Cavener. So, Nampa hasn't been very engaged in this discussion so far and they have changed city attorneys and so I don't know where the mayor or the council are today on this conversation. Boise has focused a lot of their attention on trying to move this to '22, because they -- they want to have more time for process and I don't -- I haven't spoken with their city attorney for a few months. So, they did not have any real plan in mind the last time we spoke. I would imagine they are going to go through a similar process, though, of a citizen committee and assist the commission. I don't know how they would choose them. I haven't spoken to her recently. To be fair -- and not to -- not to toot Meridian's horn, a lot of -- a lot of the cities look to us as what -- what is Meridian doing and, then, sort of take their -- their own lead from that.

Bernt: Yeah. Emily has done a great job.

Perreault: Mr. President?

Simison: Ms. Perreault.

Perreault: Bill, might there be a -- an efficient way to learn from other cities who have gone through this process how they chose their committee or commission and what the results were in terms of whether that was effective for them and keeping it as -- as minimally political as possible? I know that's a subjective determination, but that is just -- that's a really important element in my mind with all of this. I just see so many potential challenges with this becoming politicized and -- and not necessarily this next term or the -- you know, the term after, but in ten years -- I mean I feel like this could have really impactful long-term effects that we may not even yet realize. So, I'm curious to learn from cities that did this ten years ago or 20 years ago and maybe how that's affected them. If there is any way to find that information out. I have no idea. I certainly wouldn't want it

to be incredibly time consuming, but if you wouldn't mind letting us know if that's a possibility.

Nary: So, Mr. President, Members of the Council, I mean there -- there is data available out there. I mean we did -- we did to do some research in crafting that and trying to fit what would make sense in our city and again -- again, our objective always was to try to make it as apolitical as possible. I do think that's a more defensible program that you are going to have. But we can certainly do a little more research to see what other cities have done. Again -- you know, again, as usual with Idaho we are unique here. We don't have any city in the state that has done this, even though they could have done it, they have never done it for a lot of reasons and so we are having to look at other states and, again, we did some research with our intern this summer and Ms. Kane from my office, as you all know, does a lot of research as well. So, I know there is data that we can -- we can locate and at least bring that to you to see if there is other -- again, I think -- you know, ultimately, at the end of the day who picks -- who picks who sits on the committee to decide how to do it is really how you would avoid as much of the politics as possible. You know, I certainly -- you know, to be honest when we had this first discussion I told the Mayor I'm happy to do it with the clerk and, then, you guys can approve it and I'm going to be as apolitical as anybody on this and the Mayor said that sounds great, but I don't think any other city attorney in the state would feel comfortable doing that, so I don't think that's a good idea. I think you should look to a citizen group or somebody else and that's kind of where we landed with that. But I agree with you, I don't -- I -- I know it can be done properly without it becoming a partisan type of exercise. I know we would do it right. I know we would do everything to make sure it was clean and done and defensible and transparent to everyone, because that's who we are. But definitely we want to build that safeguard into an ordinance to make sure the public recognizes that, that it is not intended to create favoritism or preference for anybody.

Strader: Mr. Council President?

Bernt: Ms. Strader.

Strader: Thank you. Thanks a lot, Bill. It seems like you guys have done a great job trying to be proactive on something that was kind of nebulous. So, I -- I really appreciated the -- the digging in on trying to find a way that would make it work that was, you know, just in the benefit of the city and as impartial as possible. It seems like it's getting close. I guess -- and I apologize for the background music here. My little monkeys are going crazy. I guess my question was if -- if we went for it in 2021 and, then, the census data came out and the precincts all changed, would those seats -- I mean how would that work with the timing? I guess I just wasn't really tracking, then, if -- if the statute is effective in 2022, you know, in seats -- again, it's not -- it's maybe the odd number -- the even numbered seats, but how does that work, then, if the census data comes later?

Nary: So, that's -- Mr. President, Members of the Council, Council Member Strader, that's a great question. Currently, you know, the state does this every ten years, they elect -- reelect everybody in the legislature every two years. So, if you happen to be in District

14 in one election cycle and the next one's like -- like in this current situation -- I live in District 14. So, could they redistrict -- and I live right on the edge of District 14. So, could the district line move away from me and now I'm in District 20? Yes. Nothing changes. Now I vote for different people. So, my opinion would be is if you were in district two in '21 and we districted the city and you got to vote for the representative from district two and, then, when we redid it in '23 you are now in district three, you get to vote for the person in district three.

Strader: Quick follow up.

Bernt: Ms. Strader.

Strader: Sorry, Mr. Council President, I didn't hear if you recognized me, but I saw your mouth move.

Bernt: Sorry. Yes, ma'am, I did recognize you. It's all you.

Strader: Thank you.

Bernt: I apologize.

Strader: No. I apologize. So, I guess just a follow up. I guess more my concern was could -- could the legislature somehow feel that our initial districting was invalid or didn't meet their intention? Is there any risk of us going ahead and, then, having them take issue with how we did it in 2021?

Nary: Great question, Mr. President, Members of the Council, Council Member Strader. I think that the risk always exists that the legislature may disagree with how any city does something and decides to take a statewide stab at that. I mean, yes, that could -- that could certainly happen. The only difference would be someone's going to have to make that effort that it was done so badly and done so poorly and I guess I just hope that no one's going to do it really badly and really poorly that draws that level of attention to make everybody do it over again, but that -- you know, the legislature has the ultimate authority over the state code and the cities are creatures of state code, so they certainly can do that if they wish. You know, again, we were -- we were appreciative that Senator Winder was also very supportive of allowing a level of local control to even create the districts, that this legislature wasn't going to try to do it for us, because we felt, again, every city has unique characteristics about it that they feel is more important to them, that the legislature may not really understand, that come from all over the state. But, certainly, if somebody did it poorly -- you know, I think Mr. Borton would understand when I say bad facts make bad case law. That happens in our business a lot and -- and so could that happen? Yes. Would it -- do I think it will? I don't.

Strader: Thanks.

Perreault: Mr. President?

Simison: Ms. Perreault.

Perreault: Mr. Nary, not having read these types of statutes before, as they are new, obviously, I got the impression in the state -- the state statute that there was not a lot of clarity about how the district lines are drawn. Do you think that's something that will be flushed out more in this next legislative sessions -- session.

Nary: Well -- yeah. Mr. President, Members of the Council, Council Member Perreault, they -- at the moment -- now, again, this is one proposal by Senator Winder. It doesn't mean it will be the only proposal and it doesn't mean it won't be amended. So, he was comfortable with what we have proposed, but will the House be as comfortable? Will other senators be as comfortable? I don't know. So, they certainly could create some amendments to it. We all know what starts at the beginning of the legislative process isn't always going to be what gets passed, so there certainly could be more. Again, we were hopeful to have the desire and the ability, with Senator Winder's help, to keep it to a local level, to keep it with some definition. Our concern legally, honestly, was you could look at it on one hand and say, well, the current legislation that exists doesn't tell us anything. So, I guess it's a free for all, you can do whatever you want. Our concern was that's how usually you get sued, because you just make it up yourself and you just say, well, nobody says how to do it, so I will just do it this way. That tends to get -- now you got to -- now you got to really defend it, that there is science to base it on, there is data to base it on, that you didn't just make it up and so it's a lot more difficult to defend. Not that you can't and not that you couldn't succeed, but it is a lot more time consuming and potentially expensive to defend that than it is to say, look, the legislature gave us some parameters, says you can have a committee. Now, again, we decide what the committee looks like. We decide -- the committee decides what the -- what the boundaries look like. But at least it says we can have a committee. Right now it doesn't say anything. So, that was our fear was the lack of -- the lack of clarity as the potential that someone's going to find whatever we did, whether we have all the science in the world to back it up, they are going to want to oppose it.

Borton: Mr. President?

Bernt: I have been waiting for you, Mr. Borton.

Borton: So, really good discussion on this topic. I take it that the outcome from today is we have got a couple of choices. Meridian can, for better or for worse, control its own fate and -- and continue down this path, figure out the details of what it might be and decide to district for 2021 regardless what the state does, even though that obligation is not yet upon us. Or path number two, that we say now this looks like it's too airy and too compressed and let's wait until it is officially imposed upon us for 2023. Is that the -- the crux of what we are -- the fork in the road for today?

Nary: Well, Mr. President, Members of the Council, Council Member Borton, I -- you know, I don't even think we are quite to even to that stage. I think the Mayor's intention was to introduce this topic that is -- potentially is something we may want to consider, that

we -- we don't have to make any decisions today, but, technically, if -- if you read the state code -- I don't know -- it's another thing that's unclear to me. If the -- if the census comes out in April and says we have over a hundred thousand people, the way the Idaho Code reads right now we have to do it anyway, so -- and I don't know -- there is no magic bell to ring in the statute that says, well, at your next election -- I think just your next election. So, potentially, we are going to be forced to do it in May anyway, if nothing changed. If the statute changes and gives that somewhat grace period to '22, it gives you the ability and cushion to do it later. So, without those changes I'm afraid potential is once the census is determined that says Meridian has X number of people over a hundred thousand people, we are obligated to do it anyway.

Borton: Mr. President, I -- I don't disagree. I -- I feel very confident that if one thing changes it's that. I think at the very least that clarity and that cushion will be provided, because there is a chance the census isn't done -- out until May 25. June -- I mean there is so much funky going on that we might have eight days between the census and when our districts would have to be approved 120 days before election and --

Nary: Right.

Borton: -- through no fault of our own we could just get stuck. So, I believe -- I guess I asked a fork in the road question and maybe that's a -- at some point we have the fork in the road decision, but there has been a lot of really good work done by you and Emily and the team and you two -- or your whole crew is taking -- leading the charge, basically, on trying to create the solution statewide for the -- the gaps in the code and there is probably a whole lot more work, so probably the sooner that you get some consensus from all of us and get the seven of us to provide direction the better. If it's not today I get it, but maybe it's January, February. Otherwise, there is a whole lot of work still to do and I wouldn't want to drop it on you in February, if it's the Council's desired to not move forward.

Nary: Yeah. And as I said, Mr. Borton, Members of the Council, I mean, you know, it's not my intention or the Mayor's intention today to put all of you on the spot to say are we doing it or actually not doing it. I think it was to make sure you were aware and the public was aware that we are aware this is coming. We are aware that it's already a requirement. It could be a requirement sooner than we would prefer or there could be a cushion and if there is a cushion do we want to use that cushion or do we want to leverage that cushion. Again, if the potential is -- based on what Mr. McGrane has said, is that the precincts will not be drawn until 2022, which means there may be some slight adjustment in '23. I don't think it will be large, but I think it will be some. We have an ability to go through a process in '21 and decide if the process makes sense, because if we -- we have a reasonable opportunity to adjust it in '23, which means we can also adjust the process. If we wait until '23 to do it the first time, there really is no logical reason, because the census won't change and the precincts won't change, so we wouldn't really have a justification to change it unless it was really poorly done, that you couldn't redraw the districts very efficiently or effectively after that until the next census. So, that was the only rationale to me that it's reasonable to consider. We are going to do it anyway and -- we are going to

do it anyway, just when do we do it is really the question.

Borton: Okay. Mr. President?

Perreault: Mr. President? Oh.

Borton: Go ahead.

Perreault: Sorry.

Bernt: Mr. Borton.

Perreault: Did you acknowledge me? I didn't hear.

Bernt: I will stick with Mr. Borton, if he has something just to finish up his thoughts and we can move to you, Ms. Perreault.

Borton: Real briefly, I guess, just feedback on it is I -- I think an odd number of citizens versus even is preferred, if they are voting and deciding and making recommendations, if seven is better than six or five is better than six and at least as drafted that May 1 presentation is hopeful, but if that's also perhaps the date that the census gets released it's not realistic. So, as we proceed down the May 1 may be a bit aggressive to expect them to have a final product to come to us for our sort of administrative approval, in light of the fact that if there is time needed for a remand to edit it, there needs to be time for a remand and it can, then, come back to us before the 120 days before the election. So, just the sequencing. That's really the big concern that I thought that we run the risk of is really compressed, which it's a math equation, quite frankly, to do this right. That's all it is. It's just equal distribution of population amongst districts and you only get it wrong if you poorly populate one of the districts and -- relative to another. So, rushing that is the risk, so -- just comments as we continue to chew on it. Thanks.

Bernt: Ms. Perreault, one last thought.

Perreault: Sorry, Mr. President, I didn't hear what you said.

Bernt: I said one last thought for you.

Perreault: Oh. Okay. I think Council Member Borton really hit the nail on the head. I appreciate that. That was very well said. One more quick question for Mr. Nary. Can you explain how this works with this -- the seat numbers as they currently are versus the district? So, do you -- do the Council seat numbers go away and their seat number is replaced with a district that they are in or -- I guess I'm just completely unclear on that.

Nary: Sure. Sure. Mr. President, Members of the Council, Council Member Perreault, that was our -- that was our thought, that simply the seats would now become the districts. So, in theory -- again, my earlier comment -- it doesn't have to be one, two, three, four,

five, six, you know, in a circle or in a square or three on one side and three on the other. They can be anywhere. I mean it doesn't really make any difference. So, it -- it may look funny, but I mean, you know, think of -- I think of it like our fire stations; right? We have -- we have six fire stations. They are not in any sequence, they are named because that's the sixth one we opened versus that's the first one we opened. So, I don't think -- our intention was if we did this next year, districts two, four, and six would be up, because those seats are up in that election cycle and seats one, three, and five would remain the same as they have been at large to the individuals that have already been elected for two more years and, then, in 2023, then, seats one, three, and five would correspond with those districts that will be established in 2021. So, the person, again, who -- if, for example -- and I don't want to get real granular, because I wasn't really trying to get into the specifics, but I mean if you have two council members in the same district in one election cycle, the incumbent that's got two more years left can remain regardless of the fact they live in a different district than they are technically representing. But in the next election cycle whoever gets elected has to live in that district. Does that make sense?

Bernt: It makes sense.

Borton: Mr. President?

Bernt: Mr. Borton.

Borton: Just one final comment that we all know is really obvious, but I will state it anyway is -- and this is a hundred percent true in Meridian and I would assume in almost every other city, but we are just meager public servants and nothing more. We all have other jobs and lives and -- and the things that take the majority of our time and we do this because we love our community and serve and if we can't do it through -- if a districting decision changes our -- so be it. We just want -- we are just here to help and it's -- it's -- I don't want to say insulting, but it almost is even to imply that any of us would be ever concerned about where lines are drawn, as long as it's fair and accurate nothing else matters. I mean we are here -- it's simply service. So, that -- that really means something here and I just don't want us to lose sight of that and -- in our discussions. You draw boundaries where you draw them and we will serve when we can and I just think that's an important part to not lose sight of.

Bernt: Thank you, Mr. Borton. I think that you nailed the nail on the head there, because that's what it boils down to is just service to our community for sure. Anyone else have any thoughts to wrap up? But just a couple of thoughts. First off, I -- you know, I wanted to thank Mr. Nary and his team and Emily for their -- you know, in putting together this -- this ordinance. I know that they have spent a lot of time on it. They weren't joking. You know, Bill wasn't joking when he said that other municipalities in the valley look to Bill's office and to Emily for guidance and they -- they have and they always will and I believe that we have done a great job putting this together. So, thank you, Bill, and thank you, Emily, for -- for your help with this. Just reading the tea leaves, I think it's pretty evident that one of the main concerns is the -- the citizen commission and what that looks like and how that's put together and -- and going forward we are probably going to have more

discussion in regard that for sure, but at the end of the day the process is the most important thing and -- and getting it right is the most important thing and being transparent in this process is the most important thing. Mr. Borton nailed it on the head. We are here to serve and whether it's me or someone else or if it's anyone else in this body or another hardworking dedicated citizen that cares and wants to serve, so be it. That's what we are here to do and Meridian will go forward and we will have strong leadership and -- and have citizens and elected officials and staff members who truly care and that's what's most important. But I think there is a lot of moving parts with this and I think that -- that the time frame and -- to get it all dialed in is going to be very difficult. I -- I'm trying to find a way to wrap my arms around what the benefit is to the citizens of Meridian to have this change in 2021. I just -- I just -- I just don't know if I can wrap my arms around -- I can't come up with -- with anything. Really. And so that would be my concern. You know, the time frame, getting it right. Charlie Rountree used to say it, you know, all the time, you know, that's -- there is no -- there is no -- we are not -- we are not in a hurry in what we do and -- and I think it's even more the case with this situation. So, I would lean more toward -- and just throwing it out there and no one else needs to share their opinion of thumbs up or thumbs down, but my initial thought would be to wait and to get it right and to make sure that we get all our ducks in a row and -- and there is no doubt we are going to do that, but that time frame is going to be really tight to make that happen. So, there we have it, Bill. A bunch of opinions for you. Did you write them all down?

Nary: I got them. Emily is on the call.

Cavener: Mr. President?

Bernt: Mr. Cavener.

Cavener: Perhaps it would be fitting to have staff bring this back in February or March after the legislature -- legislative process has potentially played out. We may have some greater clarity to many of the questions that are unknown at this point.

Bernt: I think you are spot on with that, Mr. Cavener. I think that you are going to see some changes. I think that Mr. Winter has already alluded to maybe some changes that are going to be talked about in this next legislative session as well. So, I think that's -- I think those -- those are wise words.

13. Mayor's Office: Current Strategic Plan Closeout Report

Bernt: So, with that said let's move on to Item No. 13. Back to Vincent. Hopefully Vincent has taken care of his audio struggles. Mr. Koontz, are you there?

Koontz: I am here. Can you hear me?

Bernt: That a boy. Boom. Boom.

Koontz: So -- all right. Sweet. Let me share my screen with you before it decides to

disappear, so -- all right. All righty here. All right. So, Council President, Members of Council, I'm here to present -- and can you see my screen?

Bernt: Yes, sir.

Koontz: Just want to make sure. Okay. I'm here to present to Council the closeout report on our current 2016 to 2020 strategic plan. I do want to take a moment to thank Mayor Tammy, our previous city council, and the city's leadership team. They all deserve credit for recognizing the importance of taking bold visionary strategic leadership back in 2015. It really set us up for the future, setting the course for where we want to take this thriving vibrant community for the next decade and beyond. But, you know, like any good relationship, the plan and I have had many fond memories, struggles, and opportunities to grow and change. But like all good things, they sadly must come to an end, but will transition to something even better. So, a little agenda for you. I will tell you how we did from a high level. What did we get done. What did we learn, both good and bad. I will also share with you the final objective close outs for our current plan and, then, I will share a little bit with you about our new strategic plan and any questions that you might have with regards to that. So, I'm going to keep it short and sweet. I know we just had a -- you know, a long discussion on -- on districting and so I want to -- I want to make sure I get to the point and keep it brief, so -- so, how did we do? Well, we completed and finalized the work on 35 of the 59 total objectives in the plan and we had 13 objectives that were within one action item of being complete. Didn't quite make it over the finish line before the end, but the work will continue or will be reevaluated in the next strategic plan. Out of the 359 tactics in our plan or action items, we completed 290 of them, with another 27 that are currently in progress. So, really really good results for our first strategic plan. Overall we achieved 80 percent of our total plan's tactics and our goal when we adopted the strategic plan was to achieve at least 70 percent. So, I'm pleased to report that we are far above that with achievement. We have also got another eight that are currently in progress. So, 88 percent of the total plan has either been completed or is finalizing the work. It took over 40 objective leads working, you know, day in and day out, on work across multiple departments, so it was truly a team effort and I want to say thank you. I would love to list everybody, but you know -- you know who you are. I have bothered you, poked you and made sure you got stuff done. So, we completed the work across multiple administrations. So, for our first strategic plan we accomplished a great deal, learned a lot of lessons, matured as an organization and as a city. So, I'm happy with where we are at. So, what have we learned? So, some of the positives. Well, we took the initiative. We looked to take a step forward in a plan that looked long term on the work that we are doing. We accomplished -- as I mentioned, we accomplished 80 percent of the total action items in the plan. We adapted. We took action on things that weren't working. Actually, this plan over a third of the original plan objectives were changed, modified, or deleted and I actually looked at that as a positive. That's a sign that we were willing to make changes to accomplish our goals. Some of the opportunities -- it was ambitious. You know, it was ambitious. Some of the objectives we put in their work -- might have been unrealistic or didn't have necessary resources attached to them. It was often operationally focused. We were looking sometimes to just check the box and maybe just completing tasks, as opposed to working towards improving outcomes or delivering results for our citizens. You know, that -- that's an opportunity. It lacked some flexibility

and buy-in. The senior leadership team developed a plan, which is good at a high level, but a lot of the objective leads and action leads didn't have a lot of engagement with the subject matter experts or with Council along the way, which led to some of those modifications in the first place. But all in all it was a very solid effort and it's informed our next plan that we are -- that's currently in progress that we are working on. And I sent a memo out to City Council on some of the objectives that were not closed out in the plan period. Some of the objectives were operationalized and ongoing. Some had lack of resources or changes that didn't allow completion. Some were very close to being complete, but not all the way completed and some have elements that will be considered in the next plan. If you have questions on that memo I would like to hold them until the end, but we will get through and talk about some of the completed objectives that have been completed before the end of the plan period. By focused area -- we had a few. Strategic growth. This is about downtown development and the execution of the Destination Downtown plan. The objective lead was Cameron Arial. Some of the major milestones that occurred in this objective were approval of the Union 93 project, Old Town lots, the Keller building, working with MDC on parking capacity and policy and, then, creating a new urban renewal area in downtown with the Union District. Some of the challenges that were mentioned. Working with developers to balance parking, housing, and mixed use in a compact area in our downtown. Some of the next steps. Working on a tool in Community Development for downtown parking capacity, similar to the one that Miranda has developed for school capacity. But one of the key questions for this is what does the evolving downtown of the future look like as an ongoing piece of this objective. On to the next one. Ensuring our city area of impact values are consistent with infrastructure plans, service boundaries, and growth goals. The objective lead on this was Caleb Hood. Some of the major milestones -- you actually just got a chance to talk to Ada county about recognizing our area of city impact. Their board met with the City Council last week and seems to be in agreement. City officials and staff have met with Kuna and Star for their ultimate city limits. Some of the challenges we found with this were the need to keep open communication lines open on the topics, especially with Kuna and Star, to ensure infrastructure plans match our development boundaries. Some of the next steps will be to further explore updates with the county in any border cities as any -- any changes come up. Under economic vibrancy, this -- this objective was about our industry analysis as part of the comprehensive plan. The objective lead is Tori Cleary. They have their industry analysis and we have identified need for industrial space, developing -- we have also developed a marketing video with Idaho Power. We have identified light manufacturing, healthcare, technology and financial services as potential industries to target and attract. Some of the challenges of that. Obviously, identifying and attracting businesses is challenging, but we have tools and staff to support that effort. We will need to focus on marketing, expanding and maintaining land uses as we continue to grow and keep a balanced land use. Work will continue in the next strategic plan as one of the goals is related to bringing in these industries. Another one is promoted on -- promoting identified special business districts. This objective is also Tori. We completed the industry analysis and we have identified several needs for complementary businesses that we will pursue as part of the application and data from the industry analysis. We have several areas that we might look to for special business districts. One area is highlighted -- I mentioned before was the Union District and the successful RFP for the

civic block. Some of the challenges. The Magic Bridge area is a challenge, as will other districts be challenges as we continue to grow, because available space is dwindling. So, next steps. We will continue some of these efforts in the next strategic plan for business improvement districts, northwest Meridian, and other areas in town. And this one is close -- close to my heart. Government excellence. So, this is actually my objective. So, I will -- I will -- this was a major milestone for me is accomplishing the strategic plan, developing rapport and relationships with City Council, directors, and staff over the last few years to ensure completion and achievement and implementation of our strategic plan and I think we have done a good job as a team. Some challenges. Plans change, priorities shift, and, then, staying the course on a rapidly evolving plan is tough. The city changes. The plan did not fully reflect the community focus which -- which led to a lot of tasks, a lot operational stuff. So, you know, we learned about -- we learned that and we are going to apply that to the next plan. Some next steps. Finalizing new priorities and work with departments and finalizing the next strategic plan to allow us to develop strategic initiatives, develop meaningful performance measures to improve outcomes for our citizens. Next ones are public health and safety. Objective lead was Jeff Lavey. This is about evaluating human caused threats and hazards and establishing benchmarks and standards for our safety profile. Some milestones. As part of this objective we identified several key threats to Meridian on the human caused side. Several that we identified had actions that needed to be taken in order to improve responses. One area of opportunity was asking for mutual aid from local, state, and federal partners. Another is cyber threats. And PD has been working closely with IT over the past year on improving security and training employees on what to watch out for and protecting infrastructure. Challenges. One area that has been a challenge was civil disturbances. We have a mobile field source unit, but we do need to recruit more officers and equipment to train with local teams to ensure that we work well together and handle any civil protests that might turn violent. And next steps. Continue monitoring and identifying threats as they arise and being proactive as they develop. Other public health and safety. And this is the last one. Build and maintain a broad spectrum of partnerships to improve education access to social and support services. The objective lead on this was Dave Miles. Some milestones we highlighted was developing a list of organizations to engage with for various socio-economic actions. One example of these efforts is the Mayor's senior advisory board and AARP have been looking at livability needs, researching and utilizing survey data to assess what opportunities for conversations and how we can utilize our resources and staff in the meantime. Some challenges. This was delayed several times with personnel challenges and assignments and finalized -- also in finalizing the socio-economic indicators to align with from the United Way and next steps. How best can we use our communication platforms and personnel to engage going forward, utilizing partnerships and delivering community engagement. And what's next. So, our -- this plan is complete -- as complete as it's going to be in the plan period. So, next week I will be discussing some of our new strategic plan priorities with you. I will bring back and describe some of the partner and community feedback that we have received so far. This step will be really crucial for Council as a body to accept our priorities over the next five years, giving our departments the green light that tells them their senior leadership and City Council is in agreement on the highest level priorities and that they match the needs of the community. After that stage that's going to include making the meat and the work of the plan with the

departments with City Council. I know City Council expressed a desire to work on some topics regarding partner agencies, the legislature, and diving into some growth and housing related topics. So, I will circle back with you at that stage. We will also work with our departments to make and develop relevant performance measures related to our goals, our citizen survey, and the outcomes that we desire by developing strategic initiatives and actions to accomplish them. I have been working on a public facing dashboard to tell our story for both our staff, our leadership, and our community. So, our plan is not only an adopted document, but also something that they can see and interpret the results. So, I will report bi-annually on the high level updates on the plan, performance measures and the results, and departments will deliver updates on their initiatives, action items, and key findings in their annual updates or in one off of ad hoc updates and I'm going to target full implementation of our plan by March of 2021 and with that I stand for questions.

Bernt: Thank you, Vincent. Any questions?

Perreault: Mr. Council President?

Bernt: Ms. Perreault, is that you?

Perreault: Yes.

Bernt: There you go.

Perreault: Vincent, thank you so much for this. I -- every time I have chatted with you about this your passion for this project shines through and I appreciate that so much that you -- that this is really important to you, not only in your role as a staff person, but personally and I just -- your attitude is always so fantastic as we have gone through this process. So, thank you for that first of all. Secondly, could you bring the slide back up -- the last slide that you -- second to the last slide. I guess I'm not understanding on the -- the memo that you had sent us where you had stated that a certain percentage of the focus areas were complete and now you are saying that -- that we are essentially done with this plan. I'm trying to reconcile I guess -- done with the plan meaning the plan's framework is -- is complete or the objectives that are in the focus areas have been completed or not completed or -- or are those just going to be perpetually worked on for the four years that the plan is in place I guess. Is that -- hopefully that question makes sense.

Koontz: Okay. Council President, Council -- Council Member Perreault, so what you are describing on that -- completed objectives, like these completed objectives that are on the screen -- were for the plan period from 2016 to 2020. When I say that the objectives in this plan is complete, that plan period had, you know, that -- from 2016 to 2020 and so these objectives are part of that plan and so this plan is completed and, then, we are -- what you are -- you are getting confused with -- and maybe the new plan. The new plan is taking -- taking over, so -- on this slide. So, this is the 2021 to 2025 strategic plan, which we have been talking about the focus areas and goals for that one, which they have

made -- we have made some -- you know, some of the -- some of the themes from that, obviously, carry over. But, you know, the -- the plan that we adopted in 2015, that's what's completed and that's what this report really is about. I'm just highlighting some of those things for Council, so we can kind of show you what's coming up next. We will be creating the objectives and strategies for that plan in the next few months. So, that's -- does that -- does that answer your question, Council Member?

Perreault: Mr. President?

Bernt: Ms. Perreault.

Perreault: Yes. I apologize. I -- when I was reading through the memo I did not notice the 2016 to 2020. What I noticed was that the items were not fully closed out and so I was under the assumption that this was a draft of a portion of our new plan. So, yes, I'm aware that -- that some of these focus areas will continue from the prior plan into the new plan. Can you give us some context for the -- the objectives that were not met and just some significance for what that means for us and, you know, if -- if now that we are seeing this with these objectives not completely having been met, you know, I would anticipate that that will affect our new plan to some extent, but can you give us a framework for how much it should or shouldn't affect the new plan or are we just completely starting a whole new draft and not taking that into account?

Koontz: Council President, Council Woman Perreault, so if I'm understanding correctly, this -- so, you are talking about the noncloseout objectives. So, the noncloseout objectives either -- and that's what's detailed in the memo is either they are going to be operationalized and that means that they are -- either they are going to be completed, no resources were attached to them, so they were not completed at that time or some of them will be considered as part of the new plan. But we are kind of trying to take a clean slate with this plan period and say, you know, this is either done or not done. Reality check. But some of the -- again, some of the items, as -- as mentioned in the memo, will potentially carry over and will be considered as we are developing the action items, the strategies and objectives for the new -- new strategic plan. So, that was my acknowledgment that, you know, some of -- most of the work has been completed -- 80 percent of the work has been completed, but some of the work in that plan either has not quite been completed yet and will be or will be considered as part of the plan. I tried to bullet that out in the memo for that reason. So, I hope that might answer your questions in more detail.

Strader: Mr. Council President?

Bernt: Ms. Strader.

Strader: Thank you so much, Vincent. I agree, your enthusiasm for this has been wonderful and infectious and it's been amazing to be part of the process of creating the new plan and I'm excited to close out the old one and work on the new one. I guess a question. We have set such a high level for the new plan, are we going to start talking

about the tactics and would that be an appropriate time to revisit items that are closed out from the old plan that we may want to weave back in or how do you see that working, the objectives that are not met per Council Woman Perreault's point.

Koontz: Yeah. Council President, Council Woman Strader, so, essentially, what I am going to be doing after we adopt the -- the high level framework for the new plan is I will be working with the departments, because, essentially, if you want to look at the new plan is that the -- the focus areas and goals are our strategic priorities. So, my goal would be to get Council to adopt those strategic priorities for the next five years and, then, I can work with departments and subject matter experts and City Council on developing those strategies and objectives and tactics underneath that in the next three months. So, that's exactly what we will be doing in the next three -- three months is developing -- considering the items that may have carried over or weren't quite finished yet from the strategic plan that is -- has been completed, but also to consider, you know, do -- do they belong in the new strategic plan, but -- you know, because of the themes were similar from this strategic plan to the new strategic plan, I think you will find that most of the items will be considered in the new plan once we develop those -- those strategies and action items and tactics, if that makes sense.

Strader: Mr. President?

Bernt: Ms. Strader.

Strader: Yeah. I think that makes tons of sense. I guess just -- you know, I would hope -- if you are getting input from Council for the new plan or input on things that we are closing out from the old one, you know, you could let us know and we could discuss if you need any other information from us. I mean I feel like we are really involved in the process of crafting the new one and it feels like it was -- or, you know, it's evolved in a nice way. So, yeah, I mean let us know. There are a couple of things on this list that said, you know, things weren't resourced or, you know, Council maybe hadn't provided direction, but that's normal, you know, in any kind of strategic plan, not everything is going to be met. But if you still need input from us, you know, please -- I would say let us know.

Koontz: Council President, Council Woman Strader, no, I appreciate that and that's part of my discussion next -- next week in going forward will be, you know -- you know, presenting you with -- with the priorities -- the strategic priorities and, then, talking about some of those next steps in more detail and, you know, on purpose anything that's in here -- you know, a lot of -- a lot of the items in the memo were designed to be followed up or designed to be -- or, frankly, got to the point where they weren't relevant or to your point they -- they maybe weren't considered properly, but they will definitely be considered as part of it and where ever Council input can be, you know, provided in that and where you guys are considered departments in creating object -- objectives and strategies and action items, I will definitely be in touch at that point to -- you know, to get you guys involved, as we have -- as we have done throughout the process, so -- so, I appreciate the questions. Thank you.

Bernt: Any other questions for Vincent? Thank you, Vincent. Appreciate your time on this. Well -- well done.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

15. Per Idaho Code 74-206A(1)(a) To deliberate on a labor contract offer or to formulate a counteroffer.

Bernt: Item No. 15 we have -- we have struck this item from tonight's agenda. So, moving on to our last agenda item.

Hoaglun: Mr. President?

Bernt: Mr. Hoaglun.

Hoaglun: I move we adjourn.

Strader: Second.

Bernt: We have a motion to adjourn this evening with a second. All those in favor say aye. Any nays? Perfect. We are adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 6:14 P.M.

(AUDIO RECORDING ON FILE OF THESE PROCEEDINGS)

COUNCIL PRESIDENT TREG BERNT

_____/_____/_____
DATE APPROVED

ATTEST:

ADRIENNE WEATHERLY - DEPUTY CITY CLERK